Teaching about Global Human Rights for Global Citizenship

Action Research in the Social Studies Curriculum

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What are my rights?
What can I do if my rights are violated?
Who has the right to do that?

Questions like these are easily articulated by most students in the United States because from an early age they frequently receive socially diffused rights messages in virtually every aspect of their lives. The United States has been described as a highly legalistic society or a polity of laws, not people. That tradition is indeed one of the hallmarks of the U.S. democracy. Television and film media illustrate that claim, awash as they are with references to laws, statutes, adjudication, and police work. Because young people, particularly adolescents, are great consumers of those visual texts, they imbibe a general understanding of, and perhaps even a taste for, this national legal fixation. The same is true for classrooms, with rights and litigation issues taking precedence over all other civic ideas, according to Avery (2002). Much of what constitutes formal rights education in the United States is focused on study of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, emergent case law, and criminal or civil procedures.

Although U.S. students are somewhat conversant with rights discourse in the national context, familiarity with global human rights, and the local-national-global connections implicit therein, is lacking (O'Brien 2000; Stone 2002). A recent nationwide survey of human rights education curricula revealed that twenty states include human rights content in state-level curriculum documents, social studies standards, or assessments of social studies learning. The scope of the human rights content studied varies from state to state, however, because human rights concepts and content are often subordinated to or embedded within more pervasive subject fields, such as history, government, civics, study of the Holocaust, and genocides (Banks 2002).

Students who only study rights and litigation in the United States, without considering rights in other national and global contexts, are left with a series of misunderstandings, not the least of which is that the United States has few, if any, violations of human rights or that people living in other societies have few, if any, rights. As two students in Cornbleth's (2002) study noted, "We're free here . . . not like other countries," and, "in some countries, the government tells you what to do, and you have to do it. Here we have a choice of how we want things" (529).

Perhaps more telling is the infrequency of use of the term *human rights* in textbooks, curriculum documents, and educational discourse. As O'Brien notes, "the concept of human rights is not yet part of the culture as it relates to issues inside the U.S." (O'Brien 2000). That may be because the very notion of *human* rights necessarily transcends national boundaries, a paradigmatic shift not easily accepted by nations with long-standing legal traditions. Because the period between 1995 and 2004 has been declared the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, we believe it appropriate to address this apparent curricular imbalance.

Certain questions can lead students toward a richer understanding of global human rights, and they might include the following:

How do my rights differ from the rights of others living in different locations in the world?

How are they similar?

What responsibilities do I have to the communities in which I live?

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Why are my rights different from those of people living in other parts of the world?

How have global standards of human rights been articulated?

To what degree are universal human rights standards enforceable?

Questions like these, rarely encountered in traditional rights education, which is often subsumed within civics study, deserve sustained and careful attention if students are to engage adequately in the global community of the twenty-first century, an era that already has been characterized by its fluidity, interdependence, and reconfigured boundaries. In many societies, the level of activity concerning human rights education far outstrips that of the United States in its scope and intensity. A diverse group of UN member states has developed and implemented systematic plans to expand human rights education and include it within civics curricula (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 2000). The United States, in contrast, has no national plan; moreover, there is no coordinated effort under way to stimulate state-level human rights education initiatives (Flowers 2002).

In this article, we report the ongoing efforts in one high school to prepare students for the rigorous challenges of global citizenship. In this example of human rights education (HRE), we explore the manner in which teachers attempted to draw students away from human rights discourse that is nationally focused and toward a global perspective on human rights. The curriculum and action research study illustrate how teachers and students can enact abstract ideas about global citizenship and teaching for world-mindedness.

The Challenges of Global Citizenship

We used global citizenship as the analytical lens through which to develop the action research study. To determine what we meant by global citizenship, we reviewed scholars' efforts at explaining the concept. Cognizant that the analytical "nation-state container" is no longer singularly sufficient for understanding our complex world (Sassen 1996, 28), a variety of scholars theorized about the dimensions of this amorphous yet vital concept. Boulding (1988) contends that global citizenship is contingent with a process of imagining the world in new ways that transcend a nation-state fixation while embracing peace, diversity, complexity, and temporal awareness. Species identity, or the "acceptance at some level of a shared identity with other human beings," is central to her conceptualization (56). Hanvey (1976) argues that there are five interrelated aspects in developing a global orientation; namely, perspective consciousness, knowledge of world conditions, cross-cultural awareness, knowledge of global dynamics, and knowledge of alternatives. Similarly, Andersen, Nicklas, and Crawford (1994) pose Hanvey's dimensions in a series of declarative statements: You are a human being; your home is planet Earth; you are a citizen of a multicultural society; and you live in an interrelated world. Global civics is intermingled with notions of rights and responsibilities. Being part of a polity requires involvement on the part of the citizens, or at least the opportunity to participate, and rights are the means by which participation is guaranteed. A global polity does not yet exist, yet the absence of a single world government does not mean a global civic culture cannot develop. Indeed, the process already is emerging. Human rights are a core element of the transcendent move toward a global civic culture, establishing a foundation for fairness and justice that is potentially universal.

International pressure to develop meaningful guarantees of human rights intensified following World War II, particularly in light of the massive human rights violations committed by the Axis Powers, as well as by Nazi Germany's policies of genocide in Europe (the Holocaust). Despite the reluctance of the victorious Allied Powers to make human rights guarantees a central feature of the postwar world, pressure brought by nongovernmental organizations, individuals, and other world states forced the Great Powers to relent and make human rights a central focus of the United Nations Charter (Lauren 1998, Chapter 7). Following the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and its approval by the UN General Assembly in 1948, twenty-one internationally binding human rights treaties have been established under the auspices of the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations such as the European Union and the Organization of American States.

Since the mid-1980s, international efforts to expand international human rights guarantees to address the unique needs of children (Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC]) and to create an international criminal court with jurisdiction to try crimes against humanity and related violations of fundamental human rights have been widely accepted and ratified by most UN member states. Sadly, since 1990, the United States Senate has failed to ratify the CRC, and in 2002, the Bush Administration "unsigned" the treaty creating the International Criminal Court. Although not the only reason, we believe that the lack of human rights education in the United States has clearly contributed to the ineffectiveness of campaigns designed to support these two initiatives and related human rights treaties. However, despite the reluctance of the United States and selected other UN member states to support the development of universal standards fully, norms and enforcement mechanisms in the area of human rights, international pressure to force governments, groups, and individuals to abide by human rights standards are clearly on the rise.

Global citizenship is a challenging notion for a variety of reasons, including its complexity, transcendency, and inchoate status. Conceptualizing how the world can operate as a single yet multifarious entity is necessarily complex. We do not yet have the vocabulary and grammar with which to engage adequately in discourse about a global civic life, although precursors are being developed in various disciplines as the phenomenon of globalization emerges (Gaudelli 2003). Global citizenship is also challenging, and

perhaps even controversial, given its non-normative stance. Suggesting that the emergence of supranational organizations, such as the European Court of Justice, International Criminal Court of Justice, or the United Nations Human Rights Committee, will augment or supplant the sovereignty of nation-states is desirable to some and despicable to others. Clearly, global civics is a transcendent notion in that it challenges long-held ideas of how civics, and specifically rights and responsibilities, are engaged.

Background of the Regional High School

Hunterdon Central Regional High School, where the HRE case reported here is taught, is a relatively affluent, suburban high school located equidistant from New York and Philadelphia. The vast majority of its graduates (87 percent) continue their education in institutions of higher learning, and the mean SAT scores are thirty points higher than the national average on both the verbal and math segments. Advanced placement courses, offered in almost every department, are widely subscribed to by the students. A litany of national and state agencies have lauded the accomplishments of Regional High School (RHS), including the U.S. Department of Education, which has twice since 1994 bestowed on it the Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award. In 1997, the social studies department was recognized by the National Council for the Social Studies with its Program of Excellence Award.

The relative affluence and achievement of RHS as an institution has translated into an abundance of teaching resources. Hundreds of film titles, a computer lab dedicated for the use of *Comparative World Studies* students, Internet access for every student, and software packages for human rights instruction are some of what is available. The raw materials for learning, available in abundance at RHS make it a unique learning environment, which should be borne in mind when examining the curriculum and action research presented in this study.

Global Human Rights

RHS offers a required course in global education, titled Comparative World Studies. In the mid-1980s, Willard Kniep identified five core conceptual themes and four "essential elements of study" as critical for the development of social studies education curricula within a global education. The five conceptual themes were interdependence, change, culture, scarcity and conflict. The four essential elements were the study of systems, the study of human values, the study of persistent issues and problems, and the study of global history (Kniep 1989). The persistent issues and problems encompassed the four categories of issues that Kniep argued were pervasive around the globe and that had historical and contemporary significance: peace and security, national/international development, environmental problems, and human rights. When RHS developed its eleventh-grade world history/world cultures course in 1989–90 as a response to the inclusion of world history and cultures as a state graduation requirement in New Jersey, the social studies department used Kniep's conceptual and thematic framework as the structure for Comparative World Studies course (Gaudelli 2000). The four course units were directly informed by Kniep's core themes and essential elements of study, as noted in table 1.

The course, taught over an eighteen-week period, during which classes met five days a week for eighty-four minutes of instruction, consists of three units: tradition and change, international human rights, and global security. Global environmental issues are included within the global security unit, and they are also examined to some degree in the tradition and change unit, which uses a cultural anthropological framework to study two world societies from different cultural regions. In table 2, there is a summary of the goals, methods, and content of the human rights unit.

Teachers of Comparative World Studies have significant latitude in deciding how best to teach the HRE unit objectives. The description presented here reflects how one teacher on the social studies faculty conceptualized and implemented the CWS international human rights unit. Although it retains similarities with pedagogical strategies and materials used by other faculty members in the school, the unit does not represent a uniform instructional plan or curriculum design implemented among all eleventh graders at the school. The global human rights unit often begins with a brief introduction to students' rights as a means to begin the process of reconstructing rights experiences for adolescents. Students read their own rights document, the RHS student handbook, clarifying regulations for student conduct and raising new questions about their rights in the context of the school. *En loco parentis*, or the legal tradition of the school acting "in place of the parent," is a source of much of the opening dialogue. Students generally enter the course unaware of that doctrine and all its manifestations in their daily lives. During class meetings in the early part of the unit, the students begin to identify important tensions that serve as the foundation for the remaining study; namely, collective v. individual rights and security v. liberty.

New Jersey v. T.L.O. (1985) concisely illustrates the tension between the privacy of the individual and the security interests of the school. The students study the T.L.O. case, along with other famous students' rights cases, in a deductive rather than inductive manner. Before reading the T.L.O. case, the students witness a peer's purse being searched by the teacher. When the goods (rolling papers, matches, phone numbers, rolled up dollar bills, and a marijuana, i.e., oregano, bag) are displayed, the students speculate about the legality of the search. They then read the actual case and the verdict of the U.S. Supreme Court. That decision provides an excellent point of entry for investigating social contract theory or the relinquishing of certain liberties for the preservation of group security.

Once their curiosity has been piqued, the students embark on an examination of the evolution of human rights. They examine the Code of Hammurabi and consider an ancient view of jurisprudence and rights. They begin to examine

TABLE 1. Comparative World Studies: Course Units, Core Themes, and Essential Elements of Study as Informed by Kniep's Curriculum Design

Unit title	Core themes	Essential elements of study
Tradition and change	Culture, conflict, change in the modern world	National/international development
International human rights	Conflict, change	Human rights
Global security	Interdependence, change, conflict	Peace and security
The Global Environmental Challenge*	Scarcity, change, conflict, interdependence	Environmental problems

Note. In 2000, the social studies faculty members modified the unit structure of the course in response to a review of student data. The Global Environmental Challenge was eliminated as a separate unit of study and key elements of that unit were included in the Tradition and Change and Global Security units.

the categories of rights apparent in the code, such as property and security rights, after completing a thorough document analysis in cooperative jigsaw groups. The students then encounter rights in the context of the Age of Enlightenment through a brief investigation of social contract theorists, including John Locke, Jean-Jacque Rousseau, and Thomas Jefferson. The civil and political tradition of rights is readily identifiable and acceptable to American students whom we have taught to be conversant with free speech, assemblage, and freedom of thought and expression in their own experiences.

In contrast, students are less familiar and somewhat antagonistic toward the notion of social, economic, and cultural rights. They find the second-generation rights, such as the right to an adequate living standard, health care, education, and social security, more controversial. They generally ascribe to the notion that those rights should not be guaranteed; rather, they contend that only the opportunity to procure those economic commodities should be assured. The recognition of that tension allows for a thoughtful consideration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and some of the subsequent covenants listed in table 1. Students engage in document analyses, identifying the generations of human rights that exist, the legal interpretations of the agreements, and enforcement mechanisms (Buergental 1988).

The document investigation is capped off with a simulation of the UN Human Rights Committee's annual hearings on human rights violations. The teacher assigns the students the roles of human rights committee members, human rights NGO representatives, and representatives of the national governments. Nations are selected based upon their ratification of a particular international rights covenant (e.g., Convention against Torture) coupled with reports that there have been acts in that nation that have violated the agreement. They engage in research to construct their cases for the simulation, drawing largely on the Amnesty International annual reports and reports surrounding alleged violations. Once all of the complaints are presented by the human rights NGO representative and responded to by the national leaders, the judges determine their courses of action, based on the mechanisms available to the UN Human Rights Committee (e.g., public embarrassment and supplying technical support to the nation or aid to victims). This activity is essential in human rights education because it combats a widely held misperception that human rights standards are unenforceable beyond national borders.

Conflicts abound when considering the clash of security and liberty-oriented rights. That philosophical contrast provides ample space for students to consider the notion of rights in conflict. China's One Couple/One Child policy offers a provocative example of this clash: reproductive rights (liberty) versus promoting an adequate living standard (security). Students are given readings from a variety of perspectives on the issue. Tangential issues are raised, including exponential population growth in contemporary China, subsequent resource depletion and environmental degradation, the phenomenon of single-child families, female infanticide, and the gender imbalance that has resulted from the policy. Once the students reflect on the information, they use a human continuum approach to examine the extent to which the students agree with the policy.

The human continuum approach requires students to move to a position in the room that represents their views on the policy (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = unsure, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree). That facilitates an enlightening exchange of views, because the students articulate their perspectives without employing a rigid, dichotomous agree-or-disagree format.

State-sponsored violence is the core content concept and the most challenging to teach. The graphic nature of the victims' testimonies forces students to confront torture, a phenomenon they incorrectly assume is purely historical (Totten and Kleg 1989). Macabre images and descriptions of inconceivable human suffering can be traumatic reading for some students and bizarrely entrancing to others. One of the supplemental readings based on the abduction, disappearance, and torture of Norberto Liwsky in Argentina presents students with a shockingly graphic portrayal of his story (Argentine Commission on the Disappeared 1986). Many students expressed shock at his treatment and were dismayed to read the account.

Although the faculty members who have taught the HRE unit have often worried about doing a disservice to students by encouraging them to read about victims of state-sponsored violence, after a decade of teaching the course, they remained committed to showing some of the details of state-sponsored violence. Our agreement stemmed from a desire

TABLE 2. Comparative World Studies: Global Human Rights

Goals
- Appreciate that efforts to establish human rights are continuous and progressive
- Realize that concepts of human rights are open to diverse interpretation
- Understand that violations of human rights can be state-sponsored
- Recognize that efforts to curb human rights violations have met with variable success
- Interpret and analyze key international agreements for enforcing human rights
- Understand the differences in generations of rights and how these categories are prioritized
- Constructively participate in society in ways that address the complexity of human rights

Methods
- Teacher-led discussions
- Student-led discussions
- Teacher demonstrations
- Guest speaker presentation
- Internet research
- CD-ROM based inquiry
- Inner/Outer circle discussion
- Human continuum discussion arch
- Multimedia presentation development
- Documentary and feature-length film viewing
- Model UN simulation
- Mock trial
- Simulation learning activities with debriefing discussion
- Creation of film/multimedia presentations
- Web-based inquiries using curriculum modules developed by faculty

Content
- Historical development of rights and different generations of rights (first, second, and third generation rights)
- Rights in conflict case studies: Skokie, Illinois, free speech case; Yanomamö cultural preservation in Brazil and Venezuela; Student locker/effects searches (T.L.O. v. N.J.); China's one couple, one child policy
- Case studies of state-sponsored violence (such as torture, "disappearances," prisoners of conscience, and capital punishment) in El Salvador, Argentina, China, Chile, Tibet, United States, and Iran
- Nongovernmental organizations' role in enforcing human rights standards (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Asia Watch, Save the Children)
- Law and treaty—international human rights documents and enforcement mechanisms: Universal Declaration of Human Rights; UN Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; UN Convention against Torture
- Case study: Refugees; state policies and NGO actions; outgrowth of mass violence; Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Cambodia as illustrative case-studies
- Children's rights
- Women's rights: gender discrimination, state-sponsored violence, access to education and labor, state policies and NGO actions, child trafficking, labor and health violations

not to shock or be gratuitous but to facilitate student understanding and empathy for those who suffered. It is necessary, however, to balance that exposure with sensitivity to the students with whom one is working and the apparent psychological effect of the information. If too much macabre detail is provided or if it is done so in a manner that is gratuitous, students are likely to tune out or make jokes about the material as a defense against fully engaging the information. We encouraged teachers who present information about victims of violence in the HRE units to be sensitive to student feedback and willing to make curricular adjustments accordingly.

One of the case studies of state-sponsored violence is the military coup in Chile in 1973 by General Augusto Pinochet and his supporters. That case provides rich detail about the use of state-sponsored violence to subdue and coerce millions of Chileans to accept the dictates of the new regime. *Missing*, directed by Constantine Costa-Gavras in 1982, is a feature-length film that is particularly poignant for students. The film documents the experiences of a group of Americans living in Chile at the time of the coup and the arrest, torture, and eventual execution of Charlie Horman. The saga of how Charlie's wife and father search for him in vain is gripping and helps the students to personalize the human suffering of state-sponsored violence.

One of the highlights of the unit over the past decade was having Charlie's widow, Joyce Horman, who now lives in New York City and is active in human rights advocacy, speak at Hunterdon Central Regional High School about her experiences in Chile. She talked about her feelings of devastation over losing Charlie, the family's desperate search for him, and the alleged cover-up by the American consulate in Chile. Joyce Horman's message was one of hope, insisting that what happened would not happen if more people advocated human rights globally or at least supported national leaders of a similar persuasion.

Teachers need to strive to communicate a hopeful message to avoid having students turn away from these challenging issues. One way that RHS teachers have promoted a hopeful perspective is to engage students in a Children's Rights Model United Nations. That activity not only gives students a chance to learn more about the problems facing the world's children but also offers the opportunity to develop solutions for those problems. The problem-solving orientation is vital to promoting constructive participation about issues of human rights. As a culminating activity, the Model UN Conference on Children brought together different Comparative World Studies classes in a collaborative setting to consider global solutions to human rights violations.

The project begins with an in-depth analysis of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), as detailed by Edmonds and Fernekes (1996). The teachers encourage the students to ask questions, seek clarification, and obtain additional information about the numerous articles in the convention. As a way to introduce the covenant, each student is assigned an article to research and visually depict in creative, artistic renderings, which are then displayed on the classroom wall to enhance students' understanding of the covenant.

Students working in pairs research information about an assigned country's position on the Convention on the

Rights of the Child and the rights issues of greatest concern to that nation. They make suggestions about how global children's rights issues might be addressed. A student might investigate Cambodia and discover that land mines have killed and maimed many youths who are especially vulnerable because of their mobility and adventurous spirit (Redman and Whalen 1998, 16). The delegate from Cambodia might then offer a resolution to the Model United Nations to develop an international task force to identify and disarm existing land mines in Cambodia and in other nations that have to cope with a similar problem. The Cambodian resolution would be considered either on its own, or as part of a package, perhaps with a resolution by Zambia to institute HIV/AIDS testing and treatment for children and a Brazilian proposal to provide education for street children. Joint resolutions are developed after the students have given opening speeches explaining their national perspective on children's rights.

The culminating activity helps students examine complex problems that face the world's children today and realize that the presence of an international covenant alone will not solve problems and that proposals might be developed and implemented to channel human and financial resources to address these concerns. It is a hopeful activity with a redeeming message, offering students an opportunity to simulate being a diplomat, policymaker, and child advocate.

TEACHER RESOURCES

For further study of children's rights content and how it can be used within the social studies curriculum, consult the following sources:

Edmonds, B., and W. R. Fernekes. 1992. Special section on the rights of the child. *Social Education* 56 (4).

Fernekes, W. R. 1999. Human rights for children: The unfinished agenda. *Social Education* 63 (4): 234–40.

———. 2001. The convention on the rights of the child. *Trends and Issues* 13 (3): 5–8.

See the "Children's Rights" curriculum module developed by a consortium of New Jersey social studies faculty under the auspices of the Global Citizen 2000 project. Accessible at <http:///gc2000.rutgers.edu/GC2000/MODULES/CHILD_RIGHTS/default.htm>.

Action Research to Assess Results of HRE

To document and analyze the HRE curriculum at Regional High School, we engaged in action research, using the question, How do students respond to an HRE curriculum that emphasizes the dimensions of global citizenship? We ascribe to Price's (2001) assertion that action research should be systematic, collaborative, intentional, and democratic in intent and process. We systematized the study through protocols and procedures for the collection of data over an extended period of time and made it collaborative by involving teachers who volunteered to participate in the program. We made it intentional by seeking to answer a question about a particular body of curriculum and democratic by promoting social knowledge about the curriculum. We also empowered teachers to participate in the analysis and application of the study, both as a process and a product. Our aim is not to generalize about the HRE curriculum but rather to specify the implications of the practice for our internal processes and its potential to yield insights that transcend RHS. As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) argue, action research is a means by which educators can develop local theory that can be shared to inform a wider public.

The research took place during two semesters, spanning the period 2000–2003. Data sources for 2000 included student surveys. We jointly analyzed the data following the 2000 survey and identified a series of patterns in students' reaction. In 2003, we expanded the data sources, including pre-test/post-test surveys (using the same instrument from 2000), teacher pre- and postinterviews, teacher reflections, and student interviews. We surveyed two classes of students taking the HRE unit ($N = 48$) in 2000, and we used data from two focus classes ($N = 43$) to collect the 2003 data. We present a summary of the student responses to the survey instrument in table 3.

For the data analysis of the student surveys from 2000, we examined the Likert-type scale responses and categorized open-ended responses, identifying patterns of student reaction. Given the limited student data from 2000, we decided to forego comparative statistical analyses between the nonrandom, purposeful samplings. Although this survey provided us with the general contours of student reactions, we needed to know more specifics about why students responded in those ways. Toward that end, we interviewed teachers before and after the HRE unit and a stratified sample of students from those teachers' classes to gain a richer understanding of the interaction between teachers and students in the curriculum. Once we identified patterns in data from the survey instrument, we sought explanation and clarification among other data sources.

Summary of Findings, Search for Local Theory

In this section, we explore students' responses to the survey and use additional data sources to develop a theory about the application of the HRE curriculum. In question 5 of the survey, the students categorized their previous experiences studying human rights. Although all the students surveyed had studied rights in the context of U.S. government and history and the Nazi Holocaust, approximately two-thirds claimed not to have studied human rights previously (.62/.31 agree/disagree split). One Comparative World Studies teacher in the study suggested that although students get "bits and pieces of human rights study in the Holocaust," this is the first course in which they study HRE in depth. The novelty of HRE was echoed in student open-ended responses, with the majority of students in both samplings indicating increased awareness of issues previously unknown to them. A number of students in the 2003 sampling commented on their increased level of awareness about global human rights

issues. One stated that he learned about "torture and disappearance cases, which are atrocities that need to be stopped; human rights plays a big part in the world community." Another commented, "I was a little surprised that there were so many human rights violations that were parts of culture, as in some cultures that you don't hear much about, like some tribes in India that had female genital mutilation." A third stated, "This is the first time I learned [about] anything outside of this country . . . how war, poverty affected human rights; how sometimes a country, to protect its security, will violate the rights of a few people, how they are affected, and how to prevent them from being violated."

The students generally had a favorable reaction to the HRE unit and reported being interested in the topic. For question 7, the students rated their interest in the unit, with a .60/.15 agree/disagree split, suggesting a general interest in the course material. When asked in question 6 if they would like to know more about human rights now that they had studied the topic, the students indicated a slight drop in interest with a .57/.19 agree/disagree split. One male student asserted, "Some of it I didn't really think could happen in the world. . . . I was surprised to say the least." A female student noted, "Most of the stuff was pretty shocking that we were taught. I guess I was kind of oblivious and really naive to what was going on. Now I have a better understanding of what's going on in the world. I took it seriously; I guess, I was surprised." Reflecting the orientation about rights issues cited by Avery (2002) and Cornbleth (2002), another young woman commented, "Some of it [human rights information] upset me and sometimes I felt really bad. One video we watched about AIDS, I felt really bad and I started to cry because I felt really bad for the people who don't have it as well off as we do. And they're not given the rights that we're given in America." Such data suggest that the HRE unit was well received and stimulated student interest in the topic.

HRE has typically been enacted as value-oriented, normative curriculum (Tibbits 2002). An important element of HRE is the development of empathy for victims of human rights abuses. Much of this HRE unit focused on the stories of victims and the simulation activities, with the primary purposes being to elicit an affective response from students. Students seemed empathetic toward human rights victims as a result of this unit, with question 8 producing an agree/disagree split of .86/.07. In question 9, students claimed to be more concerned about human rights as a result of the HRE unit, with a .74/.14 agree/disagree split. For question 10, most students reported a willingness to advocate for victims of human rights (.71/.04 agree/disagree split).

HRE for global citizenship necessarily seeks the students' commitment to advocate for human rights. Data from 2003 student interviews reveals that the classroom instruction does positively affect student willingness to advocate for human rights. When asked if students thought about their role as global citizens when studying the unit on human rights, one young woman stated: "I realized there's a lot more that I can do. When I hear someone being called a name in the hallway, I can actually speak up and say that's not really nice. I can actually try to prevent that; telling people how people are being hurt and how people are being abused by what they do, and what that might end up causing in the end." A young man responded: "I want to do more to help other people out, to help the disappeared, to bring an end to torture itself, to help heal torture victims. . . . In my adult life, I can do more—travel the world here and there maybe to help out. Like the Red Cross, people who go out of their way to help people, I tend to be that type of person and I hope to continue to be that way." Another young man commented: "I guess I thought about it a lot; every time we went over different human rights and human rights violations I kept thinking; do I do this, am I doing this, have I done this? And I started to feel bad for some of the things I've done that really were cruel to people. . . . I just felt bad because no one deserves to be treated this way."

From the survey results, we cannot theorize about the nature of empathy and concern as understood by the students or about the long-term effect of the curriculum on student attitudes. We have some evidence, however, that some students understood that those values were foundational to citizens' acting to improve society. Four of the eighty-one students surveyed in both years indicated in their open-ended responses a commitment to advocating for human rights beyond the course. The contrast between those claiming empathy and concern and those acting on their concerns seems to indicate that most students view caring and empathy as internal responses, rather than social ones. A few students in 2003 indicated their efforts to take action beyond the scope of the classroom. That was epitomized by one young man who stated: "I think it really means to think beyond yourself, to feel for others, and to try to help others. To try to live your life with a basic set of morals, to not impede everyone else, and to appreciate everyone else, to not gain things for yourself at the expense of others." The same student elaborated, "You start feeling how much you actually are worth. I hadn't known about any of this and so before that I was probably contributing to the problem because I didn't know anything or how to stop it."

Teachers in the study also offered their perceptions of student empathy, concern, and social action. One female teacher, whose class was two-thirds female students, suggested that that class in particular was a good audience for developing empathy about global women's issues: "The students obviously had a strong personal connection to their research projects and studied a variety of topics, some obvious ones like veiling in the Middle East, and some more obscure, like unequal rights to own property in Kenya." She explained, however, that she would have liked to engage in a social action project but simply ran out of time. The other Comparative World Studies teacher whose class was engaged in the study sensed that his students were less than sincere in their empathetic responses. He explained: "They . . . pay lip service to the concept that all people are humans and therefore guaranteed human

rights, but they still think that if you commit violent crime that you lose this humanity and your human rights. I still don't think they can get past the idea that humans [have] rights; they can parrot it back to me, but I don't think they believe it." That teacher's class was seventy-five percent male, which may partially explain the differences in empathetic responses, which are typically associated with femininity among U.S. adolescents.

The notion that the United States is a unique defender of human rights at home and abroad is well documented in the literature (Stone 2002; Banks 2002). Rather than embed a United States–world dichotomy in the course of study, teachers use global comparisons throughout the unit to show how different societies compare with regard to human rights issues. For example, the students examine case studies of state-sponsored violence, such as torture, "disappearances," prisoners of conscience, and capital punishment in a geographically diverse sample (e.g., El Salvador, Argentina, China, Chile, Tibet, United States, and Iran; see table 2). As one girl noted in 2000, "Every country has human rights issues." Students made similar comments in 2003, highlighting their increased awareness about the universal nature of human rights. One male student noted that being a citizen of the world involved "being treated like a human; you are human and you deserve respect. No matter where you are or what you're doing, what culture you are a part of, you are human and you should be treated just like any other human being." A young woman stated in response to the question about the elements of being a world citizen, "I guess just being a human being and not doing anything that will harm other people. . . . It does not take much to be a citizen, do unto others as you would want them to do unto you. Be considerate, compassionate, and giving."

Given the nature of the HRE unit, it is not surprising that students saw the United States in a broader context and weighed its human rights record against those of other nations, a critical stance that challenges the implicit doctrine of American exceptionalism. In the 2003 survey, conducted during the war in Iraq while prisoners of the "war on terrorism" were being held in military detention at Guantanamo Bay, students generally indicated that human rights were also a problem in the United States, with a .16/.64 agree/disagree split.

What can be done globally to promote and protect the human rights of all people is a controversial and challenging issue. From the answers to question 12, we learned that an overwhelming majority of students (.91/.02 agree/disagree split) wanted more to be done to protect human rights globally. Students gave mixed responses about the current mechanisms for global human rights enforcement; however, with a .31/.32 agree/disagree split (a third were undecided about enforcement, the greatest number of undecided responses in the survey). The ambiguity of the data suggests that that level of analysis may be beyond the scope of an introductory HRE course. Although the students seemed to gain a great deal in terms of interest, awareness, and concern, issues of international law, human rights covenants, and global courts may be too complex to be addressed meaningfully in a four-week unit.

The extent to which students internalized the idea of HRE advocacy is also illustrated by the data. As one student in 2000 indicated, "I have gained the idea that in many places human rights are a joke. I do not appreciate this reality and I think it should be improved if not remedied." Curiously, she does not implicate herself as part of the remedy, but rather, views the problem as someone else's to address. One young man wrote in the 2000 survey, "My most important idea is that I now have the knowledge and information on how to help human rights issues." The contrast in these perspectives implies two different notions of who has agency to advocate for human rights, but both also suggest an increased awareness of the need to do so. As a group, students in both the 2000 and 2003 samplings agreed that the world should do more to uphold human rights (91 percent), whereas a smaller proportion (71 percent) believed *they* should do more. The students in the 2003 group generally supported the notion that human rights advocacy should be embraced by the citizenry as a whole. One female student stated, "Learning about all this stuff makes you realize that you do have a say; that people can really make a difference, but it does take more than one person. One person's beliefs aren't always carried out, it takes everyone to create peace and have that state of mind." In a similar vein, a male student stated, "Now you can think of ways to stop it or set up organizations; you start seeing how everyone is important, how every one person is important to the global community." From the data, we concluded that students believe not enough is being done to protect human rights globally because of an ineffective enforcement system and that a smaller percentage of the students felt personally committed to engage in improving human rights.

Conclusions

From this HRE action research study, we concluded that students view human rights as an important topic in their study of world history and cultures. They were inspired to participate in social action projects within their own communities through the study of human rights issues. For the most part, their understanding about the scope and significance of human rights issues expanded to include not only national but also international perspectives. In this regard, the data suggest that the curriculum design and instructional strategies of the *Comparative World Studies* program were successful to some degree in "countersocializing" these adolescents to reexamine their knowledge base, attitudes, and values with respect to human rights. As Engle and Ochoa argue in *Education for Democratic Citizenship*,

> Countersocialization is a learning process designed to foster the independent thought and social criticism that is crucial to political freedom. It promotes active and vigorous reasoning. It includes a reappraisal of what has been learned through the process of socialization so that adolescents can independently and reflectively assess the

> worth of what they have learned as young children. (1988, 31)

Countersocialization is critical for the development of active, reflective citizens who are committed to democratic practice. It blends well with the models of human rights education described by Tibbitts (2002), all of which emphasize education that leads to advocacy and development of action strategies that build human rights cultures in our own communities.

Of the three models outlined by Tibbitts (Values and Awareness, Accountability, and Transformational), the human rights unit discussed herein falls primarily within the "values and awareness" model. With the greatest emphasis on transmitting basic knowledge of human rights issues and fostering its integration within the civic community, this model is often encountered in schools and frequently is linked conceptually to content about fundamental democratic values and practices. By instructing students about the normative goals of the UDHR and related international documents and about historic and contemporary human rights issues, teachers emphasize critical thinking and policy analysis, using a framework of human rights norms. In contrast, the accountability model focuses on how professionals work on a regular basis to guarantee human rights either through monitoring of human rights violations or advocating the protection of human rights through the law. As differentiated from the daily activities of classroom teachers and students, this model places considerable weight on skill development (e.g., lobbying and advocacy) and on strengthening content. Its target audiences are journalists, community activists, health and social service workers, law enforcement professionals, and members of the electronic media.

The transformational model focuses on empowerment in the recognition and prevention of human rights abuses. Self-reflection and support in the community are critical, along with formal study of human rights content, intensive skill training in leadership development and conflict resolution, and assumption of personal responsibility for action on behalf of those whose rights are threatened. The Regional High School human rights curriculum contains elements that establish a foundation for transformational behavior, such as student participation in social action projects. It also promoted more in-depth study and training in the actual skills of human rights advocacy, which are necessary to put this model into practice. The responses of the students indicate their receptivity to engagement in a countersocializing process of social education. To assess their long-term commitment to human rights awareness and advocacy because of their experiences in this course would require further study.

The egocentric nature of adolescents is often referred to as an impediment to HRE and global education more generally (Gaudelli 2003). Although there is evidence of that developmental tendency in how young people see themselves, we concluded from this action research that a more complex understanding of egocentrism is needed. Furthermore, we believe that an egocentric frame of reference is not necessarily a hindrance to HRE. If the curriculum begins with the students' experiences and knowledge about rights, the teacher can guide them to investigate the experiences of others in differing contexts. Commonalities are easily found. Teachers need to help students see beyond their personal and national experiences with rights and move them toward developing empathy for others, so that they are not myopically focused on global counterparts who are like themselves. The associative tendency of students to see themselves in others can lead to deeper insights into the circumstances of other social and political contexts that permit human rights violations to occur. Through illustrating the universal need to promote dignity and justice for all people, teachers can promote civic awareness and attitudes that transcends national boundaries, building on the association of student identities with global "others."

Drawing on Jungian psychology, as well as both Eastern and Western religious traditions, Kathleen Brehony has documented that the ability of individuals and institutions to take action to reduce the gap between "them" and "us" is not only within our reach but is being realized on a daily basis when people understand that one's individual welfare is directly connected to the quality of life of those too easily distanced from our experience (Brehony 1999).

This study further suggests that advocates of human rights curriculum should attend to the education of preservice and inservice teachers. Although undergraduate education may more likely afford an opportunity to study human rights, there is simply no guarantee that such study is being engaged in by prospective social studies teachers or that issues that are commonly studied (e.g., Nazi Holocaust) are approached with a human rights lens. As evident in this study, students had certainly encountered human rights previously, but they were not able to categorize the seemingly disparate topics as such. Teacher candidates, similarly, need to have a sustained and identifiable human rights focus to grasp the interconnectedness of issues typically addressed in secondary social studies curriculum (e.g., protest, civil rights, genocide, judicial processes). Those currently teaching would also benefit from sustained, professional development related to a human rights curriculum. Little sustained education of HRE is apparent in either teacher education institutions or surprisingly, in programs designed to address issues such as the Holocaust and genocides (Fernekes 2003).

The curricular example offered here illustrates an effort made by teachers and students in one high school to promote awareness about human rights abuses. It is not offered as an ideal course of study but rather as a work in progress. The HRE unit has certain characteristics that can be reflected on as a model of human rights education that might be employed elsewhere, but the decision about what is most pedagogically appropriate rests with the professionals engaged in curriculum development (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993). The characteristics of the unit, including the global-orientation, attention to the students' selves, and the active reconstruction of student

experiences with rights, can serve as an exemplar for educators considering implementation of a course of study in human rights.

Having followed this curriculum with students for decades, we remain committed to the idea that human rights education plays a central role in the limitation and eventual eradication of human rights abuses worldwide. As Itoe (1998) asserts, "Human rights education is at the center of . . . promotion and protection. In other words, the worldwide struggle against human rights violations can be strengthened if it is combined with more vigorous preventive human rights work, such as human rights education." Human rights education that is nationalistic will not help students to embrace the humanity of all people; rather, it will entrench the already ego-centered adolescent to believe that injustice in any place endangers no one but those threatened. Whereas human rights education alone cannot eliminate human rights violations, it can certainly be instrumental toward that end. We contend further that the notion of global interdependence is fundamental to the appropriate study of human rights because it is an idea that necessarily transcends national boundaries. In a world where global connections are an omnipresent reality, it is imperative that we educate young people to respect and support universal human rights guarantees.

Key words: civics and human rights, global understanding, global interdependence, human rights education

APPENDIX

Human Rights Unit Survey

Directions: Please respond honestly and thoroughly to each item. This information will be used to evaluate the human rights program and its effectiveness. The information gathered will be used in a publication about human rights education. Your confidentiality will be maintained when the data are used for research purposes. You may receive a copy of the final research report, upon request.

1. Gender:
   ___ Female
   ___ Male

2. Ethnicity:
   ___ White
   ___ Latino/Hispanic
   ___ Asian
   ___ African American
   ___ Native American
   ___ Other ( )

3. Religion:
   ___ Christian
   ___ Jewish
   ___ Muslim
   ___ Hindu
   ___ Buddhist
   ___ Other ( )
   ___ Nonreligious

Please mark here if you are an active participant in your religion. _____

4. Age:
   ___ 18
   ___ 17
   ___ 16
   ___ 15

Directions: Using the scale printed below, please indicate on the line below the number that most accurately describes our view of the human rights course that you have just completed.

Strongly Agree	1
Agree	2
Unsure	3
Disagree	4
Strongly Disagree	5

5. Comparative World Studies is my first encounter with international human rights education as a student.
   ___

6. I would like to know more about international human rights issues having studied this topic.
   ___

7. I was generally interested in international human rights study over the past four weeks.
   ___

8. I often felt empathy for the victims that I encountered in human rights study through their stories.
   ___

9. I am more concerned about human rights abuses now, having had this course, than I was previously.
   ___

10. I would be willing to act on behalf of someone whose human rights were being threatened.
    ___

11. I do not think the United States has a problem with human rights; it is a problem that affects poor, developing countries.
    ___

12. I think the global community should do more to protect the human rights of all people.
    ___

13. I think the enforcement of human rights internationally is effective.
    ___

14. Please use the space below to explain the most important idea you have gained from the study of international human rights.

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