

# Peace Education SIG Newsletter

Spring 2020

Co-editors: Thuy Tu (ttu2@gmu.edu)  
Kirsten (Kira) Woitek (kwoitek@gmu.edu)

## SIG Chair's Message

Dear Colleagues:

As we celebrated March 8th, International Women's Day, I wanted to commemorate the life of Mary (Yuri) Kochiyama (1921-2014), one of the great peace activists of the 20th and 21st century. I was an undergraduate at the University of California at Santa Cruz in the 1960s when I first heard about Yuri Kochiyama from one of the young Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) members who had traveled from UC Santa Cruz on the West Coast to New York and came back to tell us about the new youth formations like the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords and a group from Chinatown, the IWK-Righteous Harmonious Fists.

Yuri was legendary among our generation of young student activists because she was one of the first of our parents' generation to speak out openly against the internment camp experiences when 120,000 Japanese Americans were put in large prison camps during World War II (WWII). She was a founder of the Asian American Alliance in New York City—a Pan Asian organization that saw the importance of forging a Third World Coalition—inclusive of Native Americans and Third World Peoples in countries around the world—African, Asian and Latin Americans across the globe—for peace with justice and against racism, militarism and imperialism. Yuri's lifelong commitment to organizing and uniting grassroots communities—she remained an activist until she died at the age of 93—inspires us all as members of AERA's Peace Education SIG to renew our efforts as public intellectuals for peace, racial and economic justice in these perilous times.

Yuri, a Nisei, or second-generation Japanese American was born in 1921 in San Pedro, California. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, her father, suspected of disloyalty was taken by the FBI. He soon died in custody because the authorities would not allow him to have his medication. Soon afterwards Yuri and her entire family along with 120,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated in internment camps. Yuri Kochiyama is known for being with Malcolm X when he was assassinated in New York City in 1965. Yuri first met Malcolm when she was a 40-year-old mother of six. She soon joined his Organization of



**Yuri Kochiyama (1921-2014)**

African Unity and worked with him for the 16 months before he was assassinated. The image of Yuri cradling the head of Malcolm when he was shot on the stage of the Audubon Ballroom appeared in Life Magazine.

While Yuri is known for her work for reparations and to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners, what has been buried about the history of Yuri and Malcolm is their deep commitment to international peace and against nuclear weapons. When the hibakusha, the atomic bomb survivors of the Hiroshima atomic bomb came to the United States to call attention to the need to ban atomic weapons, Yuri hosted a meeting for them and Malcolm joined them in the Kochiyama apartment in New York City in Morningside Gardens.

Many years later in 1983, after I had moved to New York, I had the honor of joining another group of peace activists in the same living room of Yuri and

---

### Inside this issue:

SIG Chair's Message	1-2
Meet our Authors	3-5
Call for Global Research Circle	5
Call for Research Brief	6
News and Publications	7
Newsletter Editors' Message	7

---

## SIG Chair's Message

Bill Kochiyama to form the Asian American Caucus for Disarmament (AACD). What is important for our work today in Peace Education as U.S. citizens is to call for the dismantling of the U.S. arsenal of nuclear weapons--the need for the most powerful military power in the world.

The need for us in the AERA Peace Education SIG to become active and vocal at this time is underscored by the imprisonment and conviction of peace activists like Elizabeth McAllister and the other courageous members of the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 (\*). The Plowshares 7 chose the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., April 4, 2018, as the date to engage in civil disobedience against the nuclear weapons on the trident submarines. Before he was assassinated, Martin Luther King spoke out against the U.S. war on Vietnam and said, "The greatest purveyor of violence in the world is the U.S. government."

On April 4, 2018, Elisabeth McAllister (who has remained in jail for over 2 years since their arrest) and six other Catholics broke into the Kings Bay US military base in the state of Georgia and poured their own blood on these weapons of mass destruction. They call themselves "Plowshares 7" because of the Biblical mandate to "turn swords into plowshares". The Kingstown Plowshares 7, such as the Buddhist monks in Saigon who set themselves on fire to call attention to the U.S. bombing of Vietnamese villages, and Chelsea Manning are prisoners of conscience. Sadly, because their cases are buried in the U.S. corporate media, we as peace education educational researchers have a responsibility to speak out and to tell their stories.

As members of the Peace Education SIG we need to redouble our collective efforts to speak up and to make visible the cases of the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 and to draw connections to link our efforts to those around the world.

We were so pleased that Dr. Wayne Au, a renowned educator, author and editor of Rethinking Schools agreed to be our featured speaker for our PEACE SIG Business Meeting in San Francisco. The title of his talk, "Showing up for the Struggle: On the Power and Perils of Public Scholarship" is so needed at this time. We

look forward to his speaking to us when AERA meets in 2021 in Orlando, Florida. The theme of the 2021 annual session is "Accepting Educational Responsibility". The 2021 Annual Meeting call for submissions will be released on May 15; the deadline for submissions is July 22, 2020.

We on the Peace SIG Steering Committee would like your involvement. Our SIG provides you with a community to network, stay current, and connect with Peace Education colleagues across the globe for support, ideas, reinvigoration, and renewal. Our SIG also creates new spaces and opportunities to share cutting-edge research as public intellectuals during these divisive, rapidly changing and tumultuous times. It also offers you opportunities to publish and disseminate your research.

I encourage you to send copies or links to your research publications on peace education to our newsletter co-editors Thuy Tu (ttu2@gmu.edu) and Kirsten (Kira) Woitek (kwoitek@gmu.edu) so that we may publish these in our next newsletter and share on our AERA Peace Education website. Our webmasters are: Dr. Maryam Sharafian from James Madison University and Sungshim Choi from George Mason University.

I also encourage you to volunteer for the SIG in some capacity, if you can; because this will help you develop deeper relationships with our members and make our SIG stronger in furthering our goal of advancing the interdisciplinary field of Peace Education research.

Please join me in reaffirming your commitment by renewing your SIG membership. Please contact the AERA membership team at members@aera.net or (202) 238-3200 to assist you. Thank you for your membership and engagement.

In Peace with Justice,

*Shelley Wong*,  
Chair  
AERA SIG on Peace Education  
Associate Professor  
George Mason University  
Fairfax, Virginia USA

(\*) For more information about the Kings Bay Plowshares 7, visit: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h\\_UaiP0p711&feature=youtu.be&link\\_id=3&can\\_id=19a9445c5e962f3770fe81da23bdc4a3&source=email-april-update-second-anniversary&email\\_referrer=email\\_769163&email\\_subject=april-update-second-anniversary-video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_UaiP0p711&feature=youtu.be&link_id=3&can_id=19a9445c5e962f3770fe81da23bdc4a3&source=email-april-update-second-anniversary&email_referrer=email_769163&email_subject=april-update-second-anniversary-video)

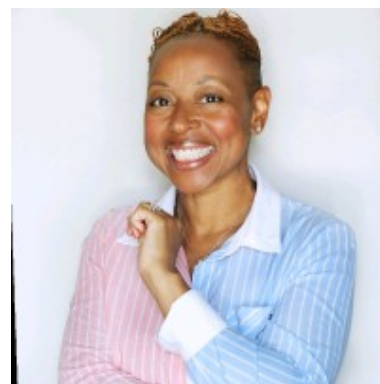
**Like today, May 1st, May Day which began in the U.S. with the struggle of U.S. workers in Chicago for the 8-hour day, International Women's Day began with the struggle of women garment workers for a living wage and safe working conditions and is celebrated around the world on March 8th, but not in the U.S. At a time when in the words of Martin Luther King "the U.S. is the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today" and that the evils of racism, economic exploitation and militarism are all bound together, we need to reclaim International Women's Day and learn from the example of Yuri Kochiyama and other wise women elders in the struggle who saw the deep intersectionality of systems of war and imperialism, gendered violence and racial oppression, and the prison industrial complex.**

## Meet our Authors

**PEACE SIG Secretary, Treasurer - Dr. Maryam Sharifian and PEACE SIG member - Shenée Simon are exploring the missing narratives of our members across the globe.**



**Maryam Sharifian, Ph.D.**  
Secretary, Treasurer



**Shenée Simon**  
Peace SIG member

Maryam's work perspective is rooted in research in the Middle East (Iran & Syria). Maryam is an Assistant Professor at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia in Early Childhood Education. Maryam received a BA in Counseling and Psychology from AllameTabatabaie University at Tehran, Iran; an MA in School Counseling at University of Tehran, Iran; and Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education from SUNY at Buffalo. Her research interests include War Zone Education, Teacher Training in Conflict Areas, Teacher Resilience and Burnout, and Refugee Children Education and Wellbeing. Sharifian addresses educational issues relating to children and teachers in area of armed conflict (their wellbeing and resilience strategies). In addition, she worked with children of undocumented Afghan immigrants, school girls in rural Tanzania and street children in Iran. Maryam is Co-author of *Globalization: International Perspectives on Early Childhood Teacher Education*. Handbook of Early Childhood Teacher Education, L. Couse and S. Recchia (Eds.). New York: Routledge. Her work brings global attention to early childhood education in Iran. Sharifian, M. S. (2018). Early childhood education in Iran: Progress and emerging challenges. *International Journal of the Whole Child*, 3 (1), 30-37. She is also co-editor with Wishon, P., Harris, T., Kang, S.J., Bodle, A., Turner, M., Phatudi, N., &Beka, A. in *Educating educators around the world: Helping teachers help children and youth cultivate globally sustainable selves*. In C. Shealy (Eds.), *Cultivating the globally sustainable self*. Oxford (in press). Her recent publication is focused on *Teachers in War Zone Education: A Literature Review "Case of Syria"*. Sharifian, M. S. & Kennedy, P. (2019). *Teachers in War Zone Education: A Literature Review "Case of Syria"*. *International Journal of the Whole Child*, 4(2), 9-26.

Maryam became involved in peace research following her work with Syrian teachers who currently teach in active war zones. She has recently elected as PEACE SIG Secretary, Treasurer and her focus is to increase participation from historically under-represented peace scholars by including Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and other

interfaith perspectives, as well as indigenous, communities of color and LGBTQ voices for peace. She would invite educators from active war zones and conflict affected areas to bring their voice to the peace education.

Shenée's work and perspective is rooted in community dialogues with international educational advocates and activists from Central and South America and U.S. cities that are home to international immigrants and citizens. Shenée is an emerging scholar with research focus on UNSDG 2020 and U.N.S.C.R 1325 WPS and the transcending of these global initiatives to local practice. An, activist and advocate for gender equity, peace and security of girls and women. Shenée holds M.A. in Women & Gender Studies and Human Resources Management-Non Profit Management and a B.A. in Women's Studies. She serves on the Board for the Southeastern Women's Studies Association and International Girls Studies Association. She is a 2020 Pipeline Fellow for Women of Color Advancing Peace & Security (WCAPS). For the purposes of this article information gathered from the International Visitor Leadership Program (El Salvador, Panama, Uruguay, Lima, Argentina, Belize, Dominican Republic and Costa Rica).

AERA is a great platform and community to share best practices, resources and work focused on education, research and education equity. In order to create, promote or sustain movements towards educational equity multiple voices and representation are both critical and necessary for the creation of equitable programs, research and collaboration. Both authors will explore the questions below to begin the dialogue of how critical these stories and voices are to the thread and participation at AERA conferences and programs.

### **1. What is the current climate of education in your chosen geographic location/representation?**

**Maryam:** General Education (Primary to High school) is free and mandatory in Iran. Iran has one of the youngest populations in the global education system.



Providing free education and supporting parents to enroll their children are priority to continue the national development plan. There has been a significant increase in enrollments of females in higher education after during the past two decades. Although this increase is a major progress but it doesn't lead to gender equity. We have a long way to achieve equal rights in our country.

**Shenée:** Basic formative education is available in most South America countries yet inequity exists in accessibility. The domestic global South (TX) is home to many who are first generation college students seeking higher education. The value of education and higher education differs with immigration laws and policies being at a high it is challenging to navigate on both sides of the border.

## 2. What support is available for educators and educational advocates in this city/ country/region?

**Maryam:** Unfortunately, due to sanctions against Iran, there is limited access to basic needs such as food and medical care. The economic challenges have been impacted on the quality of access to educational materials and technology as well. In addition, US Travel ban has been in effect since 2017 and it includes Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, Chad, North Korea, and Venezuela. Majority of these countries are Muslim countries, and this ban politically known as Muslim Ban. Travel ban has been a political decision, however, it has impacted many aspects of citizens of these countries. During the travel ban Iran's education system has been isolated even more which led to lack of access to professional development and collaboration in any scientific area. A clear example is participation of educators in international conferences such as AERA. Iran is the land of many world known scholars and researchers who can share their knowledge and outcomes of their significant studies with like minded educators in such opportunities but travel ban makes it impossible for them to be included.

**Shenée:** Recently spending time with representatives from 11 South American countries we identified parallel challenges in our educational systems. Teaching and educators are not often supported or encouraged professions. ESL and Teach for America programs are intentionally recruiting in these regions providing student loan repayment options and professional development. Creating more grants, and funding programs thru AERA could definitely encourage and support educators in this region. In addition providing a platform to share scholarship, first voice narratives and collaborative space for change.

## 3. What barriers exist that impede education?

**Maryam:** There are several barriers in the education system that many of them are common in global education. Iran has experienced progress over the years in taking effective steps towards identifying people with disabilities and providing more supportive services for families' welfare so that they may be encouraged to reveal a disability in their household. However, special education teacher training, providing equal access to basic standards of life and cultural barriers in inclusivity for children and families with special need kids are still major issues.

Afghan refugees limited access to education, lack of financial support for preschool registration, lack of access to education equipment and teachers' professional development in rural areas are some of main concerns in Iran.

**Shenée:** Agree with Maryam, the one that resonates with me is the safety, financial and resource disparities. Some of these countries are creating councils and task forces across multiple community institutions from non profit, faith based, to judicial to collectively solve and address challenges. Often times education can be a solo issue yet it is like the spoke of a wheel it touches and impacts multiple factors in the fabric of the individual and community. This model is one I would like to see play out more in the domestic global south and even in AERA.

## 4. Pay equity is a growing concern in North America which impacts economic security. How does this contribute to educators salaries, etc.?

**Maryam:** "Accompanying growth is a challenge in the area of preparing teachers for diversity, working with second language children and parents, and providing financial benefits that will attract and retain the brightest and best professionals. Such challenges are not dissimilar to ECE teachers throughout the world" ( Sharifian, 2018).

Teachers Low salary is a major concern in Iran. Teachers play one of the most critical roles in the development of the country by educating the next generation. However, despite long hours of work and extra effort to help students, they have to obtain second or third job to be able to afford their day to day expenses. This issue is majorly highlighted in early childhood educators.

**Shenée:** This is a globally universal issue and challenge. I would really urge our organization to think more deeply about this and the role we can play to impact this.

## Meet our Authors

### 5. When we consider WPS, YPS, GPS and the 2020 UNSDG how are NGO, NPO similar to AERA addressing or moving this work forward or what recommendations would you share with these organizations and institutions?

**Maryam:** Perhaps if specific strategies were developed for sharing ECE progress and failures internationally, teachers of the world could begin to

better prepare children, resulting in a better future for all.

**Shenée:** Intentionally understanding, dissecting and creating clear action steps around the UNSDG 2020 pertaining to education and the overall well being of children and women and the role educational access plays. A key piece to this is having the personal/direct narratives from all counterparts. This work cannot be done alone or in silo levels but urges global/national/local leaders, policy makers, educators, practitioners to collaborate creatively with empathy.

As a result of this work a goal of this SIG is to identify country or region community members to join our Community Council to provide informational updates, challenges, issues we can take on as a SIG and fundamentally representation. The purposes of the PEACE SIG are to create a global forum for scholars from diverse backgrounds and with varied perspectives to report and critically explore educational research and promote constructive changes in the areas of peace keeping, peace making, peace building, peace education, nonviolent conflict resolution, reconciliation, mediation, and more. Our work often addresses compelling, complex and politically charged topics and is informed by both sophisticated and sensitive analyses. Consequently, we welcome both traditional and innovative theoretical and methodological approaches to research, and we encourage collaboration among members. This work can only be accomplished by collaboration with all global partners.

## AERA Peace Education SIG Global Research Circle

We are pleased to launch a Global Research Circle to increase our awareness and engagement of our AERA members across the globe. Our goal is to have representation from each continent in forms of scholarly writings, presentations, briefings to our leadership team or general community.

Please self nominate or nominate someone in your community by **1 JUN**.

### ROLE OF GLOBAL COMMUNITY MEMBER

- \*attend monthly meeting via virtual platform
- \*contribute to SIG newsletters
- \*share monthly updates and call to action how AERA can support your efforts in community
- \*engage, and educate prospective members

Thank you for your interest in this SIG and this role. Should you have any questions please contact Dr. Maryam Sharifian at sharifms@jmu.edu.

Please use the following link to fill the interest form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfyZtF6VYFG5FwdqQdFLY-RYA9YkemMkTDzIRno1dtOqILNKg/viewform>

## Call for Research Briefs

### Deadline: June 01, 2020

The Peace Education (PE) Newsletter Committee welcomes briefs on any PE-related topic for inclusion in our newsletter. We will devote a major section of our newsletter to promote awareness of current research and projects that reflect emerging trends in the field and to encourage collaboration among SIG members. Research briefs are peer-reviewed publications that can appear on submitters' CVs as publications.

Topics may include but are not limited to:

- Literature reviews
- Critical Issues In PE Education
- Case Studies
- Interventions and Implementation of PE Programs
- Professional Learning for Educators

#### **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING RESEARCH BRIEF PROPOSALS:**

Submit the Research brief and a short description via the template provided. PE SIG members can submit one brief for publication. SIG newsletter committee members will work with authors to finalize their brief for inclusion in the PE SIG Newsletter.

- Your research brief should be no more than 500 words.
- Submit the brief summary AND the research brief by **June 01, 2020** to Dr. Margareth Lafontant at the following email address: [mlafontant@mec.cuny.edu](mailto:mlafontant@mec.cuny.edu). You can also contact her with questions.

#### **Information to be Submitted:**

- *Your name, institution and e-mail*
- *The title of your research brief*
- *The topic of your brief*
- *Abstract- 50 words or less*
- *Research Brief- 500 words or less*

**Note: Be sure to utilize template below.**

#### **Briefs will be evaluated based on:**

- *Originality of ideas*
- *Contribution to the PE field*
- *Utilizing the template provided and adhering to the writing instructions*
- *Clarity of expression*

### Template for Peace Education Research Brief

**Author Name:**

**Title:**

**Institution:**

Co-Author Name:

Title:

Institution:

Title of Research Brief:

Abstract (type into the box immediately below—maximum of 50 words):

Research Brief (type into the box immediately below—maximum of 500 words):

## Member News and Publications

**Jennifer Blackburn Miller** is a dual-title doctoral candidate in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education & Comparative and International Education from Pennsylvania State University. She is a new member of AERA and the Peace Education SIG. She has a very interesting article that was published in the Canadian Journal for the study of Adult Education entitled, **The Transformative and Healing Power of Theatre of Witness**. This article describes the healing and transformative effects of a social justice theatre program called Theatre of Witness on participants and community members in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. It begins with a review of relevant literature, including sections about artistic ways of knowing, transformative learning through theatre and storytelling, and theatre for peacebuilding. The research is still in process, however, the findings are similar to other social justice theatre programs used for peacebuilding. The key themes of this program are authentic, vulnerable storytelling through testimonial theatre, and a process of empathy development by humanizing the 'other'. A direct link to this article: <https://cjsae.library.dal.ca/index.php/cjsae/article/view/5432>  
Welcome aboard, Jennifer!

Our incoming Chair, **Dr. Margareth Lafontant**, from Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York (CUNY), is conducting a study on math anxiety in pre-service and in-service teachers, funded by the CUNY Pre-K – 16 Algebra for All initiative. Dr. Lafontant sees some definite connections between **math anxiety and Peace Education**; especially as this relates to issues of equity and access. Participation in this study involves completing 2 short surveys (approximately 10 minutes altogether). **A \$5.00 Amazon gift card will be provided as compensation** (payable though email address or cell phone #). If you are interested in participating in this study or know of others who would be, please email Dr. Lafontant at [mlafontant@mec.cuny.edu](mailto:mlafontant@mec.cuny.edu)

*Thank you, in advance, for your support and participation!*



## SIG Newsletter Editors' Message

*Dear AERA Peace Education SIG Colleagues,*

*Peace be with you and your families in these very challenging times. Our newsletter co-editors Thuy Tu and Kira Woitek are eager to use our newsletter as a way to stay connected as we work to get our classes online, arrange for clinical assignments and student placements, home school and reach out to support the most vulnerable among us.*

*Please consider submitting your recent publications, presentations and professional announcements to our Summer Newsletter.*

*Share a professional photo, your good news - publications/presentations in Peace Education and the broad field of education research as well as announcements – personal and professional.*

*Share strategies and resources on Peacemaking and anti-bullying or restorative justice, invitations for international solidarity - reaching out especially to family members and colleagues.*

*Share signs of HOPE for Peace Education - as well as your analysis of the barriers.*

*Finally, if you know of any upcoming on-line conferences or publication opportunities related to Peace Education, please let us know.*

*Please send your items to co-editors: Thuy Tu ([ttu2@gmu.edu](mailto:ttu2@gmu.edu)) and Kira Woitek ([kwoitek@gmu.edu](mailto:kwoitek@gmu.edu)) by **June 15, 2020** to be included in the upcoming Peace Education SIG NewNewsletter.*