PEACEMAKERS IN THE KINDERGARTEN

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PEACEMAKERS

IN THE

KINDERGARTEN

The Problem

The production of peace education material for later elementary and high school students has grown steadily since the 1960's (Harris, 1988). However, few curricula have been developed for children from five to eight years of age (Brouwer, 1986). Previous research in child development (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969) appeared to prove that young children were too egocentric to benefit from prosocial lessons. The purpose of this study was to incorporate peace education materials into an early childhood program by creating related activities, to implement them in a Kindergarten class, and to observe the interactions of the children before and after the implementation of the planned curriculum.

The need for such a study has been a concern of this researcher who has watched the apparent influence of violent television on young children's play during her eighteen years of teaching experience. Also evident in the 1980's was the concern among this teacher's students for the fate of the world in light of nuclear build-up and global pollution. Although the age of peristroika has no doubt lessened the fear of nuclear war, the media continues to promote violent solutions to problems as the most effective and glorious. The current group of world leaders may hand their descendants a relatively safer and more peaceful world. Will the younger generation have the necessary skills to carry on this legacy? The author is concerned that they will not, given the curriculum of North American media.

Television: Violence, attitudes, heroes

One of the biggest challenges educators face today is dealing with the lessons presented through television and other media. Psychological research has established that the violence seen on television can produce aggressive acts in the viewer (Comstock, 1980; Friedrich-Cofer & Huston, 1986). The deaths of fourteen young women on Dec. 6, 1989 on a Montreal University campus provoked newspaper articles and editorials examining the possible influence of media violence on the killings (Bantey, 1989; Boone, 1989; Quill, 1990; "What's Violent TV", 1990).

Another disturbing feature of television viewing is the insidious attitudinal effects which are produced (Grebner & Gross, 1980; Huston, Watkins & Kunkel, 1989). The pervasive violent themes are stereotypic, promoting the idea that violence is an acceptable and successful method of resolving conflict. Also, the violent model usually represents the dominant culture. The hero is most often young, white, male, and a law enforcer. Television also provides an inaccurate picture of the extent of the violence that actually occurs in society (Lyons, 1990; Stohl & Stohl, 1981).

A recent newspaper article quotes psychologist Robert Cadotte who is concerned with the attitudes of today's police recruits: "Watch the children's TV shows in the afternoon and you'll have an idea what kind of police applicants you will get in 10 years...and you shouldn't be surprised there is violence in the Metro, either (Tu, 1989, p.A-3)". Cadotte's reported concern is that

television, video games and war toys are making young people believe that violence is the only way to solve conflict, and that efforts must be made to "...tell (children) that Rambo is not a hero ...(Tu, 1989, p. A-3)." An article published in the same newspaper on the following day reported a case of vandalism at the Haitian Education Centre. Scrawls reading 'Robo-cops' led the centre's director, Josianne Gabriel, to say that children "...do what they see their heroes do on TV (Kuitenbrouwer, 1989, p. A-3)." The alleged vandals were 10 and 12 year old children!

Many of the television programmes most popular with children then, appear to produce attitudes which can be detrimental to the future of humanity. In an increasingly smaller and interdependent world, co-operative skills will be crucial, as will be mutual respect and caring among the diverse groups that populate the earth (Smith, 1986).

Escalona (1982) further argues that too often our culture ignores constructive actions of society, while the destructive features are emphasized. Aside from the electronic media, even school history courses tend to focus on those who fought and won wars, with little ink devoted to those who managed to avoid conflict and maintain their dignity (Harris, 1988).

The impact of television on young children became evident after the 1983 telecast of "The Day After". This writer had to deal with a traumatized group of third-graders who had not had the opportunity to discuss their concerns and fears with adults during, or immmediately after, the movie. It is disturbing that

children cite television as their primary source of information regarding nuclear war (Duncan, Kraus, & Parks, 1986). They see that the adult world acknowledges a problem, but then find that their parents are unwilling to discuss the nuclear threat (Lyons, 1990). Adults often deny that it is a legitimate concern for children (Duncan et al., 1986). Like pollution, sex, and more recently, AIDS information, discussion of global violence is part of the modern educator's responsibility (Canadian Teacher's Federation, 1986; Kniep, 1989).

Fears of children

Another common rationale for introducing young children to peace education is the evidence that many of them have fears of nuclear weapons and war (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1986; Myers-Wall & Fry-Miller, 1984). Numerous studies attest to this fact (Duncan et al., 1986; Schwebel, 1982). Many open-ended surveys which never specifically refer to fears or to nuclear issues, produce responses that illustrate youngsters' concerns with the global problems of famine, pollution and war (De Gramont, 1988; Engel, 1984).

Children find many things in life fearful. Common fears include the dark, separation from parents, insects, certain animals, and so on (Leach, 1978; Spock & Rothenberg, 1985). A recent international study of children's fears (Robinson, Robinson, & Whetsell, 1988) indicates that fear of the dark and of being alone show higher frequency than in the past and now extend

into early adolesence. Also on the rise is the fear of "someone", "somebody" or "strangers" (Robinson et al, 1988). The authors express concern that the visibility of "bad people" in the media is increasing children's fears. There is general agreement amongst those who work with children that it is important to give them the opportunity to express their fears (Jacobson, 1984; Myers-Wall & Fry-Miller, 1984; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; Spock & Rothenberg, 1985).

Peace education

There has been some controversy regarding the introduction of peace education at the earliest levels of schooling (Kneeshaw & Kneeshaw, 1986; Stohl & Stohl, 1981). However, peace educators argue (Weiser, 1985), and many psychologists (Marantz, 1988) and social scientists (Myers-Wall & Fry-Miller, 1984; Stohl & Stohl, 1981) agree, that children in today's world are much more aware of global problems than their predecessors. Their concerns need to be treated with respect. They need to be given hope that change is possible. If left unaddressed, children may learn the media messages that violence is a solution to conflict in all areas of life.

Educators concerned with social issues in early childhood education see the following as important components of an efffective programme: the promotion of a positive self-concept, respect for others, a sense of fairness, and a sense of being able to deal effectively with conflict (National Committee on Social

Studies, 1989; Reardon, 1988). These are consistent with the goals of preschool education in Quebec (Ministere de l'education du Quebec, 1987).

Young children can relate readily to discussions of conflict and so this is the basis of the few curricula which have been developed in North America (Reardon, 1988). Strategies which help children to solve common disputes can be taught. Sapon-Shevin (1980) and Kutnick (1988) argue that specific curricula are needed and are more effective than the occasional ad hoc lessons which deal with disputes as they arise in the classroom.

Arguments have also been made for introducing children to positive role models or heroes who demonstrate caring for fellow human beings and a commitment to solving conflicts non-violently (Adams, 1987; Comer, 1990; Molnar, 1987; Zarnowski, 1988). These positive role models are especially important to present to children exposed to the dubious "heroes" of today's television (Shugar, 1988). As well, it reassures children that there are adults who care and who are working for a better world. Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1986), among others, see this as an important component of peace education for young children.

While there has been some research on the development of prosocial behavior in children (Marantz, 1988; Pellegrini & Glickman, 1990), an ERIC search has failed to reveal research directly associated with the implementation of a peace curriculm in preschool settings. There are others urging such research, however, (Stohl & Stohl, 1981; Weiser, 1985) in the belief that

our hope lies in beginning to offer non-violent alternatives early in life. Naturalistic studies in the classroom and an examination of combined approach packages for encouraging prosocial behavior are regarded as an urgent need by Marantz (1988). Ray (1984) believes that teachers need help in designing activities in peace education rather than reacting to events at random.

Although material for this age group is scarce, the use of creative problem-solving to resolve conflicts is suggested most often as a starting point for preschool children (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1987; Reardon, 1988). Teaching children about real peacemakers has been suggested as a component of an early introduction to peace education (Berman, 1983; Molnar, 1987). The present study, then, included a planned curriculum comprising both of these recommended components - conflict resolution and peacemakers.

Method

This study involved the implementation of a planned curriculum which encompassed conflict resolution skills and an introduction to positive role models of the past and present. The freeplay periods in two Kindergarten groups were observed over a one month period. Drawings of children's heroes in both groups preceded the deliberate curriculum. The drawings and field notes associated with the observations became the initial data for the study.

The planned curriculum was implemented with one class over

five months. A comparison class received no treatment but benefited from the customary ad hoc discussions of conflict resolution. While the planned activities were being implemented, observation of freeplay continued in the treated group.

Upon completion of the curriculum, the freeplay periods of both groups were observed. Field notes were taken, drawings of heroes were requested again, and interviews with four randomly-selected children in each group were audiotaped.

The researcher expected to see some change in the children's identification of heroes upon completion of the planned curriculum. Also, children who had been taught specific strategies for dealing with conflict were expected to offer non-violent solutions to hypothetical situations.

Definition of Terms

The *peace education activities* central to the study were created by the teacher/researcher and focused on non-violent conflict resolution skills and peace heroes or peacemakers.

The term, *non-violent conflict resolution* is given to a method of solving a disagreement in a peaceful mannner. It encourages constructive problem-solving, respect for others, and the acceptance of compromise when it benefits both parties (Sapon-Shevin, 1980). The term *peacemaking* was substituted for use with the children.

The *peacemakers* or *peace heroes* are men and women who have shown courage and determination in resisting the use of violent

means to achieve their goals, or those who have ignored differences and overcome handicaps in seeking ways to help their fellow humans. It is a dynamic view of peace, emphasizing strength of conviction and creative problem-solving.

Kindergarten children, in the province of Quebec (Canada), are generally defined as those who reach five years of age by October first of the year they enter Kindergarten. The Quebec Ministry of Education has given special permission to attend to some children who turn five soon after that date.

The *interactions* observed were those between students during the freeplay period, during which children choose activities and the peers with whom they play. Verbal as well as physical interactions were recorded. These latter included smiles, pushes, glares, and other non-verbal acts.

Limitations of the Study

Since the teacher was also the researcher, the proximity of the researcher to the situation is a limitation of the study. It can be difficult to remain objective in analyzing data in which you have keen interest. The 'halo effect' is a term used to describe the influence of a teacher's previous knowledge and experience with a group of students on making objective observations of behavior under study (Boehm & Weinberg, 1977). However, extensive field notes, verbatim material, audiotapes, documents - the depth of the data collected - should counter this problem (Wiersma, 1986).

A further limitation of any study with children is the difficulty of interpreting some of their verbalizations. Young children are often more sophisticated cognitively than they are verbally (Lindfors, 1987). Interviews were helpful in clarifying the thoughts behind the actions observed. The teacher/researcher's knowledge of the children then becomes invaluable.

A third limitation was the children's home experiences. The amount of television watched or the involvement of their parents in peace or ecolological groups may have influenced their classroom behaviors. There was no attempt to control for these external influences.

The maturation process may also have influenced the study. As children's ability to verbalize and reason increases with age, they also begin to show an interest in rules and order which are acceptable to the majority of their peers (Piaget, 1975). This is an aspect of children's emotional growth which can be fostered by co-operative play and other prosocial activities. Dr. Spock (1985), however, cautions that television violence can mitigate against such positive development.

Summary

Experts observe that the free play of children has changed over the years from imaginative adventure to the endless imitation of questionable TV cartoon heroes like 'He Man' and 'G. I. Joe' (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1987). The impact of televised

violence on children's behaviors and views of the world are reflected, to a great degree, in the increased insensitivity and violence in our society.

Are television and movies creating a climate of fear and hatred of anyone different? Is the mere presence of nuclear weapons creating a feeling of hopelessness in children which will lead them to live for the moment and desensitize them to the fate of the planet and its other inhabitants? Are parents, and other adults involved with children, taking the time to discuss the alternatives to violent resolutions of conflict? Are children being assured that there are adults working to prevent the destruction of humankind? If the educational community is to be convinced that it has a responsibility to deal with these questions with young children, evidence from research is crucial.

The present study continues with a review of the literature in Chapter II. The review examines many areas since the problem under study involves child development theory concerning childhood fears and egocentricity, the influence of violence on television, curriculum development, and the types of peace education activities appropriate for Kindergarten.

Chapter III is devoted to a discussion of the methodology. This includes justification for the use of qualitative research methods, a description of the sample population, and the procedure followed. Analysis of the data and a discussion of the results will be presented in Chapter IV.

The summary and conclusions will be presented in Chapter V.

The advantages of the investigation to the educational community are also explored in this chapter as well as some implications for future Kindergarten curricula.

II Review of the Literature

Peace education has been a concern since the first World War (Howlett, 1987). With the advent of nuclear weapons, and the potential for human destruction on a global scale, the necessity of teaching peaceful means of resolving conflict has become more urgent. While there is wide agreement with this, there is also some controversy (McConaghy, 1986). Peace curricula is often misunderstood. It has been regarded as promoting weakness, appeasement, and as somehow less objective, more value-laden than other areas of the curriculum (Harris, 1988). Other critics question the advisability of discussing such sensitive topics with very young children (Van Cleaf & Martin, 1986).

The discussions which follow indicate the depth of research which exists to provide further support for raising peace-related issues with young children. Studies of childhood fears, egocentricity in the preschooler, and media violence illustrate the need and the appropriateness of curricula based on resolving conflict and on positive role models. The concluding section on peace education activities examines the responsibility of teachers to counter the negative influences in children's lives. Also included are references to support the content of the curriculum which was developed for this study.

Children's Fears

The majority of Peace educators agree with the necessity of exploring the many facets of this subject with children of all ages. The predominant rationale cited is the fear expressed by even young children of nuclear weapons and the possibility of nuclear war (Duncan et al., 1986; Santa Barbara, 1989; Schwebel, 1982).

Jean Piaget's writings have been influential in our understanding of children's growth and development. His description of childhood fears and how adults should cope with them (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969) points the way to providing opportunities for children to air these fears. Literature is most commonly used with young children to stimulate discussion of sensitive topics and to give children the assurance that others have similar fears (McMillan & Gentile, 1988; Rudman, 1976; Sullivan, 1986). Research exists which shows that bibliotheraphy is effective in reducing children's fears. Through books children are made aware that other children have similar feelings. Discussions following the readings afford the opportunity to air their concerns within a non-threatening setting (Newhouse, 1987; Stein & Trabasso, 1982).

Powerful books are available which deal with 'local' conflict such as that with siblings or peers, to the more 'global' conflict exhibited between groups (Fassler & Janis, 1985). Many of these can be successfully used with children even at the Kindergarten level (Biskin & Hoskisson, 1974; Dow & Slaughter, 1989). The latter books served as an important resource for this study.

It was not the intention of this study to deal with children's fears in general. The planned curriculum gave children the opportunity to air fears concerning familiar and global conflict. It also presented children with strategies for resolving conflicts non-violently, and provided examples of adults who have worked or are presently working to prevent, and to settle disputes peacefully.

Egocentricity

The past twenty years have seen the growing influence of Piaget's writings on curriculum in education (Thomas, 1985). An important aspect is the sequencing of objectives based on his theory of egocentricity. The notion is, that in the early stages of development, children are so self-centred that they are cognitively unprepared for the learning of certain concepts. Perspective-taking and empathy are important components of most Peace education programmes aimed at older children and youths. Because Piaget sees egocentricity as delaying the development of such skills, curriculum builders tend to suggest only activities which build self-esteem for very young children. The result is a paucity of material related to peace studies at the early childhood level. While the major facets of the Swiss psychologist's cognitive development theory are still regarded as reflecting the real world of children (Thomas, 1987), there are many studies which have questioned the validity of some of his conclusions.

Social studies curricula have reflected Piaget's (1969) view that very young children can only relate to their immediate family and community - that they are unable to take the perspective of another person, and hence understand or empathize with other communities and viewpoints. Piaget's (1956) famous three mountains experiment seemed to show that young children were incapable of identifying what another observer saw from a different vantage point. Attempts at replication, using familiar childhood objects (Borke, 1975) and naturalistic investigation (Iaonnti, 1985), have produced evidence that young children *can* take another's perspective and empathize with someone else's condition. The experiences of early childhood educators also revealed clear empathic behavior in children as young as 18 months (Black, 1981).

Other studies, related to those on egocentricity, also show that preschoolers demonstrate more sophisticated cognitive ability than previously suggested. Allen, Freeman, and Osborne (1989) report that, in research using naturalistic settings, children demonstrate political knowledge and attitudes. Also contrary to what Piaget would have predicted, children's development of political awareness is not necessarily from 'spatial' to 'national' relations (Jahoda, 1964). Very young children can be made aware of other groups and other ways of life, as well as global concerns. Naturalistic studies in this area also reveal that Kindergarten children identify bombs and pollution as world problems (Engel, 1984).

The report from the National Committee on Social Studies Task Force on Early Childhood/Elementary Social Studies (1989) in the United States also explores the notion of a more cognitively sophisticated five-year-old. It discusses recent research which supports the inclusion in early childhood curricula of activities based on empathy and an appreciation of the similarities and differences between people. Study of the research findings further indicates that there seem to be crucial years for the development of certain concepts - such as an openness to diversity. The authors of the Social Studies Task Force report state that "One of the most important conclusions one can draw...is the critical importance of the elementary years in laying the foundation for later and increasingly mature understanding" (p. 19).

As described above, data collection in this study will include observations of play and interviews with children. This should indicate the extent of egocentricity and the ability to empathize of the children in the two Kindergarten groups.

Violence in the Media

The emerging view of preschoolers as potentially empathic, and highly sensitive to political socialization, has led some peace educators to express concern that little attention is being paid to this age group in terms of learning about peace (Stohl & Stohl, 1981). While critics may decry the topic as too value-laden for schools to handle, there is hardly anything as value-laden as the domination of violence on television and in the

movies. The recent film portrayal of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, in which real actors portrayed the popular television cartoon characters, featured 194 violent acts (What's Violent TV, 1990). Combat is portrayed as the solution to conflict in an "us-vs.-them world with no shades of gray" (Greenberg, 1990, p. F1). Children are now exposed to even more graphic violence in movies through home videos (Aubin, 1989).

If socialization and the foundations of political thought develop in the early years of childhood (Allen et al., 1989), then lessons are being learned by children who watch cartoon shows such as Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Transformers and He-Man and Masters of the Universe. Impressions being formed could include: Enemies are unidimensional, have foreign voices, are constantly threatening to the "good guys" (invariably identifiable as American), and justify the need for weapons and violence (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1987). Even cartoons, which sound innocuous, can teach antisocial lessons. A higher sense of danger and mistrust in children can be produced when peace-loving characters like the Smurfs are constantly threatened by "bad guys"(Gerbner & Gross, 1980). The idea that violence has no consequences is a lesson children may learn from cartoons like Bugs Bunny and Friends. Characters who bounce right back after suffering incredible maltreatment present a warped concept of reality.

The social learning of aggression (Bandura, 1977), that is, through reinforcement by family members, by our culture and by

symbolic modeling in the mass media, is a much researched and well-accepted theory of psychology. Many studies have shown the negative effects televised violence can have on children's behavior (Palmer & Dorr, 1980). The attitudinal effects have also been investigated. Television has been shown to promote acquiescence to, and dependence on, the rule of those in power (Gerbner & Gross, 1980). Heavy viewers overestimate the amount of violence in society and the result, according to Gerbner and Gross (1980), "...is the inciting of a few to destructive violence, the cultivating of aggressive tendencies among some children and adults, and the generating of a sense of danger and risk in a mean and selfish world" (p. 160).

Television can teach good lessons (Singer & Singer, 1986). However, these positive effects merely substantiate the findings of other studies that show television as an expert teacher of aggressive behaviors. And, unfortunately, television tends to teach many more lessons of an antisocial rather than of a prosocial nature. The average child watches the equivalent of 22 school days a year of war toy commercials and cartoons, and the average high school graduate has witnessed 18,000 TV murders by the time s/he graduates (Molnar, 1987)! The increasing availability of video cassettes, and their often violent content is not even included in these calculations. The Nintendo games which compose the latest fad in video viewing have such titles as Predator and Skate or Die!

The media has, to a large extent, become the hidden curriculum. The struggle to combat the violent lessons may be overwhelming. The observation of freeplay periods during this study should give an idea of their pervasiveness. The question of whether or not a special curriculum can have a moderating effect on the violent curriculum of the media was also addressed.

Peace Education Activities

It is impossible to avoid influencing the values of the children we teach (Harris, 1988). Some writers believe that in attempting to remain neutral on many so-called value-laden topics, schools are really reflecting the status quo and unwittingly promoting a violent way of life (Morrison, 1987). There is an argument that teachers have a responsibility to deal with the negative influences, like violent television, in children's lives (Adams, 1987). Teachers can make a conscious decision to promote prosocial behaviors (Prutzman, Burger, Bodenhamer, & Stern, 1978) To provide an alternative to the violent heroes of TV cartoons, many educators suggest the introduction of "peace heroes" (Berman, 1983; Molnar, 1987). Also, the discussion of peacemaking in our day-to-day lives can provide the counterpoint to the violent resolution of conflicts viewed on the TV screen (Berman, 1983; Low, 1973; Roderick, 1987).

There is support in the literature both for moral development through children's literature (Biskin & Hoskisson, 1974) and for helping children develop specific repertoires for dealing with

conflict and stress (Roderick, 1987; Sapon-Shevin, 1980). Other strategies suggested by the research literature are role-playing (Marantz, 1988), co-operative learning activities (Orlick, 1981), and clarification of thoughts through discussion (Hughes, Tingle, & Sawin, 1981; Marantz, 1988).

Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1986) and Zacharias (1983) suggest that no direct introductions to the devastating power of nuclear conflict be made. However, they argue that there are stories which should be presented to children in order to identify those who already harbour fears of war. As discussed previously, children benefit from airing their fears. By reading stories such as Dr. Seuss' (1984) The Butter Battle Book, for example, there is an opportunity to provide for those children who do make the connection between the groups' dispute and the arms race. The teacher can discuss children's concerns privately or within a small group (Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1986). This book is also an excellent resource for consideration of the similarities and differences which exist between peoples. The story can stimulate discussion on how the conflict could be resolved non-violently (Carlsson-Paige, 1986; Dow & Slaughter, 1989).

Summary

The literature indicates that little work has been done on curriculum for peace education in early childhood. While Piaget's developmental theory supports dealing with children's fears, his theory of egocentricity in young children has led curriculum

developers to avoid peace education for very young children. However, recent studies show that preschoolers can show empathy for others, and can take the perspective of another person. They can also deal with questions of nationality and of differences among people.

The influence of television however, mitigates against the natural sociability of children by providing violent models and a distorted view of the world. As pointed out by Roderick (1987), who refers to conflict resolution as the "fourth R" in school, a teacher's responsibility is:

> ...to show young people that they have many choices besides passivity or aggression for dealing with conflict and to give them the skills to make those choices real in their own lives. At a time when human survival depends on finding alternatives to violence for resolving differences, there is no more compelling mission for educators. (p. 90)

The curriculum created for this study includes the strategies for dealing with conflict and stress suggested above. Observations of play periods and interviews with individual children during this study should indicate whether or not there are changes in behaviors. The data collected should also indicate whether or not there is a difference in perception of heroes, before and after, the implemented activities.

The purpose of the study was to create appropriate activities related to peace education, to implement them in a Kindergarten class, and to observe the differences in the interactions of children before and after the implementation. The researcher was also the teacher of the Kindergarten classes and will be referred to hereafter as "the teacher".

Research Method

The qualitative methods of ethnographic research were the most appropriate choice for this study. A natural setting and multiple sources of data are two of the most important features of this type of research. The advantages of these, and their role in this study are discussed in this section.

Previous empirical studies have isolated perspective-taking as the variable which is indicative of a young child's ability to empathize with others (Piaget & Inhelder, 1956). These have not proved satisfactory. Observations within natural settings have revealed the capacity of the very young to care for, and to comfort others, in children as young as eighteen months (Marantz. 1988). The natural conversations of children in this teacher's Kindergarten class, during freeplay promised to be more revealing than an artificial situation in which a structured experiment might try to measure success at conflict resolution (Pellegrini & Glickman, 1990). In more formal situations children may very well be parroting what they expect adults want to hear. In the free-

play setting, children are much more relaxed, natural, and expressive. (Kessel & Goncii, 1984).

The natural setting of the classroom also provided the teacher with the opportunity to observe the antecedents to a particular behavior. Rather than note how many examples of co-operative, caring or aggressive behaviors occurred in a specific time period, a ten-minute observation in one centre of the classroom was carried out during randomly-selected freeplay sessions. All interactions within that area were recorded. This not only revealed frequencies of behaviors, but provided a substantive description of the actions prior to and during the childrens' activities. As Lund (1985) has pointed out, everything that occurs is potentially significant. Without a comprehensive description of what has happened, the key to a specific behavior can be overlooked.

Qualitative research requires a depth of data (Wiersma, 1986). To meet those requirements, this study includes data from observation, audiotaped interviews with a random sample of children, and analysis of children's drawings (documents). These multiple sources of data provided triangulation, or sufficient data from which to support interpretations (Wiersma,1986).

Sample

The study was undertaken in an elementary school located in a large city in the province of Quebec. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the concerned municipal school board in the province and from the School Committee. Following approval of

the study, permission for children to participate was sought from the parents of the children enrolled in the two classes (See letter to parents, Appendix A).

The school is located in an upper middle-class neighborhood. As well, students from two of the lowest socio-economic areas of the city were bused there. Its proximity to the downtown core means that the school also welcomed the children of various diplomatic missions. The classes were therefore mixed racially, ethnically, and socio-economically.

The teacher (who was also the researcher) taught two different classes of Kindergarten children. Students had been assigned to the morning or afternoon session at the request of parents. No manipulation of the makeup of the classes was undertaken by the teacher.

Parental permission to participate was granted for all but one child who was a member of the afternoon group. The morning class was thus selected as the test group. It comprised eighteen children all of whom had reached the age of five before October 1, 1989. There were nine girls and nine boys.

The afternoon class became the comparison group for the study. It also comprised eighteen children, seventeen of whom were five years old by October 1, 1989. One four-year-old had received permission from the Quebec Ministry of Education to attend Kindergarten early. There were six girls and 12 boys in this class.

Planned Curriculum

Due to the lack of peace education material for very young children, and due also to the importance of integrating activities within themes for this age group (Ministere de l'education de Quebec, 1987) the teacher prepared a special curriculum around the themes of heroes and conflict. The following is an overview of that planned curriculum. More details are presented, in context, under the heading Test Group, in the Procedures section.

As outlined earlier, the planned curriculum consisted of two parts - one dealing with peace heroes, the second, with non-violent conflict resolution. Pacifist Toyohiko Kagawa, Live Aid organizer Bob Geldof, civil rights leader Martin Luther King, suffragist Nellie McClung and fossil-discover Mary Anning were personalities introduced to the children through stories or puppets. The heroes chosen were representative of both genders, three racial groups, youth, and maturity. Some are still living, while others are historical figures. All have made contributions to the world. Those who dealt with conflict did so non-violently. Most dealt with injustice, and did so creatively. The introduction to peacemakers was meant to provide an important counter to the questionable heroes which pervade most of children's and adults' television programming. Examples of class activities around this theme appear in Appendix B.

New research also shows a growing fear of adults amongst children (Robinson, Robinson, & Whetsell, 1988). Researchers of the media believe that television programmes greatly exaggerate

the cruelty and violence in the world (Huston, Watkins & Kunkel, 1989; Lyons, 1990). Children, heavy consumers of television at three to five hours per day (Notar, 1989), may be building an image of a world that is not conducive to the development of the interpersonal skills necessary for the world of the 21st century (NCSS, 1989).

It was hoped that the presentation of real-life heroes who seek justice, and who solve problems non-violently would give children a new perspective on heroism. With it would come the security of knowing that there are adults who work to make things better in the world. The young discoverer of fossils was included to make the children aware that accomplishment is possible at any age.

Through the study of peacemakers, children were exposed to strategies for dealing with conflict in their own lives. The other part of the planned curriculum centred on children's fiction which deals with conflict and its resolution. The relationship between the lives and actions of the peace heroes and the children's lives and activities could become evident through literature. The subjects of the stories range from problems experienced in everyday life to stories of conflict involving groups, such as The Butter Battle Book (Dr.Seuss, 1984). Through class discussions, art activities, and role-playing, children investigated strategies for solutions to the problems posed. Examples of class activities related to this theme are found in Appendix C.

Conflict resolution is most often suggested as the starting point for peace education activities with young children (Harris, 1988; Reardon, 1988). It is something with which all children are familiar, and research has shown that they can begin to appreciate the feelings and viewpoints of others at least by five years of age (Berg, 1990; NCSS, 1989). Television and film teach children that most problems need violence or its threat to solve problems (Huesmann, Lagerspetz & Eron, 1984). Educators must help children to learn strategies for dealing with conflict that do not harm others or themselves (Notar, 1989). There is evidence that these lessons are better learned if deliberately taught, than if approached on an ad hoc basis (Langford & Claydon, 1989; NCSS, 1989; Schwartzberg, 1990). For these reasons the teacher presented specific activities related to heroes and taught strategies for resolving conflict.

Procedures

Type of Data Collected

Children's art work, field notes from freeplay obvservations, field notes of other related events, and audiotaped interviews with eight randomly-selected children were the types of data collected. A description of the procedures within the test and comparison groups is presented under separate headings.

Test Group

Observations of pairs or groups of children at freeplay were carried out by the teacher in October. The freeplay period in the teacher's classroom varied from 30 to 40 minutes in length.

The average observation period lasted ten minutes. During this time children were told that the teacher had paperwork to complete, and should not be disturbed except in case of emergency. The teacher then positioned herself with her papers or planbook close to a centre which encouraged student interaction. Frequently, observations of the test group were done when the teacher's aide was present. Interruptions were less frequent as children were asked to direct any inquiries to her rather than to the teacher.

During the observation periods the teacher recorded verbatim conversations between children and noted any nonverbal activity which she believed would explain the dialogue or indicate the mood of the speaker. It was important, for example, to show whether anger expressed appeared to be real or part of fantasy play.

Since data collection included children's art work the test group were asked to draw pictures of someone they believed to be a hero. The teacher did not define the term "hero" but had several children express their ideas to the group before the handwork began. As children finished their drawings the teacher recorded, verbatim, their comments about their pictures. These were retained for comparison with pictures drawn after the implementation of the planned curriculum, to ascertain whether or

not children's ideas about heroes had changed in any way. Sample drawings, with comments, from before and after the planned curriculum implementation are found in Appendix D. The pictures were also compared with those drawn by the comparison group. (As is mentioned below, the latter group drew hero pictures at the same times during the year but were not exposed to the planned curriculum.) Two examples of the comparison group's drawings and comments are found in Appendix E.

The planned curriculum was implemented from mid-November until May. Observations of freeplay continued during this time. The activities were integrated with seasonal themes or with themes which derived from the interests of the children.

The learning activities involving six peace heroes were carried out between mid-November and mid-March. During this time, children were given pictures of three personalities. The teacher recorded verbatim comments by children regarding what they remembered about these heroes. The comments were retained for analysis (See Appendix F for examples).

The implementation of the second part of the planned curriculum began in February with the focus on conflict resolution between friends. Group conflict was discussed in the latter half of May. These themes were generally introduced through children's literature and were followed by discussion and role play.

The teacher introduced conflict resolution strategies through literature. Children role-played scenarios from the stories.

After discussion, they suggested similar problems to dramatize. Photographs of conflict situations and puppet play were also used to add variety to the activities. The emphasis was on expressing feelings and "talking it out", as well as investigating creative means of reaching a compromise acceptable to all parties.

It should be noted that the interest of the children in the April 1990 Earth Day celebrations resulted in a number of activities related to protection of Nature and the environment. Though unforeseen at the time the study was proposed, this proved to be a concern which was relevant to the research. Children often talked about polluting, including cigarette smoking, as actions of violence against animals, plants, and people. The Lorax (Seuss, 1971), enjoyed through film and several readings of the story, was spoken of as a hero by the children. Although this was a fictional character, his attributes were very different from the usual television image of a hero. He was an old man concerned with the environmental damage caused by the factories producing unnecessary consumer goods. Further description of activities around this theme appear in Appendix G.

The climax of the planned curriculum was a celebration of peace and friendship in the form of a class party. This is in keeping with current peace curricula for young children. Co-operative skills were necessary in the planning and preparation, and in the serving of food.

In May, pictures of heroes were elicited for comparison with those done in October. Once again, the teacher recorded verbatim

remarks concerning each of the drawings. Four children, randomly-selected by the school principal, were audiotaped. They were interviewed separately by the teacher. The four were asked to talk about their hero pictures. They were then given hypothetical conflict situations and asked to indicate how they would deal with them. These were presented in order to provide some insight into the thoughts of children on conflict resolution (The problems, as presented to the children, appear in Appendix H).

Comparison Class

The planned curriculum, as described above, was not implemented with this group. Activities related to Martin Luther King were carried out with both classes, as this has become a regular mid-January theme in this teacher's curriculum. The rest of the general curriculum was the same for both groups.

Observations of the freeplay period in the comparison group were done in October and again in May. This corresponded to the periods when observations were done in the test group before and after the implementation of the curriculum. The structure of centres was the same as in the test group. Child observation is a regular method of assessment of Kindergarten children's progress and would not be contrary to the wishes of the parents who had withheld permission for participation in the study.

Pictures of heroes were also elicited from this class, in October, in the same manner as that described above for the test group. The verbatim comments of the children, regarding their

individual drawings, were recorded by the teacher.

Interpersonal conflict during the year was dealt with as individual problems arose. No specific strategies for resolving conflicts in general were taught to the entire group.

At the end of May, pictures of heroes were again drawn for comparison with those of October, and with those of the test group. Samples of the drawings and comments from the comparison group for both months will be found in Appendix E. Four randomly-selected children were audiotaped concerning their pictures of heroes and their solutions to the same conflict situations presented to the test group. Comments of one of the children is presented in Appendix J so that a comparison can be made with a sample from the test group.

The table on page 108 will illustrate the corresponding periods of data collection, and the activities in the two groups during the study.

The preceding chapters have dealt with the rationale for the study, the review of related literature, and a description of the methodology and procedures. This chapter explains how the data were analyzed, and discusses the results.

Data Presentation and Coding

Field notes taken during ten minute segments of the children's freeplay were typed in columns in temporal order and these segments were numbered. Speakers were given fictitious names to assure anonymity.

Behavioral categories were identified after an initial review of the interactions. Patterns of behavior became evident and repetitive. Also, a review of the literature revealed definitions of physical aggression, verbal aggression and co-operative play (Deluty, 1985; Mize & Ladd, 1988; Pellegrini, 1988) which closely resembled the types of interactions observed during this study.

During subsequent analysis, codes were assigned to types of behaviors observed frequently. For example, V. A. was the code for verbal aggression. This category included loud utterances with negative overtones, which had been recorded in upper case letters in fieldnotes. The category also included any statements which were accusatory or excluding. Other behaviors coded were physical aggression (pushing, destroying other children's work, etc.), cooperation, play fighting, quoting rules, and statements showing self-esteem. Also coded were verbal references to physical aggression, to the media, or to video games. Teacher

interventions were also noted. (See Appendix K for a list of the codes, with an example of how they were used in analyzing a segment.)

The teacher's field notes recorded during special situations also were typed in columns in chronological order and were dated. The same behavioral codes explained above were applied to this data for easy comparison with the freeplay observation segments.

Verbatim comments recorded on art work and on audiotape were typed in columns beside the children's fictitious names. The drawings of heroes were coded by the initials of the persons portrayed. Key action words, which identified the child's conception of heroism (for example, "saving" or "punches"), were listed in the columns (see Appendix L). Comments on three peace heroes selected from the planned curriculum were coded according to the concepts which had been introduced in the discussion of their lives (see Appendix F for an example). Transcripts from the audiotape dealing with drawings of heroes were coded in the manner explained above for the actual art work. The comments which pertained to hypothetical conflict situations were coded to indicate how children *said* they would react. If talking first was the solution offerred, this comment was coded "1.T". The number indicated if this was the first, second or third step in trying to resolve conflict. For example, "2. R." indicated that the child's second response, if the first failed, was to report the problem to an adult (see Appendix I for an example of how this code was applied).

Analysis of the data will be presented in two sections - the Test Group and Comparison Group. Within the Test Group section results will be described under three headings. The results of the analysis of field notes and children's drawings from the period preceding implementation of the planned curriculum will appear under Pre-Curriculum. The Curriculum heading indicates results from field notes and documents completed during the months that the planned peace education activities were being implemented. Results of analysis of field notes, children's drawings and audiotaped interviews completed at the end of the planned curriculum appear under Post-Curriculum. Throughout the three sections delineated here, field notes from special situations will be interspersed as support for other data under discussion.

The Comparison Group section comprises results described under two headings - October and May/June. The former includes analysis of field notes and children's drawings from that month; the latter, results from field notes made in May and from children's drawings and audiotaped interviews completed in June.

The analysis of the various extracts was completed in the following manner. First, there was an initial review of all the data collected to develop a sense of the types of behaviors observed and the responses obtained. Next, the data was reviewed again to ascertain if behavioral categories from the literature were evident and if patterns emerged. Also, commonalities between verbatim comments on art work or on audiotape were noted. Finally, behaviors from different situations and sources were related in

order to confirm the analysis.

Test Group

Pre-Curriculum

Children's drawings. The first initial of the name or type of hero drawn was the code used (B for Batman, F for firefighter). Key words indicating the type of action children saw as being indicative of heroism were placed in quotation marks beside the initials. These included words such as "helping, saving, fighting".

The pre-curriculum drawings showed that the children's understanding of heroism fell into two main categories. One conception was the Superhero. Batman, the film, had been a huge box office success during the summer of 1989. Batman figured in 6 of the 15 drawings done. Superman was the other Superhero depicted. The other type of heroes drawn were members of public security occupations such as police officers and firefighters. Only one picture did not fit either of these concepts of heroism. It was the child's father. Below are four of the children's descriptions of their drawings. (See Appendix D for a reduced copy of one such drawing from this period and the comment recorded.)

Matt: Batman protects the innocent, upholds the law, helps people and last but not least, kills people sometimes if he needs to.

Tex: That's Batman and Robin. They save people's lives. They walk behind Joker and throw him down on the cement.

Wilfred: Superman is flying to save the good guys. He punches the bad guys' heads.

Ada: A fireman fights fires.

The first three descriptions suggest that violence is justified on the part of "good guys". Further evidence that some children believe this is borne out in the field notes. The banning of Ninja Turtle toys from the weekly Sharing Time brought protestations such as: "But they only fight the bad guys. They don't kill them."

The firefighter example is representative of the comments accompanying drawings of public security figures. All the children used the masculine form of the word to describe the occupation. Also common is a terse description of the job with little elaboration. There is none of the rich description which accompanies the Superhero pictures.

Freeplay observations. The freeplay observations made before the implementation of the planned curriculum show a high incidence of aggression between students, especially verbal. This included such behavior as shouting, bossing another child, teasing, and using excluding statements.

The following is an example of verbal aggression observed in early October. A brief period of quiet concentration in the block centre ended this way:

Josh: MOVE! (pushing Matt's hand and truck as he was preparing to use the block road)

Matt: GET OFF! (pushing J. back)

Josh: WAIT! NOT YET I SAID! (attention turns to Wilfred) STOP IT! (Wilfred leaves the area for a second time).

(Len, another child, is working on the road.)

Josh: See you're bothering us (to Wilfred who has returned).

Len: (to Wilfred) Now you're breaking the road.

In addition to physical acts of exclusion (Matt and Josh get pushed away in the example above), many incidents of verbal aggression also contained the element of exclusion. Comments to Wilfred from Josh and Lenn indicate that he is unwelcome. Most examples of verbal aggression observed, however, reflected a conflict over who was in charge of the direction of the play. In the above example, Josh yells "Not yet I said!" in his attempt to dictate the pace of the play. This type of egocentricity is further illustrated in the following example from the housekeeping centre:

(Rosie readjusts a plate of food on the table.)

Lana: NO! RO-SIE! Leave it! I started this, I'm in charge.

Rosie: I just moved it a little. I need space for the flowers.

Lana: OK, put your stupid flowers.

The verbal aggression was, in most cases, interspersed with some co-operative efforts to build with blocks, to set up a play restaurant and to create special environments with sand.

Physical aggression was also evident during observations. This took the form of pushing (as in the behavior exhibited by Josh and Matt in the first example above), physical threats, and destroying another child's work. Another example follows:

Matt: Why all the water to Mary?

Josh: But she doesn't have any.

Matt: NO! He just wants it to go to Mary.
(To Len who approaches the sandtable) Sorry! Four people, you're not playing (physically pushes Len away) Not fair! Josh giving all the water to Mary. (Splashes Josh)

Josh: You wet me up! No more.

Matt: Now get some water (very angrily). You're not coming to the party!

It is interesting to note that while quoting a freeplay rule which regulates the number of children at a given centre, Matt breaks a more fundamental classroom rule (that of no physical violence) in order to enforce it! Egocentricity ("get me some water") and exclusion contribute to the verbal aggression in this segment. Reference to "the party" had the teacher confused for several days. Children were frequently told by Matt, or his friends, that they would be excluded from "the party". There were elaborate descriptions of the activities and food to be enjoyed. When the teacher inquired about the date of the party, Matt answered "Sometime". It became obvious as weeks went by that this was a mythical party. The threat of exclusion was used to get children to comply with the speaker's wishes during freeplay. No such party was ever held at Matt's house.

Pushing is the most harmful act of physical aggression recorded. Children were not aware that the teacher was recording their conversations and behaviors. She appeared absorbed in paperwork. However, her close proximity to the action allowed her to intervene before anything more serious occurred. Field notes

indicate that the more harmful acts of physical aggression, such as hitting, did take place (see Appendix O) during freeplay periods which were not selected for formal observation. These occurred when the teacher was in another area of the classroom and could not intervene fast enough to prevent the violence. During formal observations the teacher did not intervene when there was pushing *unless it appeared that the physical aggression was escalating* (pushing was returned by the victim and again by the aggressor, for example). Earlier, informal observations had indicated that most incidents of pushing did not lead to more violent behavior. Since the planned curriculum encouraged children to deal independently with conflict in its early stages, children's responses to pushing had to be monitored.

The incidence of *play* fighting was greatly reduced by the fact that there existed classroom rules against play tackling and the use of pretend weapons. Violent toys from home were also banned. In spite of this, references to media violence and its use in fantasy play were common in early freeplay periods. The following illustrates this:

(Felix is play-threatening Matt with a Tinkertoy 'weapon'.)

Matt: No, they're bad, I'm good.

Wilfred: If someone kills a woman...Pretend we're police.

This excerpt suggests that children are listening to the lessons of television discussed earlier: that violence against "bad guys" is justified, and that police work is primarily concerned with violent acts.

Field notes reveal much talk at snacktime about Batman and the movie. There were many incidents of fantasy play that did not occur on the randomly-chosen observation days. Field notes indicate frequent episodes of children dressing in blanket "capes" as Batman and Joker and the use of violent images and language from the movie. A similar pre-occupation was seen in the October drawings of heroes described above. (The same characters appear in the drawings and freeplay of the comparison groups to be discussed later.)

Notes also reveal one boy's fascination with horror movies. Matt made frequent positive references to these in September, usually as children were assembling on the carpet to begin the day. This behavior continued into October. For the in-class Hallowe'en party he came to school disguised as Jason, a psycopathic killer from the popular horror film series Hallowe'en. His outfit even included a 'toy' machete and toy knife taped to his pantleg! He was, though, the only child who appeared genuinely afraid when the teacher played a taped poem about a ghost. The surprise ending reveals that the protaganist is not in danger from the ghost - who merely comes by to wind the clock. But Matt appeared frightened on subsequent days when others requested to hear the poem again. This type of behavior was described by Cantor and Reilly (1982) in a study of children's exposure to frightening episodes in the media. While viewing horror movies may terrify children, they are often hesitant to talk to their parents about experiencing fear. They are concerned

that the admission will result in a restriction on what they may watch in the future! This, combined with the fact that many parents are unaware of what their children are watching, results in many youngsters not having the opportunity to deal constructively with their fear. Matt's reaction to the ghost poem may be an indication of unexpressed fear stemming from his viewing of horror movies.

Planned Curriculum

Freeplay observations. Observations of freeplay were made during the implementation of the planned curriculum from November to May. Due to the overwhelming amount of data from this period, results will be presented in blocks with some reference to the month when certain observations were made. There are three issues from this period that command attention. The first is that there were no observable changes in behavior during November. This is not surprising since it generally takes time for the effect of a curriculum to be demonstrated. However, some of the behavior threw further light on the influences of the media that directed the children's freeplay period. One example is presented here.

> Felix: Let's go into the house and shoot somebody. I'm your son (to Matt) and you're my monster (to Wilfred). Can you shoot the baby?
>
> (Wilfred also has a 'gun'. Chasing and shooting in carpet area.)
>
> Felix: Follow me, we got to kill somebody.
>
> (Wilfred and Felix go to housekeeping centre.)

Intervention by teacher: Why are you killing in the housekeeping centre?

Felix: We are killing bad people.

Wilfred: Like 'Nited States.

Teacher: You mean like people there?

Wilfred: No, like the army.

(End of teacher intervention.)

(Felix and Wilfred go to the sandtable.)

Felix: We are soldiers of United States (menacing with gun).

The example indicates flagrant violation of the classroom rules banning play weapons, and play fighting. Also evident is the theme of justified violence against "bad people". The teacher intervened to try to understand what was "the need to kill people". The references to the U.S. Army might be from the media - either film (Rambo) or from television (G.I. Joe cartoons). This latter character was a frequent, though unwelcome, visitor to the class during Sharing Time.

A more obvious example of the media-inspired fantasy play appears below. It occurred the day following the preceding segment.

Wilfred: Matt killed me with his bullet.

Felix: We are RoboCops.

Wilfred: You be the bad guys.

Joe: I killed you 'cause I went...

(Matt throws his gun.

Tex is lying on the floor.)

Matt: Joe, hide in here (indicating cloakroom). We're Robocops.

Joe: I'm RoboCop. There's just one.

Wilfred: No, we're both.

Joe: Yah, OK, there are two.

Tex: But RoboCops are made out of steel.

Wilkins: I can use it (indicating 'gun') like a knife.

Matt: Don't be his friend.

(Matt pushes Felix, won't give him Imaginit pieces.)

Joe: Take all pieces you want! (Throws pieces at Felix).

The conversation again indicates the extent to which the children are dependent on the media's definition of a character and on probable action. It's as if they need a script and are reluctant to write their own. As seen in the example above, what started out as play invariably ended in verbal, and often physical, aggression.

By December data analysis revealed a marked decrease in play relating to media figures and in both verbal and physical aggression. This trend continued throughout the planned curriculum period. The following dialogue occurred in December:

(Matt, Joe, Josh, Tex are standing on the carpet making decisions as to what to do during freeplay.)

Joe: Let's do Construx.

Josh: No, I'm sick of that.

Matt: We could listen to my tape. Want to do that?

Tex: No, not yet, near the end.

Matt: I'm Batman (runs over to the climbing apparatus and climbs, then hangs from one arm).

(The others join him.)

Joe: Yeah, but we got four, man. It's too many.

Matt: We could play a game.

Josh: OK, what?

Matt: The Christmas game?

Joe: What?

Matt: You know, like yesterday, for Table Tasks....

Tex: OK, let's go.

The game referred to in the preceding segment is a commercial co-operative game introduced to the class in conjunction with the planned curriculum. It is interesting to note that another game of the same genre was introduced to the children in the pre-curriculum period. The Harvest Game was popular with the children on the days that it was integrated with other structured activities. However, it was never requested at freeplay.

Also evident in December was a lessening in verbal aggression among the children who engaged in fantasy play in the housekeeping centre. Below is an example:

(Mia, Rosie, Lana, Flora, Elisa, Mary, Ada are in the housekeeping area.)

Lana: This is too many people.

Ada: Yes. Someone's got to go I'm afraid.

Mary: Well, I'm, not. I hardly ever play here.

Rosie: Me either.

Elisa: Alright! Come on, Flora, let's draw a picture.

Flora: I want to play in here.

Elisa: I know, but we'll come back.

Not only does the dialogue above show evidence of less verbal aggression, but it also demonstrates a growing ability to manage their own time and space through conciliation. It is interesting that, unlike other centres, no restriction existed on the number of children in the housekeeping centre. In the above interaction, there was tacit agreement that there were too many children, and a solution was found that was satisfactory to all. This ability to work things out together, without adult intervention, was encouraged by the planned curriculum. The audiotaped interviews data also show evidence that children had the confidence to use this skill, at least in the school setting.

Growth and change in two areas were observed as the school term progressed. First there was an increased ability to achieve concensus on what to do during freeplay, and to co-operate in that activity. This is illustrated below:

Joe: Let's get the Construx.

Matt: We could watch them glow in the dark. But Alanna doesn't like us in the closet a long time.

Felix: Let's play Ninja Turtles.

Matt: Ninja Turtles are NOT ALLOWED!

Tex: Let's build something with the blocks.

Matt: I don't feel like it. How about playdoh? I want to do some of the dinsosaurs Alanna brought.

This is followed by concensus on the distribution of dinosaur molds and Matt's helping Joe to achieve better results in his sculpture (see Appendix M).

The Post-Curriculum observations and taped interviews will

add further evidence of the dramatic changes in behavior observed as early as December.

A third issue arising from the data is the role of outside sources on children's behavior. Despite a very peaceful December in the classroom, the first observation made in January ended with the teacher's intervention to stop physical violence.

> Matt: I'm turning into Freddie. (Invading the housekeeping area)
> Rip it up! Rip it up!.....(repeatedly). I have the Magic Crystal.
>
> (Teacher intervened to stop rough play - Matt threatening others playing in housekeeping centre.)

This episode was followed by more talk of a Magic Crystal and 'the Power Hand'. Field notes reveal that during the December holiday period, Matt had seen horror films on video. The 'Freddie' in the segment above refers to a killer in the Nightmare on Elm Street film series. Matt had also received the Nintendo game system as a Christmas gift. The Magic Crystal and the Power Hand are references to a Nintendo video game and to part of the optional equipment of the system.

This negative influence from the media and video games was not longlasting, however. Observation of the following day's freeplay shows that Matt spent the entire time playing the co-operative Christmas game with another classmate. The following is an excerpt from their conversation:

> Matt: OK, Tex. I'm blue, what colour do you want?
>
> Tex: I'll be red. What pictures will you do?
>
> Matt: We can't decide yet, remember, we have to see what we pick up. But anyway we help each other.

Already in January, the outside influences appeared to have a shortlived negative affect on the child's behavior.

Another example of outside influences and Matt's leadership role in the group occurred in early April. It followed his absence during the last two school days of March during which time he saw the movie entitled Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Matt: I saw the Ninja Turtle movie - it's fantastic!

Joe: I'm goin', man.

Josh: Me too!

Matt: Yeah, they were fightin' and eatin' pizza, and they're real, ya know.

Tex: They're not real.

Matt: It's not a cartoon, like on TV. It's real people so like they're real turtles.

Joe: Let's be them (getting out Giant Tinkertoy tubes). I'm Raphael.

(Each boy is now 'armed'. They begin waving the tubes, Ninja-style.)

Matt: No, like this (demonstrating).

Tex: Somebody be Bebop and we'll smash 'im.

Josh: Yeah and Rocksteady.

Matt: Alanna doesn't let us be violent - no weapons.

Tex: So what do we do?

Matt: We can do some dinosaur shapes (templates) and I can tell you about the movie. Ya gotta see it!

More than any other media characters, except perhaps Batman, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles had the children in both the test and comparison classes captivated throughout the year. They discussed the movie and television plots at snacktime. They

compared the paraphenalia, such as T-shirts, backpacks, lunchboxes. They tried to bring the toys for Sharing Time (Show and Tell) even though violent toys were banned from the classroom for both groups. And finally, they attempted, many times, to engage in aggressive fantasy play involving Ninja Turtle plots. Only in the test group did these last two manifestations of "Turtle Madness" become negligible, as will be seen in the Post-Curriculum section of this analysis. The above dialogue from the April observation segment shows that the fascination remained, but the children were able to challenge their energies into other activities.

Art work. During implementation of the planned curriculum, the teacher provided the children with pictures of three selected heroes. Children's verbatim comments as to what impressed them about the person were recorded by the teacher and retained for analysis. Here are examples of comments for each of these heroes.

a) Toyohiko Kagawa, Japanese pacifist during World War II:

Elisa: He was in prison because he didn't want to go to war.

Ada: My favourite part was when he stopped the two gangs from fighting.

Felix: He jumped in the middle of soldiers wanting to fight.

b) Bob Geldof, Live Aid organizer:

Lana: He sang a song about people that don't have any food. And he got all the money from the records to give the food to the people.

Flora: He's playing with the microphone. He's a singer. He got food for the people where there was no rain.

Mel: He gave food to poor people. He sings.

c) Martin Luther King, Civil Rights leader:

Josh: He told people to stop going on the bus because they didn't allow black people at the front.

Tex: He told the people not to go on the bus 'cause he didn't want the bus companies to get richer. He wanted the law to be changed.

Joe: Dr. King was a strong man because he was the most powerful man without fighting.

The comments reveal an understanding of the concepts involved. Children understood Kagawa's commitment to non-violence and the reason for his imprisonment (see Appendix F for further evidence). They were able to express the rather difficult concept of Geldof's singing to raise money for Africans who had no food due to a lack of rain. And finally, the selections show comprehension of the idea of segregation and the power of the economic boycott initiated by Martin Luther King in order to change unjust laws. The appropriateness of such a curriculum for Kindergarten children is thus supported by the data.

The Curriculum period was characterized, then, by a gradual lessening of frequent verbal and physical aggression during freeplay. This change began just three weeks after the first related activity and continued throughout the following months. Where there was slippage in behavior, there appears to be evidence that media influence was responsible but was not longlasting. The data collected during the Post-Curriculum period further support these inferences.

Post-Curriculum

Freeplay observations. As reported earlier, there was a group of children who usually played together during freeplay and who often used verbal and sometimes physical, aggression in order to exclude others. There was one child who was largely ignored at the beginning of the year. When he began to engage in parallel play, he seemed to be a source of irritation to the group. The following illustrates the empathy that had developed by the end of the curriculum implementation:

(Three boys are involved in water play.)

Joe: I'm gonna go do the brushes.

Josh: Now Mel is going to come here (somewhat irritably).

Matt: That's OK. He can play here too, you know.

Joe: Mel, you can come now - to play in the water, man. I'm finished.

Josh: Here (to Mel) you can have this (giving him a container).

Matt: We're gonna be splashing, Mel.

Mel: OK, me too.

Mel had originally been turned away from the water play area because there was a restriction of three children. The preceding dialogue is significant in that the boys notify him when an opening develops, even though he is not a regular member of their play group. Even the child who originally expressed irritation gave him a container. Matt prepared him for the splashing that was to follow. This example further demonstrates the dramatic change in Matt's behavior. His leadership skills are used here,

not to bully or to exclude, as was previously evident, but to remind his friends that another child had the right to join them. He was helpful in telling Mel that there would be splashing.

An observation of the group that usually played in the housekeeping centre shows no verbal aggression, even though the activity involved a new fantasy, that of a Rock group in concert. There were no familiar roles to guide the children here. They had to reach a concensus on the stage, about the distribution of instruments, the choice of songs, and so on. The dialogue also demonstrates the empathy which had developed for a handicapped child, who, like Mel above, had been on the fringe of group play at the beginning of the year. In spite of her serious hearing impairment, the children take time to ask her what instrument she'd like to play and inform her of the song being rehearsed (see Appendix N).

The final observation in May contains a reference to the curriculum used in conflict resolution. The teacher had read The Story of Ferdinand (Leaf, 1936), the tale of a bull who refused to take part in the aggressive play of his peers. When a bee stings him, his reaction paints him as a fighter, and he finds himself in a bullring. Despite the taunts of the matador and his minions, Ferdinand refuses to fight. He just sits and smells the flowers in the ladies' hair. He is referred to in the interaction below:

Josh: Hey, we could have a zoo and a farm, man. Get the animals.

Len (joins them): I can play, too.

Matt: Yeah, OK. You can finish the road. I gotta get the vehicles bin.

Len: What?

Matt: The cars and jeeps and things. You know, things that go, vehicles!

Joe: Can we put these cats together here?

Josh: I never seen 'em together, man.

Felix: I'll do the farm. These can be near together, they don't fight. (indicating various farm animals - goats, sheep, etc.)

Matt: Good thing there's no bull, though.

Joe: Unless he was Ferdinand!

(All giggling or smiling.)

Josh: Or good thing there's no Ferdinand with a bee!

Len: Bees, man, they hurt.

The children above are co-operating without the verbal aggression that was characteristic of October and November. A child not in the original group is welcomed. Empathy is shown when another boy takes time to explain a word to him. And finally, with good humour they relive a shared experience.

Children's drawings. Drawings of heroes were elicited from children at the end of the year for comparison with those done in October and with those of the comparison class who did not benefit from the planned curriculum. No prompting and no review of the much earlier hero curriculum was done. There was a great difference in what was drawn. No public security figures appeared in the final drawings. One example of a real situation related to emergency services was illustrated and will be reported on more

completely when the audiotaped interviews are discussed. Another, showing sea creatures as ecological heroes will be dealt with at the same time.

Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and Bob Geldof appeared in five of the June pictures. The drawings of real-life heroes show deep insight and understanding of the concepts involved, even months after the last personality was discussed. The following are some of the children's comments about their pictures:

Flora: This is Rosa Parks. Instead of fighting she talked to the bus driver. When he didn't listen, she talked to Martin Luther King.

Ada: Martin Luther King changed the laws. He didn't fight, he talked about it.

Josh: Martin Luther King marched with people to change the laws about white and black people being together.

Matt: This is Bob Geldof. He made money for people that were starving.

It is interesting to note that Rosa Parks is very correctly identified as a hero. In the planned curriculum, she was presented in the story of Martin Luther King to illustrate *his* leadership strengths. Obviously the children were impressed with the older woman's determination to stand up for her rights as a human being (see Appendix P for other references to Rosa Parks).

Four children drew Superhero pictures similar to those completed in the pre-curriculum period. One of the four children had joined the class at the end of curriculum implementation and so had not been exposed to it. One was a child who had struggled with English as a second language all year, particularly with the more abstract concepts which were a part of the planned

curriculum. Another child drew a "hero" from a video game. His fascination with the popular violent television programmes and Nintendo games had been evident throughout the year. Also, his short attention span during class discussions affected the quality of his participation in the activities of the planned curriculum. Field notes reveal inconsistencies in his behavior. For instance, he was the only child who identified the economic effect of the Montgomery bus boycott led by Martin Luther King. At the same time, he could not name Rosa Parks as the person who had insisted on sitting at the front of the bus, even though the children had spent more than thirty minutes roleplaying the event. This suggests that he was not processing all of the information and activities presented in the planned curriculum. The fourth child also suffered from a short attention span. He drew two figures for his hero picture. One was Superman. However, the most prominent character on the page is a chipmunk. The significance of this drawing was not immediately evident to me until I taped and reviewed a series of television cartoons. One of these was entitled Chip 'n' Dale's Rescue Rangers. The "heroes" are forest rangers who rescue trees and wildlife from danger. The child may have been influenced by the Earth Day activities in his decision to draw this character.

A special situation occurred in the very last week of school which supports the idea of peace hero curriuclum as having a powerful effect on Kindergarten children. The students were asked to draw a picture of a memorable event to be included in a class

"yearbook". Ideas were elicited during a class discussion so that we would have minimum duplication. Pictures covered the entire range of the class curriculum, from field trips, to baking activites, and dinosaur box sculpture. One child, who did not divulge her idea to the group, produced a picture which she described to me this way: "This is Rosa Parks. She stopped the laws making black people go to the back of the bus."

Audiotaped interviews. The teacher decided to audiotape a small random sample of children for two reasons. The first was to establish their comprehension of the hero concept by asking them to talk about their post-curriculum drawings. The second was to elicit their responses to hypothetical conflicts. Four children were randomly selected from the test group and another four from the comparison group. The latter were selected to establish whether or not there were differences in the responses of children exposed to the curriculum and those who did not benefit from the planned activities.

Of the four test group children audiotaped, two had drawn heroes from the planned curriculum - Bob Geldof and Rosa Parks. Descriptions of their pictures confirm their comprehension of the work of their chosen heroes. A third child related a story from the television series 911 in which a young man disregarded his own safety to save two women from drowning, even though he knew that professional help was on the way.

The fourth child drew characters from a prosocial story concerning pollution. The book had been brought in by another

child during discussions of Earth Day in April. The heroes were sea creatures who save each other from fishermen and then meet to discuss strategies to clean up the oceans. In naming a fictional character as hero, Lana was being consistent with behavior exhibited earlier in the year. The teacher had introduced the issue of ecology through The Lorax, the film version of the Dr. Seuss (1971) classic. A class discussion of the issues raised in the film was held the following day. Field notes indicate that the children identified the Lorax as a hero because he "spoke for the trees and other animals". The children realized that fictional characters *may* be acceptable as heroes. This makes it even more significant that more than half of them drew non-fictional heroes. When asked if she could name another hero, Lana named Martin Luther King and was able to explain why.

To determine their possible responses to conflict, the children were given three hypothetical situations and asked how they would react. The first case involved a disagreement with a friend during a classroom activity (see hypothetical cases, Appendix H). Three of the children indicated they would "Talk about it" first, and then report the conflict to the teacher if it persisted. One child said she would give in if her initial attempt to assert her position was unsuccessful. The first three responses are consistent with the strategy discussed during the planned curriculum; that is, to talk about your feelings with the other person with a view to understanding and finding a solution. Being assertive in protecting your rights was another element in

the planned curriculum. The fourth child's reponse to the problem of having a classmate take apart her block structure was to say, "I would just change it back". This was an attempt to assert her rights, but she did not then indicate that she would discuss the conflict with the other child. Instead, she said, "I would just let her do it". Although the planned curriculum emphasized the importance of reaching a compromise acceptable to both parties, at least her second choice was non-violent.

The second hypothetical situation involved a dispute with a friend at home. All children said they would immediately report the problem to their mothers or babysitter. Although the role-playing during the planned curriculum took place in many settings, it appears that the conflict resolution strategies have been interpreted by the children, as ways of dealing with *school* situations. It may also be that the habit of reporting a problem to the authority at home was very difficult to break.

The third problem was set in a park. Children were asked to imagine that a parent is with them but some distance away, when an unfamiliar child pushes ahead of them at the slide. The responses were evenly divided between pushing back in their rightful place and telling the parent. Again, asserting one's rights was an important element of the planned curriculum, although pushing was not forseen as a method of accomplishing this! However, the fact that the teacher allowed a certain amount of pushing to take place during freeplay periods in order to monitor children's responses, may have given children an impression that

pushing was acceptable. Kohlberg (1972) discussed the importance of the hidden curriculum of the classroom. He suggested that often teachers entreat their students to be fair and yet mete out unjust punishment and rewards. Without being privy to the teacher's purpose in "allowing" pushing during the freeplay observations, the children may well have interpreted this act of physical aggression as acceptable.

Children were further asked how they would react if a child they didn't know hit them in the same setting. This produced varying responses. The first child said she would leave the area. Matt hesitated a great deal before saying he would tell his friends. What follows is how he responded to the question "What do you think they (your friends) would do about it?":

> I don't know. But once this kid, he hit Tex, he wanted to- then another one told me, they wanted me to beat him up, and then I became best friends with him.

In this quote, Matt indicates an understanding of the security of having friends. But it also suggests that physical conflict can be avoided and that "enemies" can become friends. The third child said she would threaten to report the aggressor. And the fourth indicated she would tell her parent immediately. These responses were expected since the type of physical aggression (hitting) was very serious. Throughout the year children of both groups were encouraged to report such incidents to the teacher.

The audiotaped interviews achieved their purposes. First, it was obvious that the children had developed a clear concept of

what a hero is and that may very well have been a result of the planned curriculum. Secondly, responses given to the hypothetical conflict situations, at least in the school setting, showed a tendency to handle a problem through discussion. The planned curriculum had attempted to give children confidence to deal with problems themselves, by expressing their feelings and working out mutually acceptable solutions. Reporting to the teacher was to be a second resort. As will be seen below, children in the comparison group responded quite differently to the hypothetical problems.

Summary. Data gathered during the Pre-Curriculum period reveal a great deal of verbal and physical aggression in the children's freeplay interactions. A fascination with media characters is also evident. These data arise from field notes of freeplay observations and special situations and are supported by data from the children's drawings.

The Curriculum Implementation period is characterized by a steady lessening of verbal and physical aggression. Evidence points to less reliance on media-inspired "scripts" for the fantasy play. The data also reveal the children's growing ability to manage their own freeplay by achieving concensus. The comments on pictures of heroes indicate comprehension of the concepts and motivations under study. Field notes from Earth Day activities indicate the children's ability to transfer new knowledge to new situations, to identify their own social concerns and heroes.

The Post-Curriculum data confirm lessened egocentricity and increased empathy and self-confidence during freeplay. Media characters do not dominate freeplay periods. Children's drawings indicate that they have achieved a greater understanding of the concept of heroism and are impressed by the lives of real-life heroes. Audiotaped interviews support this, and give further evidence of the children's self-confidence in dealing with peer conflict in school.

Comparison Group

As explained earlier, the choice of a comparison group was made because the parents of one child in the group withheld permission for her active participation in the study. This group did not receive the planned curriculum, except for activities related to Martin Luther King's birthday carried out annually, in January, in all of the teacher's classes. Conflict was dealt with on an ad hoc basis. That is, no specific strategies were taught the children for dealing with disputes. The teacher simply intervened when there was a problem between children and dealt only with that specific situation.

Data was collected from this group for comparison with that obtained in the test group. Drawings of heroes were elicited in October and June, and freeplay observations were made in October and May. These coincided with data collection periods in the test group. This is noted in Table 1 on page 108.

October

Children's drawings. Like those of the test group, the comparison group's October drawings of heroes are dominated by Superheroes. Ten of the 14 pictures contain media characters. The following is a sample of these (names of the children are fictitious):

Kole: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles have to fight with Shredder and BeeBop and Rocksteady. They have to get something from them.

Mick: Superman's going to rescue somebody 'cause someone's breaking into the house. He punches them into the river.

Jarrod: Batman always beats up on criminals. The Joker always makes accidents.

Jack: Donatello (a Ninja Turtle) tries to kill Shredder because he does bad things - tries to hurt them.

As in the test group's early pictures, the children's comments illustrate the concept of justified violence against the "bad guys" and the influence of the media in defining children's heroes.

The four children who did not draw Superheroes identified a parent, a friend and the teacher as heroes. Comments from these children show a concern with protection and the basic needs of food and companionship.

Freeplay observations. As in the test group, interactions during October in the comparison group were marked by verbal and physical aggression. Here is an example:

Jack: Let's get the blocks.

Jarrod: Who asked you?

Jack: I want to play too.

Trevor: Well, it's too many.

Kole: No, four can play here.

Jack: I'm gonna tell Alanna.

Jarrod: Alright, but you gotta do like I say.

(All four begin building in four different areas.)

Jarrod: It's got to connect. HERE!

Trevor: Look how high mine is! NO! (Pushes Jack who has just removed the top block from his tower).

Jack: IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE SO HIGH! TO YOUR NECK, REMEMBER!

Trevor: STUPID! (Goes over to Jack's blocks, knocks them down).

Jarrod: YOU GUYS ARE RUINING THE CASTLE!

Kole: Yeah! Stop fighting. Alanna!

(Intervention necessary by teacher.)

Media references are also evident in the comparison group freeplay interactions. On another day this was observed:

Zeke: (comes out of housekeeping with a blanket around his shoulders). Batman is come! (Play threatens to knock down blocks).

(Alan looks up, grins, gets up from Lego, goes to housekeeping.)

Irma and Kole (to Zeke): Don't touch it! STOP!

Alan: (now also dressed as Zeke). Me, too, Batman.

Zeke: You Joker.

(Alan and Zeke begin to chase each other, leave the block area.)

Irma: What a guys! (then in a gruff voice) I can be Batman.

Kole: NO! You're a girl. You can be Batman's girlfriend and I can save you from Joker. I'm Batman. This is my house (indicating block structure).

The early data from the comparison group corresponds to the Pre-Curriculum period of the test group. The similarities are striking. Verbal and physical aggression are pervasive in freeplay interactions. The references to the media restrict the fantasy play of the children and promote imitation of violent behavior. Drawings of heroes are primarily of violent Superheroes from television and the movies.

May/June

Freeplay observations. The data from freeplay observations, in May, in the comparison group show verbal and physical aggression still present. Media references still influence the fantasy play of the children, as revealed below:

Kole: Trevor! Don't put the blocks there. That's the bus.

Trevor: I'm making a castle.

Wilfred: EEEEEE-ya! (kicks a block from the castle-sideways kick, Ninja-style)

Trevor: STOP IT, WILFRED! (Stamps his foot, comes to teacher/observer who now must intervene)

Wilfred: (walks by the block "bus") What is this?

Alan: Is a bus.

Wilfred: Yeah? Take me to the sewer.

Jack: What?

Wilfred: Where the Ninja Turtles live.

Jack: (laughs) Oh.

Kole: No Ninja Turtles (looks at teacher).

Wilfred: (jumps off, goes to Giant Tinkertoys, gets a long tube, comes back waving it, Ninja-style) Cowabunga!

Children's drawings. Unlike the children of the test group, the comparison group had not been exposed to the heroes curriculum. There is little change in the types of pictures drawn in June as compared to October (see an example of each in Appendix E). Eleven are media-inspired; three are family members. These four comments about the drawings are typical:

Wilfred: Superman saves a girl. He fights with the bad guys.
Two Ninja turtles turn Superhero, fight, and the bad guy dies. (Drew all of these in the picture.)

Mick: The Ninja Turtles are heroes. They beat up the bad guys who try to steal, and in the movie they took Master Splinter.

Jack: Leonardo (a Ninja Turtle) is a hero 'cause he's a good guy. He has swords to break things.

Melvin: Batman is a hero. He saves people from the Joker. He throws him to the ground.

The notion that heroes are "good guys" who protect others from "bad guys" through the use of violence persisted during the year. This, even though children were aware of the teacher's disapproval of violence and violent media characters. Although they had been exposed to Martin Luther King as a positive role model, one set of activities was not enough to ahve any apparent impact on their perception of a hero.

Audiotaped interviews. The purposes of the audiotaped interviews have been discussed above. As in the test group, four children from the comparison group were randomly-selected. Three had drawn Superheroes. The interviews sought to clarify what characteristic made them heroic. In all three Superhero drawings someone was being "rescued" or "saved". In two of these, the rescuing involved physical violence directed against "bad guys". One example follows:

Teacher: OK, tell me about your picture.

Kole: This is Tarzan. Tarzan is saving a girl. This is the bad guy taking her.

Teacher: OK, what will Tarzan have to do to rescue her?

Kole: He just goes and kicks the guy and the girl falls and he gets her.

The other drawing of violence involved the Ninja Turtles rescuing a woman. The third Superhero picture was Supergirl helping a boy with a broken leg. The fourth child interviewed had drawn a "daddy" that she hopes to have one day. When asked what would make him a hero, she had difficulty expressing anything more than his providing companionship.

The interviews concerning hero pictures differed greatly in the test group and the comparison group. The former consisted of clear explanations of the concept of a hero, descriptions of prosocial actions, and stories of historical characters. The interviews in the comparison group enlarged on the violent theme of Superhero rescues or illustrated the children's inability to explain heroic characteristics.

The responses to hypothetical conflict situations presented to the interviewees also show differences between the two groups. Children in the comparison group were presented with the same hypothetical situations concerning a conflict in school and in the park (situations 1 and 3 in Appendix H).

Three of the four respondents in the test group had indicated "talking about it" as the first reaction to a problem with another child in the classroom (hypothetical situation 1). This is consistent with the strategy which formed part of the planned curriculum.

In the comparison group, there was an interesting phenomena. Not one of the respondents raised the possibility of talking things over with the other child in the conflict situation. Two of them indicated they would report the problem to the teacher or the parent. The responses of the other two indicated they would "just say 'No'". This solution appears to come from the Child Abuse Prevention Program (CAP) to which the children had been exposed in the last few weeks of May. Children are taught this specific strategy to deal with sexual abuse in order to throw the perpetrator off guard, to draw attention to the act, and to give children the opportunity to escape. Reporting the event to a trusted adult is stressed as the next step. The children's answers in the comparison group are consistent with elements of the CAP Program. Just saying "No", however, was not an appropriate reaction to the hypothetical situations presented - unless it had been followed by discussion or reporting to an

adult. It is an assertive position but not a solution to the problem.

The test group had also benefitted from the CAP Program during the same weeks. However, the test group children who were interviewed appeared to recognize the differences between the audiotaped hypothetical situations and those scenarios presented during the CAP sessions. They were able to apply the appropriate strategies, which they had rehearsed through role-play, to the appropriate hypothetical situations.

What is evident from both sets of interviews is that *teaching* strategies for resolving conflict appears to work. Not only do the children verbalize these strategies in interviews, but freeplay observation data support the conclusion that they use it.

Summary

Significant differences were evident between data collected in the test group and in the comparison group in May and June. It appears that the planned curriculum on peace heroes and conflict resolution had an effect on the children's perception of heroism and on their interpersonal behavior. During the early observations, one child in the test group stood out. Matt was very popular, a leader in the class. He was also the most vocal and articulate fan of media heroes and their accompanying violence. Any change in the quality of his behavior seemed to affect that of many children in the class. It was risky to focus

on this one child. His fascination with violence made effecting any change in behavior seem insurmountable. But his status in the group made his reaction to the planned curriculum critical. The data suggests that even this child's behavior was positively affected.

The following chapter summarizes the study, reviews the conclusions which were drawn from the data, and examines the implications of this research for educational practice.

The purpose of the study was to create and carry out peace education activities in a Kindergarten class and to observe children's interactions before and after implementation of the planned curriculum.

The research was conducted at a school in which the population is mixed racially, ethnically, and socio-economically. The teacher, who was also the researcher, taught two Kindergarten classes of eighteen children each. The data collected in both groups before the implementation of the planned curriculum arose from observations of freeplay interactions and drawings of heroes.

The planned curriculum, comprising the introduction of peace heroes, and strategies for resolving conflict non-violently, was then implemented over six months in one class. Observations of freeplay periods continued in this test group. Children's comments regarding three selected heroes from the planned curriculum were recorded. The other class received the normal Kindergarten curriculum and became the comparison group.

At the completion of the planned curriculum, freeplay observations were conducted in both classes and drawings of heroes were again elicited. Four children in each group were randomly selected for audiotaped interviews which dealt with hero pictures and hypothetical conflict situations.

This chapter will discuss some conclusions which may be drawn from the results of the study, and their implications for educational practice.

The conclusions to be drawn from the study will be discussed under two headings - Heroes and Conflict Resolution - which represent the main facets of the planned curriculum.

Heroes

Children's comments about the heroes from the planned curriculum reveal an understanding of the motivations and accomplishments of these personalities. This was verified by the data from the audiotaped interviews. The children were also able to identify as heroes, other people, real and fictional, who fit the positive concept of heroism introduced to them. Contrary to what many curriculum planners would suggest, the five-year-olds in this study were able to learn complex concepts that are presented to them in a developmentally-appropriate manner.

There were observable changes in the children's definitions and choices of heroes as revealed in the pictures of heroes elicited after the completion of the planned curriculum. Arguments could be made that the children responded by drawing heroes acceptable to the teacher. However, the pictures were elicited two months after the last hero was introduced with no prompting from the teacher. Furthermore, even if there was an element of "acceptability" involved, children can benefit from learning that heroism is not necessarily defined by the mass media; that adults they trust admire real-life heroes who make positive contributions to the world. The purpose of exposing children to heroes whose goals were obtained non-violently was

accomplished.

The data from the comparison group is also revealing. There were no changes in the type of hero drawn at the end of the year. A few of the children saw family members as heroes. Most drew characters from violent televison programmes or films as they had earlier in the year. Their conceptions of heroism were still defined by film and television cartoons.

Conflict Resolution

The data collected during freeplay periods in the two classes revealed that the planned curriculum did have an effect on the behavior of the children in the test group. They were able to solve potential conflict situations independently, without the intervention of the teacher. The audiotaped interviews support the notion that many of the children had learned the strategy of "talking about" a problem before reporting it. There is always the possibility that children gave responses to the hypothetical conflict situations which they believed were socially acceptable. Indeed, except for those who said they would push back into their rightful place in line, not one child from either the test or the comparison group suggested that they would use violence to deal with the problems. However, data from comparison group children revealed responses that can be attributed to the CAP programme or to reliance on adult authority to solve problems. Those in the test group most often said they would discuss the conflict with the other child. This was in keeping with the strategies they had

learned and practiced during the year. The data from freeplay observations, referred to above, and from the interviews support each other.

Maturation was no doubt a factor in the behavioral changes observed. In both classes there was a lessening of physical and verbal violence over time. But maturation does not account for the large discrepency between behaviors observed in the two groups at the end of the year. Post-Curriculum data from test group freeplay periods reveal independent attempts at conflict resolution and the absence of both verbal and physical aggression from most freeplay periods from March onward, well before the end of the Planned Curriculum. Children in the comparison group were playing more co-operatively at the end of the year than they had at the beginning. However, the data indicate that they rarely attempted to solve problems independently. These were either reported to the teacher at the onset or required her intervention when the conflict escalated. Also, a significant amount of verbal aggression remained a distinctive feature of that group's freeplay periods.

The inference to be made then, is that peace education activities can be successfully incorporated into the Kindergarten curriculum. The results of this study suggest that such a curriculum can have a positive affect on the behavior of children in the classroom.

Implications

The results of the present study have implications for the early childhood educators. There is evidence in the literature that children are capable of empathy, and are interested in the outside world. In fact, it has been suggested that children are more open to diversity at an early age and therefore benefit from curriculum which extends beyond their own family and community (NCSS, 1989).

Kindergarten children also come to school with a variety of social concepts already formed. Many have learned lessons from a media that promotes stereotypes, shows more violence in the world than actually exists, and often teaches that conflict is solved through violence and that those who use it are heroes.

Children also have fears. The latest studies on this subject attribute some of these to the media (Robinson et al., 1988). The increasing trend for young children to express a fear of adults is possibily connected to the increased visibility of "bad people" on television both in news and entertainment programming.

As educators we have a responsibility to address these issues which affect the children in our care. The introduction of peace heroes from various racial and religious backgrounds can provide positive role models. Roleplaying the lives of real-life heroes may counter the influence of violent role models in the media. This facet of peace education may also give children the security of knowing that there are many "good people" who actively, and non-violently, work to bring justice and peace to the world. It

may counter some of the mistrust of adults which is on the increase.

The violent influence of the media on children may also be lessened by teaching strategies for non-violent conflict resolution. While example is an important aspect in the development of prosocial behavior in children, there is evidence that children need to be taught repertoires of behavior to help them in specific situations (Sapon-Shevin, 1980). Not only can these skills help to create peace in the classroom, but they are crucial for the citizens and future leaders of a nuclear world.

Children are concerned with global problems. A further implication arising from this study is that investigating environmental problems with Kindergarten is appropriate and timely. Data from this study revealed that the children showed great interest in Earth Day activities. They spoke of pollution and the destruction of wildlife as acts of violence. Ecological concerns are frequently the source of conflict. The Mohawk crisis of the summer of 1990, which began with the threat of destruction of a pine forest in Oka, illustrates this dramatically. If our future leaders are to deal with the many ecological conflicts to come, they need to learn about the problems facing the Earth. They need to know about adults who are working to improve nature's chances for survival, and how they can help (Currie, 1990). And they need conflict resolution skills to convince others of the need for action.

A Kindergarten peace education programme must take into

account the fact that young children learn by doing. As indicated above, children "become" peace heroes and learn the facts of their lives through stories and roleplay. To learn the specific skills for resolving conflict, literature and daily experiences can provide the scenarios. Roleplay can promote an appreciation of the similarities and differences in people's experiences and the need to come to a mutually acceptable compromise. Children then require sufficient freeplay to practice and improve their conflict-resolving skills (Kutnick, 1988).

The present study suggests that including peace education activities in the Kindergarten programme would be appropriate and timely. Children may retain their fascination with television Superheroes, but will have a more balanced view of who may be considered heroic. When children know strategies for conflict resolution strategies, non-violence in the classroom can be the result of a conscious choice rather than compliance to imposed rules. In light of the study, it is also recommended that activities related to the environment be integrated with the other areas of the peace education curriculum - namely, peace heroes and conflict resolution.

Recommendations for Further Research

As indicated in the literature review, very little research has been done on the implementation of peace education programmes with young children. As violence in schools increases, more naturalistic research in this area is needed (Tattum, 1989).

The present study raises two other questions which require investigation.

First, do the strategies for conflict resolution learned in school transfer to other settings? During audiotaped interviews, the children's responses to hypothetical problems indicated that they would use the strategies within the classroom. Responses were less conclusive in the other settings, which were outside of the school and in the presence of a parent rather than the teacher. Many children attend afterschool programmes. The question of whether or not children will use skills learned in another situation is of concern to all caregivers.

This raises a second question for further research. Did the home environment affect the children's behavior in class in relation to a planned curriculum? If so, how? There are many variables involved. They range from the family's television-viewing policy, if any, to the presence of physical abuse in the home. To what extent can a peace education curriculum be effective if variables in the home environment mitigate against it? The violent summer at Kanesatake and Kahnawake has greatly affected the "children of the barricades" (Thompson, 1990). They play at Warriors and soldiers. They have nightmares because they fear for their lives and those of their families. How effective could peace activities in a classroom be, in light of such experiences?

Our responsibilities to the children in our care dictate that we try. The pervasiveness of violence in the media can

desensitize young children to the humanity of others and/or make children fearful. Integrating peace education activities with the normal Kindergarten curriculum is a first step in addressing these concerns. The following quote encourages such a change:

> ...we teach children little about advocates of peace and nonviolence such as Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Mahatma Ghandi, Albert Einstein, Martin Luther King, Jr., Leo Tolstoy, Albert Schweitzer, or even Jesus. We can teach more about those historic figures who transcended the strategies of violence. We can put into practice the policies, procedures, and programs that help us and our students imagine and build a world without war either in our hearts, on our playgrounds, or among nations (Molnar, 1987, p. 79).

The present study was an attempt to develop and try out the type of programme which may help Kindergarten children achieve that goal.

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Appendix A

Letter to Parents

September, 1989

Dear Parents:

Permission has been granted me by the school board, School Council, and the School Committee to conduct a study in my classroom. This is part of a requirement for my Masters degree in Education.

From October to January, one of my two Kindergarten classes will participate in a special programme I have developed. It involves learning about people who have shown courage and strength in promoting human rights and in resolving conflict peaceably. These 'peace heroes' will be drawn both from real life and from children's literature. Prosocial values are an important objective of the Kindergarten curriculum and so, the class not participating in the special programme will continue to receive the usual guidance in dealing with conflict. Although a less structured approach will be used with this class, in both groups discussions and activities will consider how conflicts in everyday life can be solved non-violently.

My interest is in providing alternatives to the violent 'heroes' of television, and to investigate the effectiveness of a deliberate curriculum which focuses on peacemakers and peacemaking.

The study itself will involve my taking notes of children's interactions during free play in both groups - before, during and after the special activities are introduced. It will also involve interviews with eight randomly-chosen children. In the event that your child is one of those selected, I am requesting your permission to audiotape the interview. Questions will relate to heroes, and strategies for solving disputes.

To assure confidentiality, all tapes will be erased upon completion of the study. During the research period, the notes and tapes will be securely locked in a classroom cupboard or in a filing cabinet in my home. Within the report of the study, a copy of which will be sent to the School Board, all children referred to will be assigned fictitious names. It should be further understood that you may withdraw your child from the study at any time.

To give your permission for your child's participation, please sign the form below. Should you have any questions or concerns relating to the study, please telephone me at school (935-4388) or at my home (844-8715).

Thank you for your co-operation.

Alanna J. Dow

I hereby give my consent for my child _____ to be interviewed and audiotaped by Alanna Dow, for the purposes of the study described above, and under the described conditions.

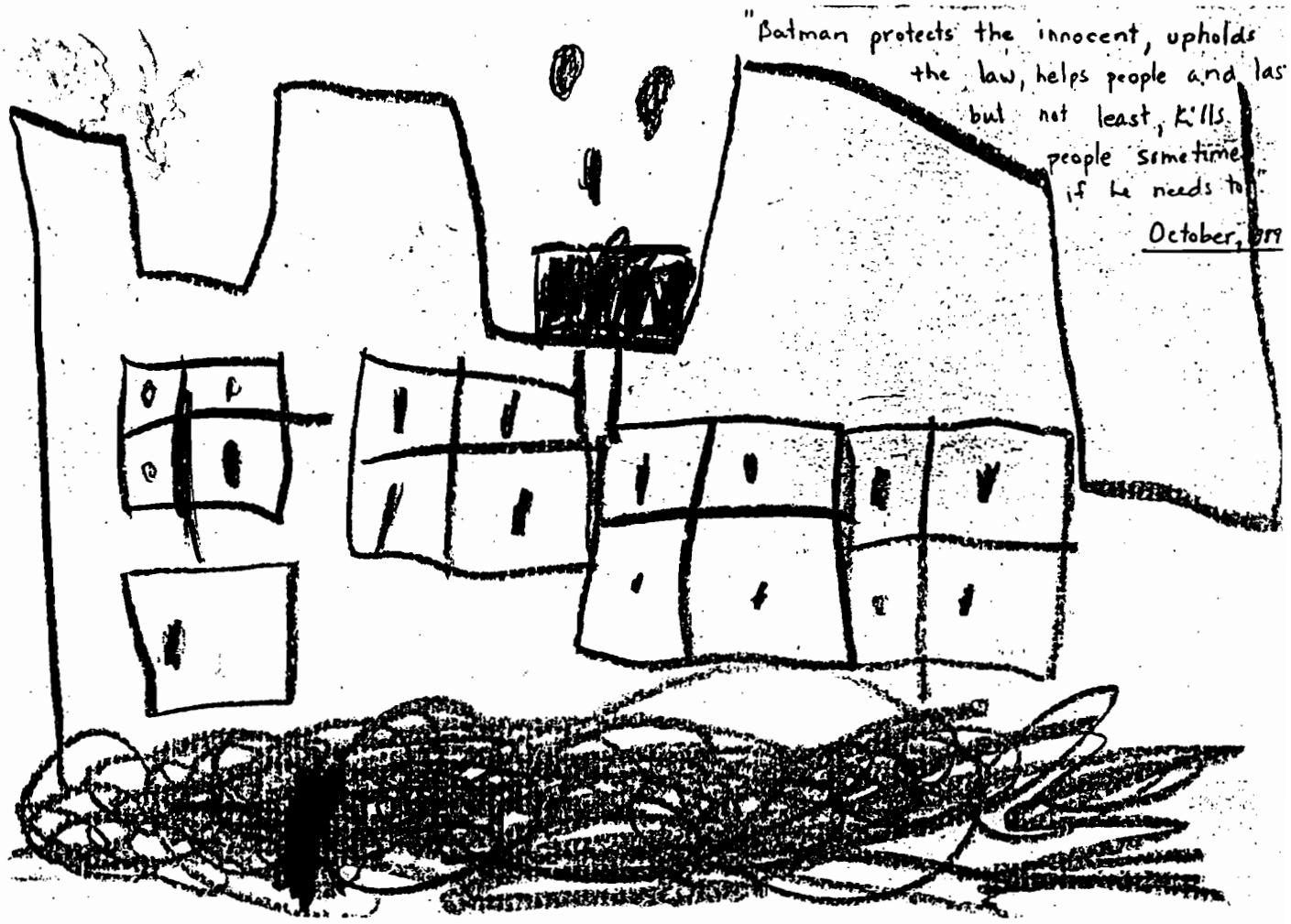
_____

Appendix B

Sample Activity/Heroes Curriculum

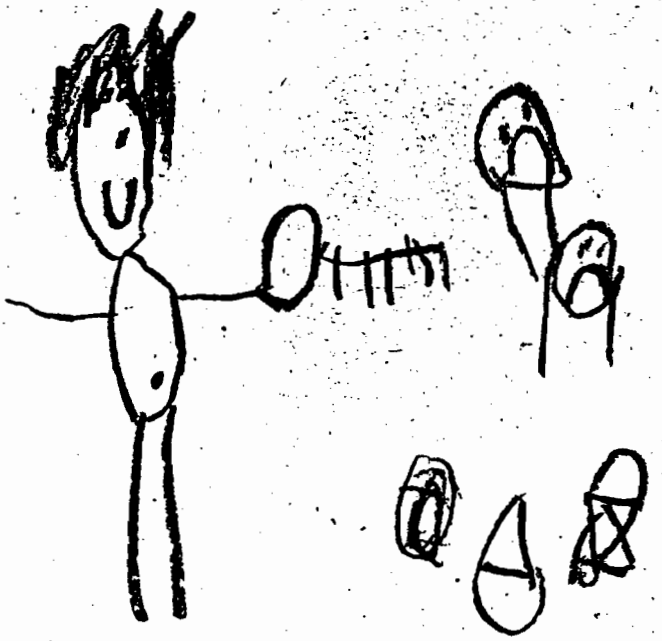
Martin Luther King

1) Invite children to celebrate Dr. King's birthday (January 15).
2) Photo of Martin Luther King shown and discussion of bad laws in reference to segregation in Southern U. S. in his time.
3) Puppet play presented to children by teacher telling the story of Rosa Parks, her request to Dr. King for help, and the resulting Montgomery bus boycott.
4) Roleplay by children of the Rosa Parks story, including her visit to Dr. King.
5) Discussion following roleplay. Questions such as "When you were Rosa Parks getting on the bus after work how did you feel?" and "When you were the bus driver, how did you feel when Rosa sat at the front of your bus?"
6) Discussion of the bus boycott and other non-violent ways of getting laws changed.
7) Discussion of other laws children may know about that they consider unfair (for example, no pets in some buildings). What could they do about unfair rules or laws?
8) Make corn bread for the party. Listen to "Happy Birthday to You", Stevie Wonder's song to honour Dr. King. Teach the song "We Shall Overcome".
9) Follow-up next day with comments recorded on copy of photo which children colour.



Appendix D

Pre-/Post-Curriculum Drawing/Test Group

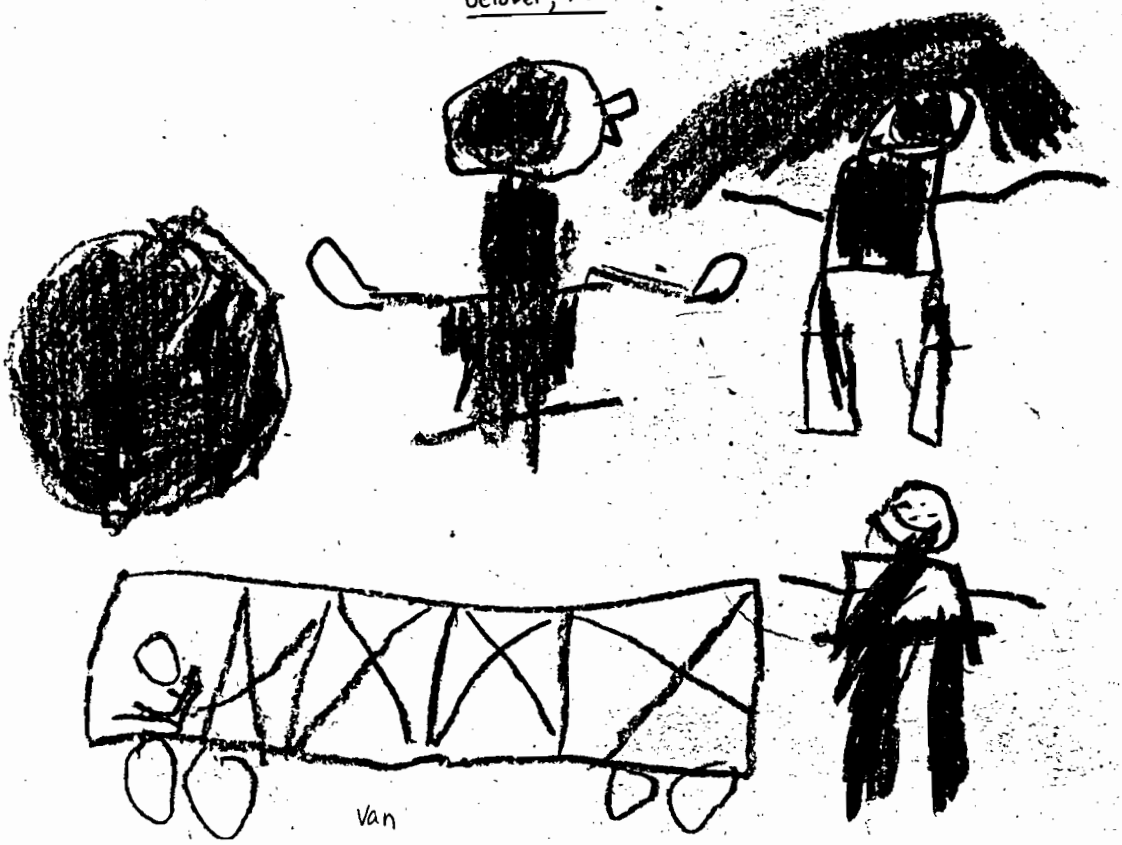


This is Bob Geldof. He made money for people that were starving.

June, 1990

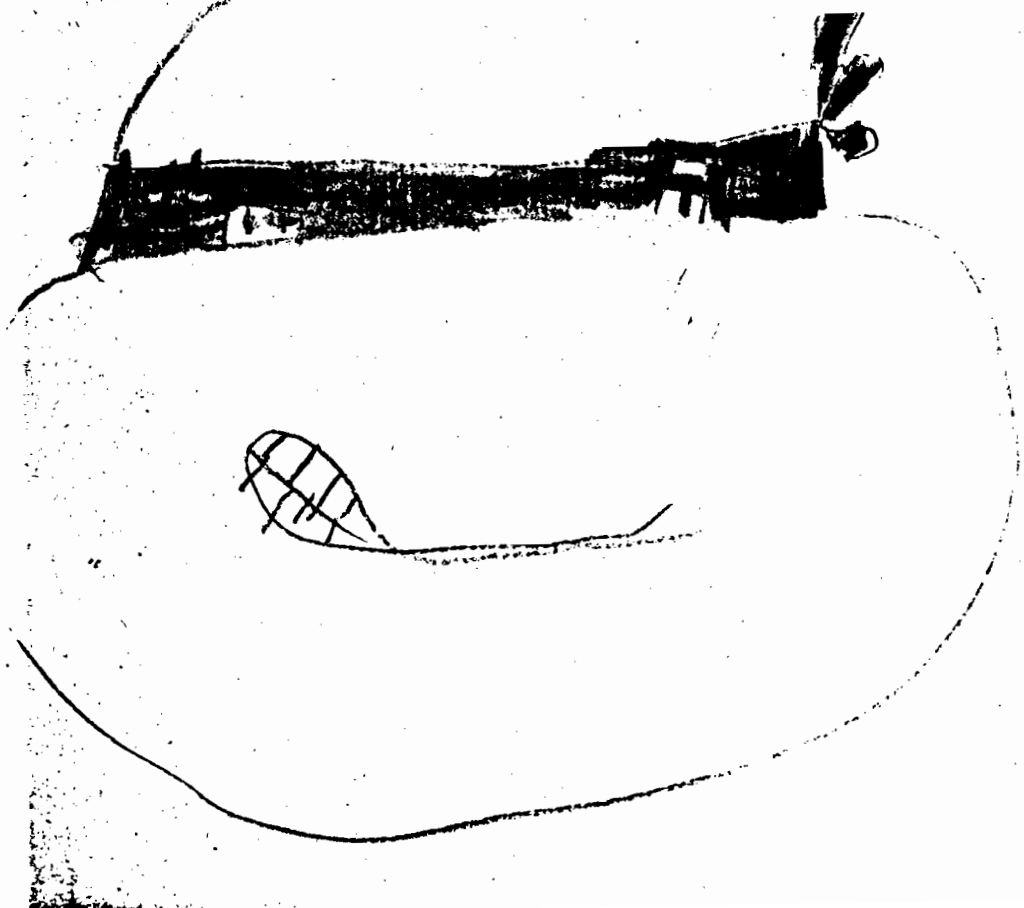
Donatello tries to kill Shredder because he does bad things. tries to hurt them.

October, 1989



Appendix E

October and June Drawing/Comparison Group



June 4, 1990

Leonardo is a hero because he's a good guy. He has swords to break things.

Appendix F

Test Group Comments on T. Kagawa

Toyohiko Kagawa

November	Comments
Elisa: He was in prison because he didn't want to go to war.	P
Ada: My favourite part was when he stopped the two gangs from fighting.	N
Joe: His mother died and he went to live with his aunt and uncle.	E
Mary: My favourite part of his story was when he helped the poor people.	A
Tex: He was in prison because he told the people not to do war.	P
Len: He gave his money to the old people.	A
Flora: He was going to not fight anymore.	P
Joshua: He said, " Stop war".	P
Lana: My favourite part was when he went to live with his uncle and aunt.	E
Matt: My favourite part was when his mother died.	E
Felix: He jumped in the middle of soldiers wanting to fight.	N
Rosie: I liked the part when he stood in the middle of the fight.	N

CODES:

P = pacifist
N = non-violence
E = early childhood
A = altruism

Appendix G

Example of Earth Day Activity

1) Children viewed the film, The Lorax, an animated version of the Dr. Seuss (1971) book.
2) The following day a discussion was held concerning the issues raised. Children identified the important themes of spoiling the wildlife's environment, the lack of conservation of trees and even the motivation of the Oncler. One child observed, "All he thinks about is money". A student teacher observing for the morning was surprized at the sophistication of the children's answers.
3) Later, children contributed ideas to an experience chart entitled "What we can do" after discussinng examples of pollution and lack of conservation they see around them.
4) This led to an excursion to the yard in front of the school to collect garbage. It was retained for analysis. Children discussed the types of objects found and their possible effect on the animals, soil and water.
5) The book, The Lorax (Seuss, 1971) was read and enjoyed many times in the days that followed. Children roleplayed the Lorax explaining to the Oncler the folly of his ways.

Appendix H

Hypothetical Situations from Interviews

Hypothetical Situation 1:

Pretend you're building with blocks at playtime. You leave your work for a moment. When you come back, another child is taking some of your blocks away. What would you do?

Hypothetical Situation 2:

Pretend you have a friend over to your house. You ask him/her not to touch one special toy, but s/he does. What would you do?

Hypothetical Situation 3:

Pretend you are at the park one day. Your mother or father is there, but some distance away. A child you don't know pushes you out of the way at the slide. What would you do? If a child you didn't know hit you, what would you do?

Example from interview with Matt: (T = teacher)

T: OK, good question. Let's say you were building with blocks and you put a block in place and you turned away to do something and he , when you turned around, he was moving it and putting it somewhere else, what would you do?	Hyp. 1
M: I'd put it back, and tell him not to do that.	1. T
T: What if he got upset and started to yell at you and didn't agree with the change?	
M: Go tell you.	2. R

Appendix I

Data From Test Group Interviews

Excerpt of Interview with Rosie:	Comments:
...	
Teacher: OK. Let's say you're playing with somebody here at playtime, and pretend you're building with blocks one day, and you put a block in place, and then, off you go to do something else and when you turn around one of your friends has the block and is moving it somewhere else, what would you do?	Hyp. 1
Rosie: Say 'Stop'and 'Please could you put it back.	1. T
Teacher: And what if they didn't?	
Rosie: I'll tell.	2. R
Teacher: Who would you tell?	
Rosie: The teacher. I would speak to get the block back.	

Appendix J

Data from Comparison Group Interviews

Excerpt from an interview with Jarrod:

...

Teacher: OK, what if you were having playtime here in the classroom and you were playing with a friend and when you walked away from the blocks they changed the way the blocks were?	Hyp. 1
Jarrod: I'd be sad.	submissive
Teacher: You'd be sad. What would you do about it?	
Jarrod: Tell.	
Teacher: Tell who? Tell them?	
Jarrod: Tell you.	1. R

Appendix K

Behavior Codes and Example of Analysis

Behavior Codes: V. A. = verbal aggression
P. A. = physical aggression
Q. R. = quoting rules
I. = intervention by teacher
Co-op = co-operative play
R. M. = reference to media
B. G. = reference to "bad guys"
P. F. = play fighting
RVG. = reference to video game
RPA. = reference to physical aggression
E. = empathy shown

Excerpt of analysis from comparison group:

1.OBSERVATION: Oct. 2, 12:45-12:55

...

Jack: Let's get the blocks.	Co-op
Jarrod: Who asked you?	V. A.
Jack: I want to play too.	
Trevor: Well, it's too many.	V. A.
Kole: No, four can play here.	Q. R.
Jack: I'm gonna tell Alanna.	
Jarrod: Alright, but you gotta do like I say.	V. A.
(All four begin building in four different areas.)	
Jarrod: It's got to connect. HERE!	V. A.
Trevor: Look how high mine is! NO! (Pushes Jack who has just removed the top block from his tower)	V.A., P.A.
Jack: IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE SO HIGH! TO YOUR NECK, REMEMBER!	V.A., Q.R.
Trevor: STUPID! (Goes over to Jack's blocks, breaks them down)	V.A., P.A.

Appendix L

Analyzed Sample of Hero Drawings

DOCUMENTS: JUNE P.M.

Jade: Daddy takes care of the girl. He brings supper and lets her go to bed. In the morning she has to go to school.	D. "takes care"	
Irma: Supergirl is saving a boy who broke his leg.	S. G. "saves"	
Kole: Tarzan is a hero. He is saving a girl from two bad guys. He kicks them. (also indicated his pet, a cheetah.)	T. "kicks"	
Jarrod: The Ninja Turtles are saving April. They've got to fight Rocksteady to get her.	N.T. "got to fight"	
Wilfred: Superman saves a girl. He fights with the bad guys. Two Ninja Turtles turn Superhero, fight and the bad guy dies.	S.M. "fights"	"bad guys"

Appendix M

Excerpt/Test Group Freeplay Observation

March 5:

...

Tex: I'll do some playdoh, too.

Matt: I'll do this Stegosaurus first.

Joe: I want the Longneck.

Tex: That's a Brontosaurus. What is the real new name again?

Josh: I don't remember, man.

Matt: Joe, you have to push the playdoh into all the corners. Here, I'll show you. Where's the scene? Let's put them all together on the scene.

Appendix N

Excerpt/Test Group Freeplay Observation

May 23:

...

Mary: I'm the drummer. Wait, I need sticks. I sit way up here.

Ada: What'll we sing?

Flora: Let's do our song like for the concert.

Elisa: We could even do the dinosaur poems.

Lana: No, let's sing, not just say poems.

(Mia wanders away. She is losing interest. Seems difficult for her to follow just what is going on. Lana goes after her)

Lana: Mia, (turning her face towards her) we're a group, we sing. Come and sing. You want to play guitar? We have a tambourine.

Mia: A tambourine.

Lana: OK, listen everybody, Mia is playing the tambourine.

Flora: We're doing 'The Big Fat Spider'.

Appendix O

Excerpt/Field Notes on Special Situations

September:

Joe and Josh fought over food for snack &/or lunch.

Jade and Nikki very verbal - fighting - loud. Jade's temper explosive.

October:

Wilfred hit Josh - over trucks - "He pushed me first" - denial from both, sat them out.

November:

Trevor fought physically with Zeke over blocks.

Appendix P

Comments/Test Group Post-Curriculum Heroes

June 1

Lana: Serendipity. The whale saved her from the iceberg. This is the polluted lake.

Matt: This is Bob Geldof. He made money for people that were starving.

Mary: A mother and her daughter were driving a car. They fell into the water upside down. A woman saw and called 911. Her son jumped in and got both out. He was a hero.

Flora: This is Rosa Parks. Instead of fighting she talked to the bus driver. When he didn't listen, she talked to Martin Luther King.

Ada: Martin Luther King changed the laws. He didn't fight, he talked about it.

Josh: Martin Luther King marched with people to change the laws about white and black people being together.

Tex: This hero has to go into the Pyramid of Death to kill the Minotaur. (Mack) He turns into a prince if he grabs the treasure.

Felix: This is Superman saving a good guy from a bad guy.

Len: Chipmunk. Superman.

Joe: This is the bus with Rosa Parks. This is Martin Luther King. He's changing the rules from the bus.

Brian: Batman kills the bad guys.

Table 1

Corresponding Periods of Data Collection and Activities in the Test and Comparison Groups

	Comparison Group	Test Group
Months		
October	Observations	Pre-Curriculum: Observations
	Drawings	Drawings
November		
December		Planned Curriculum
January	Normal Curriculum	Observations
February		Comments on 3 Heroes
March		
April		
May	Observations	Post-Curriculum: Observations
June	Drawings	Drawings
	Interviews	Interviews