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Laura L. Finley

*University of Northern Colorado*

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## **Militarism Goes to School**

**Laura L. Finley**

University of Northern Colorado

### Abstract

While there are many influences that shape how schools are structured one that has been largely ignored is the influence of militarism. Militarism refers to a set of values or ideologies that include hierarchical relationships and domination. This piece discusses the ways that schools are militaristic, including their authority, physical, academic, and athletic structures, the processes used by administrators and in classrooms, and the curriculums taught.

### Introduction

It is commonly accepted among educators today that schooling is not an a-political process, nor is the location of school a neutral place. As Eisler (2000) notes, “all schools teach values, whether they do so explicitly or implicitly, by inclusion or omission” (p.30). There are, as with any institution, ideological assumptions that underlie the way we educate our youth. These underlying values are often called the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum has been defined in many ways. Vallance (1983) sums these various meanings into three dimensions: 1) the contexts of schooling, including “the student-teacher interaction unit, classroom structure, the whole organizational pattern of the educational establishment as a microcosm of the social value system;” 2) the process operating in an around our schools, including “values acquisition, socialization, maintenance of class structure;” and 3) the degree of intentionality or depth of hiddenness, “ranging from incidental and quite unintended by-products of curricular arrangements to outcomes more deeply embedded in the historical social function of education” (pps.10-11).

Given that there is indeed something called the hidden curriculum, many also ponder what we should do once we “find” it, with responses ranging from eliminating it, to accepting it, to denying it exists. Regardless of which response seems most appropriate, it has become quite clear that there is a need to problematize, or to think critically about, what specifically constitutes the hidden curriculum in various school contexts, as well as the implications of those findings for the education of our youth.

The overt curriculum must be problematized as well, for it, too, contains ideological assumptions and messages that must, at very least, be understood. Further, there is often a hazy understanding, a gray area, between what is considered to be the overt goal or intention of an educational practice or structure and the hidden curriculum it contains. For instance, a primary goal of U.S textbooks is to promote nationalism (Loewen, 1994). This is not on its face a problem, nor would most publishers deny that

they do it. It could then be considered an overt part of the standard curriculum, simply another facet of students' civic growth. On the other hand, the ways that nationalism is promoted through these texts may serve to discourage inquiry and dissent, thus giving way to a particular form of compliant citizens (Loewen, 1994). This effect, then, might be considered part of the hidden curriculum.

One element of both the hidden and overt curriculums that has been largely overlooked is that of militarism. According to McDaniel (1989), "American education has often looked to other areas of our national life for concepts, principles, and organizational models on which to base the design of schooling" (p.15). One of these, I argue, is the military and its ideological counterpart, militarism. According to Fogarty (2000), "The United States continues to be a society organized for war, as exemplified by the permeation of military values into many of its most central institutions" (p.83). Militarism refers to this preparation, this readiness of a society for war. According to Feinman (2000), "militarism is defined as...the deep conditioning of the society to valorize military cultures" (p.11). While "the effects of militarism are felt at diverse levels and in varied arenas" (Caulfield, 1999, p.300), including the diversion of resources from such institutions as education and toward an ever-expanding military-industrial complex, this is not the purpose of this paper. This work focuses on the specific values militarism is steeped in, as well as the exclusion or minimization of others that typically follow, and their impact on schooling.

According to Caulfield (1999), "in order for the public to be persuaded of the importance of militarism, the values of militarism must be rooted in the political and social life of the state" (p.299). These values included those of hierarchy, centralization of authority, discipline, and obedience (Merryfinch, 1981). DeVall, Finley and Caulfield (2002) state that, "This ideology is one that privileges power, domination, control, violence, superiority, hierarchy, standardization, ownership, and the maintenance of the status quo" (p.9). Carlton (2001) asserts that the "military can be seen as a kind of institutionalized competition; the means whereby one group remains dominant. Realistically, this often does not mean the complete elimination of the opposition, but rather their subjection" (p.37). Further, "militarism can be said to...connote the glorification of the ideals of strength and fitness" (Carlton, 2001, p.12). Marullo (1993) identifies other American values that play an integral part in promoting militarism. These include pragmatism, efficiency, rationality, a faith in technology, capitalism and free markets, and ethnocentrism and American exceptionalism.

In addition to the mere presence of these values, Varney (2000) notes that it is, "in the interest of militarists and those who seek to gain advantage from war in any number of direct or peripheral ways, to socialize children into militarism, to make it seem logical, necessary, 'natural' and even fun" (p.385). Militarism is also fostered, "by presenting an unbalanced, even false picture of war; by exaggerating the heroism, nobility and glamour associated with war" (Yarwood & Weaver, 1988, p.91).

These values are thus incorporated into our educational institutions in a number of ways, most of which have become accepted practice. According to Fogarty (2000)

educational institutions provide for the "bonding of youth to the society at large." "In short, one of the functions performed by the educational institution is to promote nationalism, and thus militarism, among the nation's youth" (Fogarty, 2000, p.85). As Simon (2001) states,

The military has long been a productive source of mentalities (along with the technologies of power to produce them). For example, concepts such as loyalty, duty, and obedience to rank describe mental attributes that the military does not presume; rather recruits must internalize them and officers must excel in them. All three concepts have been widely borrowed by other institutions seeking to establish discipline and motivate performance (p.107).

In addition, these efforts to promote militaristic thinking start early, with young children attaining "Simplistic attitudes toward vaguely defined symbols," such as the U.S flag" (Simon, 2001, p.86).

In this piece, I seek to start a dialogue about the ways that our schools, through their overt and hidden curriculums, adopt militaristic practices and emphasize militaristic ideology. The discussion is framed by the work of Eisler (2000) who describes two ideological approaches: dominator and partnership. These are "systems of belief and social structures that either nurture and support-or inhibit and undermine-equitable, democratic, nonviolent, and caring relations" (p.xiv). Eisler (2000) then describes three levels at which schooling is impacted by ideology, structure, process, and content. Structure refers to "where learning takes place: what kinds of learning environments we construct..." (p.xvi). Process refers to the ways we learn and teach. Content is "what we learn and teach. It is the educational curriculum" (Eisler, 2000, p.xv). These levels, then, incorporate elements of both the overt and hidden curriculums. This work is not intended to be the definitive understanding of militarism. Nor am I attempting to propose ways that we can shift the ideologies we employ in schools; that is for another paper. What I seek to do is to interrogate the ways that militaristic ideology has manifested in our school structures, processes, and content. This is important, as if we do not interrogate the ways that schools and other institutions reinforce militaristic hegemony, we risk reproducing it. As Holtzman (2000) states, "Hegemony is not secured through force but rather through the way that values get taught in religious, educational, and media institutions-through socialization" (p.26). According to Loewen (1994), "Education as socialization tells people what to think and how to act and requires them to conform. Education as socialization influences students simply to accept the rightness of our society. The more schooling, the more socialization, and the more likely the individual will conclude that America is good" (p.307).

### Militarism and School Structure

We can look at the authority structure, the physical structure, the academic structure, and the athletic structure of schooling in the U.S to find examples of militaristic practices and ideology. The hierarchical authority structure of schools, where students are beholden to teachers, teachers to building level principals and vice principals, building

administration to the Superintendent and central office administration, and everyone to the local school board, is akin to a military structure, where each person higher in command has more authority over the next. It reflects the militaristic value of centralization and is inherently un-democratic. But, of course, the military cannot run as a democracy. Those in the lowest positions, students, have virtually no impact on what occurs, yet are subject to any decisions made by those above them. Students have input in the school's curriculum no more input than grunts in the trenches get a vote on where and when to attack the enemy.

One group that is especially subordinated in militaristic societies and institutions is women. Enloe (1983) states,

The military plays a special role in the ideological structure of patriarchy because the notion of 'combat' plays such a central role in the construction of concepts of 'manhood' and justifications of the superiority of maleness in the social order. In reality, of course, to be a soldier of the state means to be subservient, obedient and almost totally dependent. But that mundane reality is hidden behind a potent myth: to be a soldier means possibly to experience 'combat', and only in combat lies the ultimate test of a man's masculinity (pps.12-13).

This notion of patriarchal superiority is certainly visible in schools, where females often dominate the teaching ranks but lack administrative pull. As Holtzman (2000) maintains, "The lower status of women is reflected in school structures in which the majority of people in positions of power are men, while teachers and staff are largely women" (p.68). Eisler (2000) describes one important consequence of women's lower status. "Learning to accept the domination of half of humanity over the other half as normal teaches us that there is nothing wrong with domination and submission in human relations" (p.195).

The physical structure of U.S schools has oft been equated with prisons. According to Brendon, one of the students in Patricia Hersch's ethnography *A Tribe Apart*, "When I got there [to high school], I was astonished by how much it was like a prison. They painted all the walls white and there were no windows in any of the classes except the art class" (Hersch, 1998, p.73). Brendon's description might also apply to military barracks. Poor florescent lighting, drab and often bare walls, minimalist restroom features, hard cement floors and many other standard features of schools are decidedly uncomfortable, and they are that way for a reason; because schools, like the military, have an agenda, and physical comfort is of minimal or no importance. Another of Hersch's students, Jonathon, also notes this condition, "People aren't comfortable in school" (Hersch, 1998, p.222). Hilliard (2001) illustrates the conditions of a typical school.

Look at your-or your neighbor's-child's classroom. What you'll find will more than likely remind you of that song Pete Seeger sang in the early 1960s, 'Ticky-tacky boxes.' That's where your kids are, with all the others, in the same ticky-tacky box, watching the same ticky-tacky teacher, looking at the same ticky-tacky 'material,' on the same ticky-tacky blackboard, sitting at the same ticky-tacky

desks, reading from the same tacky-tacky textbooks, and even doing the same tacky-tacky problems and other so-called educational ‘work.’ All the children doing exactly the same things, as if they were all exactly alike, out of the same mold (p.21).

Because of their punitive functions, prison is not intended to be fun, exciting, or anything else positive; it is supposed to be demeaning at least, at worst, painful. Nor is the military, notorious for the harshness of boot camp, intended to be fun or uplifting. Addressing school structure with militarism in mind, then, we may begin to question whether schools, too, have demeaning if not painful aims. School buildings, especially in the post-Columbine paranoia, have expanded the comparisons, both with the military as well as with prisons, by increasing the use of metal detectors, security guards (often referred to as “Rent-a-cops” by students), locked doors, ID cards and many other punitive measures, all which reflect the militaristic ideology of domination and control. According to Crews and Tipton (1999), who identify some of the features schools have in common with prisons, “An overly controlled environment may stifle individual creativity, individualism, and possibly intellectual development” (p.2). Yet, like the military, creativity and individualism are not rewarded in many schools, so measures that may reduce them are not considered problematic. Standardization, though, is a militaristic value, and the physical structure of a typical school supports it.

The academic structure of the schools also reflects militaristic ideologies. Virtually all public schools in the U.S are based on a competitive model; students are to compete for accolades such as valedictorian. This focus on competition by nature excludes a focus on empathic cooperation and emphasizes that one or some are superior to others. Another part of the structure of most schools is academic tracking, or “sorting,” as Sizer and Sizer (1999) call it. They state, “The rigid academic ‘tracking’ so common in American high schools has been demonstrated to be harmful in research study after research study, but nonetheless it persists” (p.72). Evidence is overwhelming that academic tracking does not necessarily improve learning among the faster students, and often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy among the slower ones (Sizer & Sizer, 1999). Yet we maintain some degree of tracking in most schools. I argue that this is due, in part, to militaristic ideology.

Another facet of militarism in our academic structure is the call for ever-tougher academic requirements, including additional courses, longer school days and years, and a stress on like performance on standardized tests. One main culprit of these militaristic moves was the 1983 report, *A Nation At Risk*. According to McDaniel (1989), this report stated that our schools were mediocre, at best. It further stated, “If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war” (McDaniel, 1989, p.16). In a clear demonstration of militarism, the report also stated, “We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament” (McDaniel, 1989, p.16). As McDaniel (1989) states, “If we think of our schools as ‘unarmed,’ our country as ‘overtaken,’ and international security and preeminence no longer ‘unchallenged,’ these militaristic reactions are predictable” (p.16).

## Militarism and School Processes

The methods we use to teach also reflect militaristic practices and ideologies. Eisler (2000) states that,

Many of our teaching methods also stem from much more authoritarian, inequitable, male-dominated, and violent times. Like childrearing methods based on mottoes such as 'spare the rod and spoil the child,' these teaching methods were designed to prepare people to accept their place in rigid hierarchies of domination and unquestioningly obey orders from above, whether from their teachers in school, supervisors at work, or rulers in government (p.12).

These same teaching or discipline methods "rely heavily on negative motivations, such as fear, guilt, and shame" (Eisler, 2000, p.12).

Many of our teaching methods are still heavily reliant on one major characteristic: passivity. Paulo Freire (1983) referred to this as banking education. He describes it as "the art of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (p.284). It is a system where students are seated quietly and obediently and are waiting for their teachers to "impart truth" upon them. Freire (1983) describes several assumptions, practices, and attitudes that he says, "mirror oppressive society as a whole" (p.284). These are worth repeating at length, as each can be connected to militarism. The connections are mine and are described in the parentheses.

- The teacher teaches and the students are taught (Much like the military, where the commanding officers bark orders and the soldiers obey; there is no give and take).
- The teacher knows everything and the student knows nothing (See above).
- The teacher thinks and the students are thought about (The military, it can be said, is no place for a thinking man, but one who is always the object of thought).
- The teacher talks and the students listen-meekly (See above).
- The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined (Again, it is through discipline, of the mind and the body, that soldiers become "men").
- The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply (See above).

According to Sizer and Sizer (1999), "everyone is expected to flourish under this regimen. There are kudos for those who appear to do the most. And grades are given, but there is little careful thought about the real and lasting quality of what has been accomplished" (p.50). Those students who fail to obey the militaristic rules and comply with the militaristic practices, either out of boredom, rebellion or some form of legitimate disability either physical or mental, are considered troublesome, while those who do comply are praised and rewarded. This emphasis on compliance echoes the military focus on obedience. Yet, "not all kids are alike. Not all approaches, whether unanxious or

spurred by high expectations, will work with everyone all of the time. Standardization of such routines is as inefficient as it is often cruel" (Sizer & Sizer, 2000, p.105).

Much of the way that we ask our students to learn is very repetitive or rote, including scores of dittoes, individual work, and many other standard daily items. This sense of repetition and structure is characteristically military, as good soldiers are taught to be regimented. While many people assert that children are born curious, "much of this drive to think and explore our inner and outer worlds has been thwarted by pedagogies that suppress independent thought and emphasize rote conformity and obedience to orders" (Eisler, 2000, p.205). According to Jackson (1983),

The habits of obedience and docility engendered in the classroom have a high payoff in other settings. So far as their power structure is concerned, classrooms are not too dissimilar from factories or offices, those ubiquitous organizations in which so much of our adult life is spent (p.56).

It would certainly be fair to say that Jackson missed one other important institution where docility and obedience would pay off: the military. Students are typically asked to repeat the material they "learn" one more time, only this time for a high stakes test. These militaristic teaching methods "force children to focus primarily on unempathic competition (as is still done by grading on the curve) rather than empathic cooperation (as in team projects). And in significant ways, they suppress inquisitiveness" (Eisler, 2000, p.12). The rigid timelines typically associated with this type of knowledge regurgitation on high stakes tests are "at odds with research on how human beings form meaningful theories about the ways the world works, how students and teachers develop an appreciation of knowledge, and how one creates the disposition to inquire about phenomena not fully understood" (Brooks and Brooks, 1993, p.39). Yet they are perfect in a militaristic paradigm, where efficiency and speed are valued.

Like the military, many of our teaching practices allow no place for emotions, rather focusing on so-called rationality. The emphasis on rationality at the expense of empathy is linked to competition, according to Carlton (2001). He says, "The function of competition...[is] to assign each individual his place in the social system" (p.37). Rationality and objectivity, militaristic values, reign. Yet we know that, "if learning is to be effective and lasting, young people's emotions must also be engaged" (Eisler, 2000, p.136). Further, the processes we typically employ in schools favor male learners. Holtzman (2001) cites a 1986 study where it was found that,

The kind of knowledge that is most revered in education is received knowledge, which comes primarily from outside sources or authorities. This kind of knowing is largely the domain of men who have been socialized to believe this is the proper or only way to learn, as well as women who have learned that received knowledge is the way to successfully navigate academia (p.69).



One problem with this, according to Holtzman (2001), is that, “when models of learning are used that are predominantly male, both boys and girls receive messages about what kind of knowledge is superior” (p.69).

Our discipline procedures offer another example of militaristic practice and ideologies. Many of our discipline policies rely heavily on militaristic rhetoric. Since we know that, “language shapes our thoughts, and this our worldview” (Eisler, 2000, p.184), it is critical that we assess the language that we employ in our schools. According to Smith (1997), “language unquestioningly promotes values, sustains attitudes and encourages actions that create conditions that can lead to war” as well as, “creates the kind of enemy image essential to provoking and maintaining hostility” (p.2). In referring to criminal justice, Kraska (2001) makes an argument that is applicable to school discipline policies. He states, “The language we employ serves as a good indicator of the values and beliefs we use to structure our crime control actions and policies” (p.15).

Disciplinary terms and practices such as “Zero Tolerance” certainly reflect a military mindset and help to shape a militaristic worldview. In fact, the notion of zero tolerance laws emanates from the military (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). According to Casella (2001),

Some reasons for the persistence of systemic violence can be found in national rhetoric that sanctions forms of discriminatory punishment and policing. These policies create in our society a general feeling that teenagers are no good, out of control, and morally void. They bolster punishment in favor of pedagogy, control in favor of understanding (p.35).

In sum, “Zero tolerance is a policy based in militarized approaches and values. Here we have a practice that certainly serves to segregate the ‘haves’ from the ‘have-nots,’ the ‘good’ students from the ‘bad’ students” (DeVall, Finley and Caulfield, 2002, p.10). Clearly this argument can be extended to many other punitive practices, such as drug testing of students involved in extra-curricular activities.

Additionally, the way that many high school sports are run is militaristic. Fogarty (2000) states, "Sports play a central role in reinforcing militarism in several ways" (p.96). First, students interested in sport participation almost invariably compete for positions; once they are part of a team they typically must still compete, now for playing time. The competitive focus of some sports, like football, is "a model of conflict and warfare. The 'home team' provides a metaphor for the combatants of 'our side' as they do battle with those of 'the enemy'" (Fogarty, 2000, p.96).

Second, there is the emphasis on obedience, often in opposition to other qualities that could be fostered in sport, such as fun and fitness. As Chris, another student from Patricia Hersch’s ethnography states, “You can’t be bad, the coaches will kill you. There is more discipline in football than there is in school” (Hersch, 1999, p.139).

Children learn through athletic competition the virtue of playing strictly-bounded roles for the common good; this subordination of the individual will to the collective is the virtue of teamwork or 'being a team player.' It is also a manifestation of obedience to the authority of the coach, whose role gradually evolves as the child grows, from teacher to taskmaster and strategist (Fogarty, 2000, p.99).

Lesko (2000), in her interview with Woody, a teacher-candidate/football coach, found that he defined maturity as involving determination and being "in control," both attained through football. He also stated that he would have trouble working with kids who were unlike him, especially those un-disciplined, "lackadaisical athletes" (Lesko, 2000, p.196). This future teacher has been socialized into the militaristic paradigm and will, if allowed, pass it on to tomorrow's children.

Fogarty (2000) maintains that sports are a way to maintain tough and well disciplined soldiers. Lesko (2000) states that, "Organized sports and imperial wars developed simultaneously in the United States" (p.190). Fogarty (2000) notes that the mandatory physical fitness programs for schoolchildren in this country were imposed by the Kennedy administration and were the result of lobbying efforts by the Army and Air Force. In fact, physical education was first introduced during World War One as a means of preparing future soldiers. Even the fact that athletes are typically required to wear uniforms reinforces militaristic values, as they are intended to foster cohesion (like the cohesiveness of troops) as well as easy recognition of in and out-groups (like the easy identification of the enemy).

Third, sports prepare people, both participants and spectators, to engage in or support a collective effort. According to Fogarty (2000), "Required involvement in team sports at an early age readies people for active participation in a collective struggle" (p.98). Further, "people become accustomed to cheering warriors on the battlefield through a lifetime of practice cheering athletes on the playing field. The development of this 'spectator militarism' is an important and growing part of Americans' socialization into their militaristic society" (Fogarty, 2000, p.98). Further, the language of certain sports, especially football, "draws heavily on military argot: attack, blitz, bombs, ground and air assaults, offense, defense, penetrations, flanks, conflicts, and battles for territory are standard terms in sportscasters' vocabularies" (Lesko, 2000, p.190).

In sum, As McDaniel (1989) notes, it is no wonder that Joe Clark, the New Jersey high school principal known for his baseball bat and bullhorn has become the model for many in how to shape up not only students but staff as well. He is the epitome of militaristic practice going to school.

### Militarism and Curriculum

There are many ways in which our curricula are militaristic. One is the focus of study of major wars, typically covered in U.S History courses but also appearing in

Government, Literature, and other courses. According to McCarthy (1994), "Eighteen-year-olds come into college knowing more about the Marine Corps than the Peace Corps, more about the Bataan death march than Ghandi's salt march, more about organized hate than organized cooperation" (p.6). This war focus is generally coupled with the absence of peace studies. Eisler (2000) reminds us that, "including certain kinds of information in the curriculum-and not including other kinds of information-effectively teachers children what is, and what is not, valuable" (p.39). Thus peace studies are not important and war studies are. McCarthy (1992) comments on the lack of peace coverage in schools. "At commencement, graduates are told to go into the world as peacemakers. Yet in most schools, peace is so unimportant that no place is found for it in the curriculum" (p.6). McCarthy (1992) goes on to explain,

In elementary school and high school, and continuing through college, they [students] are taught the history of America's wars. Violence is taught as lore-the Alamo, Custer's Last Stand, the ride of Paul Revere, Lexington and Concord, Gettysburg. If SAT scores were based on high schoolers' knowledge of bloodshed and militarism, we would have a nation of young geniuses (p.8).

Our curriculums also tend to foster the us-versus-them, in-group versus out-group mentalities so important to military success. One way they do this is by painting a picture of the U.S as superior to all other cultures and as benevolent father to the downtrodden. According to Lesko (2000), "The 'permanent war' mentality can be mobilized through complex, evil portraits of 'others' who threaten invasion or the takeover of American institutions or interests" (p.191). As Regan (1994) states,

"The idea of collectively identifying with or against a particular group is a critical aspect of the process of emnification. To create an enemy that lives in the minds of a large percentage of a population requires a sustained effort that draws on the historical myths prevalent in society, makes use of metaphors that grow out of those myths, and presents an animate object that can be the target of public disdain or the source of public fear" (p.97-8).

The use and manipulation of symbols, such as saluting the U.S flag and the requirement to say the pledge of allegiance (of course this is now in dispute based on the 9<sup>th</sup> circuit court's recent decision) also reinforce an us-versus-them outlook. According to Regan (1994), "There is evidence to support the notion that education, particularly the early development of affect toward the nation, is a critical component in the formulation of symbols of political community" (p.99). For example, one study found that one third of sixth graders "believe that war is good if the U.S beats the communists" (Fogarty, 1994, p.99).

Our curriculums foster in-group pride at the expense of diversity. They do this by emphasizing our European, white past and excluding or minimizing the contributions by others. This has the effect of watering down the curriculum, but it also negatively impacts those children who do not see themselves as an important part of the country. Takaki's (1993) words are instructive: "What happens...when someone with the authority of a

teacher describes our society and you are not in it?” (p.53). What indeed happens, as Eisler (2000) maintains, is that, “those children whose identity is not valued or recognized in the school curriculum suffer in many ways from their exclusion-as evidenced by much higher dropout rates among black, Hispanic, and Native American students and the much higher suicide-attempt rates among gay and lesbian students” (p.43). Yet viewed through the lens of militarism, we can see how important so-called patriotic pride is.

Another way that our curriculum is militaristic is through the textbooks we use. Textbooks notoriously exclude minority contributions, or when they are included they are relegated to the “boxes” which few students read. Eisler (2000) states that, “in reading, science, mathematics, and social studies textbooks, even where more diversity was incorporated, it has often been in a fragmented, superficial fashion, as mere add-on to the ‘important’ material dealing with white Anglo-Saxon males” (p.42). This fosters the us-versus-them mentality described above. Also absent from or minimized in most history texts are the contributions of females. Holtzman (2000) states, “History books also chronicle primarily male involvement in discoveries, politics, inventions, war, and social change” (p.68).

Further, like the rest of our curriculum, texts reinforce the notion of the U.S government as heroic. According to Loewen (1994), U.S History textbooks glorify overt wars while continuing to hide the questionable covert assassinations and military actions the U.S has engaged in. In a review of seventeen U.S History texts at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, Finley (2002) found an average of 89.1 pages devoted to war or military engagements. In contrast, an average of just under five pages were devoted to peace, pacifism, nonviolence and the like. Loewen (1994) maintains that, “Educators and textbook authors seem to want to inculcate the next generation into blind allegiance to our country” (p.229). Further,

Citizens who embrace the textbook view would presumably support any intervention, armed or otherwise, and any policy, protective of our legitimate national interests or not, because they would be persuaded that all of our policies and interventions are on behalf of humanitarian aims. They could never credit our enemies with equal humanity (Loewen, 1994, p.229).

In sum, “textbook authors seem to believe that Americans can be loyal to their government only so long as they believe it has never done anything bad” (Loewen, 1994, p.235). Cooke, in Hicks (1988), states it nicely: “Good citizen is therefore about obeying authority, while to dissent is to be unpatriotic” (p.106).

The coverage of wars and the emphasis on the history of largely white males is not accidental; it is the result of militaristic ideology. Eisler (2000) asserts that, “the way in which history is told depends on who and what is considered important enough to be included and on how particular events are interpreted” (p.167). According to Griffen and Marciano, as cited in Loewen, (1994), “Textbooks offer an obvious means of realizing hegemony in education. By hegemony we refer specifically to the influence that

dominant classes or groups exercise by virtue of their control of ideological institutions, such as schools, that shape perceptions” (p.275).

One reason that we use textbooks and other curricular materials that reinforce militaristic ideology, according to Loewen (1994), is “to keep children ignorant so they won’t be idealistic. Many adults fear children and worry that respect for authority is all that keeps them from running amok. So they teach them to respect authorities whom adults themselves do not respect” (p.295).

The influx of military personnel into schools, where they teach military programs using military methods and curricula, is perhaps the clearest example of militarism in education. According to Rocawich (1994), one response to America’s so-called failing schools, as well as to our "out-of-control" youth violence, is to call in the military. Over 3000 schools nationwide have JROTC programs (Goodman, 2002; Rocawich, 1994). More than 500,000 students are enrolled in JROTC (Goodman, 2002). Some of the schools involved in JROTC have even been the recipients of “target academies,” where students not only take the Junior ROTC courses that all other students in the corps are offered, but they also take all of their other courses together. These courses are taught by military retirees and use military-provided materials (Goodman, 2001). Not surprisingly, a study of textbooks used in the Junior ROTC programs found them to be more pro-military than other schoolbooks (Rocawich, 1994).

While proponents argue that JROTC and programs like it are not recruiting for the military, they are “helping problem kids get a decent education and a taste for disciplined living,” others question the messages they put forth and the values inherent in a military-model of education (Rocawich, 1994, p.25). Of course, for those who “choose” to enlist after the program there are perks, including at least \$200 additional monthly pay (Goodman, 2002). According to Lt. Colonel Frank Houde, although, “The people who are for this often say it is ‘leadership’ training...it is really followership training” (Goodman, 2002, p.80). Quakers, well known for their opposition to war, made this statement about the JROTC program in Albany, New York: “Military programs promote obedience rather than leadership. They foster a culture of war and violence rather than peace” (Goodman, 2002, p.80). An additional concern is where the programs are implemented, or targeted, as some assert. JROTC programs are most frequently located in impoverished areas, areas that predominantly house African-Americans and other peoples of color. Thus, some argue, JROTC programs are encouraging a select group of students to potentially lay their lives on the line in the military, while not targeting other populations in a similar way (Goodman, 2002). Socialist Eugene Debs pointed this out long ago, when he said, “The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles.” It is true, according to Goodman (2002), that nearly half of the program’s graduates eventually enlist.

### Conclusions

While this was only one effort to assess the degree to which militarism has “gone to school,” it is an important first step. There are indeed many other examples of

militarism in school structures, processes and content. The use of military metaphors and ideology in schools has problematic consequences, some of which we can only speculate about. One of these is the continued, largely unquestioned, support for U.S military endeavors. Covell, in Raviv, Oppenheimer, and Bar Tal (1999) states, "Support for military intervention is facilitated by patriotism and by the positive character of U.S children's perception of the U.S political system fostered by schools" (p.118). Fogarty (2000) states, "People accept the intrusion of military personnel and values into government policy because they have been shown by the media the military institution's capability to advance U.S interests" (p.102). Clearly it is not just the media that shows people this; it is our educational institutions as well.

The rigid, militaristic structures, processes and content described herein are troublesome for another reason. That is because we tend to come to expect, and to reproduce, what we know. As Eisler (2000) notes,

People who, in their families and schools, are taught to rely on external control and fear of punishment...rather than on empathy and self-regulation, tend to require a social structure that uses fear or force to control the violent impulses we all sometimes experience. This in turn reinforces rigid rankings of domination, helping to replicate hurtful dominator patterns of relations in all spheres of life (p.232).

McDaniel (1989) reminds us that President Eisenhower, in his farewell speech to the nation, warned of the growing military-industrial complex. "Today he might warn us of the expanding military-educational complex-which is not a 'conspiracy' between the military and education, but rather a way of thinking about education that has become unhealthy military in nature" (p.16). Educators would be best to keep these words in mind when assessing both the overt and hidden curriculums of schools.

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