

war, children and peace project

a note to the reader:

The following script is culled from the individual concerns of Larissa Scrimshaw, Coral, Bronwyn, Susanne Guenther, Teagen Redekop, Jennifer, Patrick Keating and Ruth Macintosh. It also borrows from materials prepared by Project Peacemakers (look at them, there is much to consider). I have purposely written this in an episodic manner, so as to facilitate the possibility of presenting some - if not all - of the text. Indeed, depending on the circumstances we create, there is always more... or less. The script can also be used with a minimum of two people (three if you use the cooking scene), but more can take on the roles of the break-away scenes.

and like that.

Chris Gerrard-Pinker.

October 31, 2000

Scene: There are two utility tables with a variety of books piled on them, some pencils, a few note pads, waterglasses, a gun and three sturdy chairs. If possible, there are theatre lights to see the players by. There is no fourth wall. The Performers: two or three concerned individuals.

(music plays - steve riech's "18 musicians" - lx-up - music out)

Person 1: Good afternoon/evening.

Person 2: Welcome.

Person 1/2: Hi.

Person 1: I'm glad you came.

Person 2: We're glad you came.

Person 1: We're... We are here... and you are here... We are all here together to discuss -

Person 2: Present...

Person 1: Present, discuss... Present and discuss issues -

Person 2: The horrors -

Person 1: Yes... all right, present and discuss the issues and horrors-

Person 2: The atrocities -

Person 1: The stupidity -

Person 2: The insanity -

Person 1: The destruction -

Person 2: The business of -

Person 1: The politics of -

Person 2: The terror of -

Person 1: The evil of -

Person 2: Of -

Person 1: Of -

Person 1/2: War.

(beat)

Person 1/2: And children.

(pause - the players shuffle themselves)

Person 1: Welcome.

Person 2: Good afternoon/evening.

Person 1/2: Hi.

(beat)

Person 1: Let's get down to business -

Person 2: The issues at hand -

Person 1: Time and money -

person 2: Or the lack thereof...

Person 1: Hardly a matter of "lack thereof". For example, did you know that world-wide military spending is in the neighborhood of \$ 800 billion per annum?

Person 2: And that Canada's military budget, alone, is in the range of \$10 billion a year?

Person 1: Sweet little-ole Canada?

Person 2: And the number of countries authorized by the Canadian government to receive Canadian military exports more than doubled between 1990 and the present?

(slight beat)

Person 2: Alas, the wheels of industry...

Person 1/2: (knowingly) Keep turning.

Person 1: (light-heartily) The shekels generated from that kind of action could sure buy a lot of Nintendo games!

Person 2: Barbie Dolls for everyone-

Person 1: Ice cream -

Person 2: Nights out -

Person 1: World peace -

Person 1/2: (delighted) A trip to the moon!

Person 2: Hardly a matter of "lack thereof".

(beat)

Person 1: (slightly contrite) Yes, well... There's a time and place for everything and time's-a-wasting -

Person 2: There is much to do -

Person 1: Much to disseminate -

Person 2: Much to consider...

(slight beat)

Person 1/2: For example.

(beat)

Person 1: Did you know that there are - at a minimum - 30,000 nuclear war heads -

Person 2: "War heads"? Terrible expression.

Person 1: But true.

Person 2: True.

(slight beat)

Person 1: That these weapons, still in existence, are ready and willing to destroy -

Person 2: Decimate -

Person 1: Everything we know and think might be?

Person 2: That there are more than a 100 million land-mines...

Person 1/2 (outraged) Leftovers?!?

Person 2: Still buried close to the surface of our globe, ready, willing and designed to -

Person 1: That at-least 500 people are maimed -

Person 2 We mean legs, arms and faces blown off -

Person 1: And/or killed by these land-mines each and every week.

Person 1/2: (surprised) Each and every?!?...

(slight beat)

Person 1: That Canada...

Person 1/2: Our home and native land!

Person 1: Has produced interesting cocktails such as Agent Orange and exports -

Person 2: And supports... US and NATO's policy of being the first to use nuclear weapons.

Person 1: That in the last decade alone, over 2 million children, like yours -

Person 2: Our children -

Person 1: Have been killed -

2

Person 2: That's dead, no more -

Person 1: 4 million disabled -

Person 2: That means messed-up for life beyond what most of us can imagine.

Person 1: A million or more have been orphaned and 10's of millions more scarred -

Person 2: Physically and psychologically -

Person 1: By abduction and detention. Oh yeah. Rape -

Person 2: Procreation?

Person 1: The "cause?"

Person 2: Babies that have witnessed the murdering of their families...

Person 1/2: (disgusted) God?!?

(beat)

Person 1: What happened?

Person 2: What is happening?

(music plays - beat)

Person 1: Where does it begin?

Person 2: How does it propagate?

Person 1/2: (amazed) By what we know?

(the players re-shuffle into a different landscape and the music fades out)

Person 1: You have to step on the same places.

Person 2: Yeah.

Person 1: Watch it. It's really cold, the water.

Person 2: Are there sharks in it?

Person 1: No there's really jagged rocks. And if you fall they'll cut the leg right off. And there could be, monsters, probably sea monsters with really big heads.

Person 2: What's your name?

Person 1: Tail.

Person 2: Tail?

Person 1: We have to go on those four places.

Person 2: Big fish!!

Person 1: They're hungry. I could jump in and wrestle it. But I choose not to at this time.

Person 2: Cause they can always get back to you.

Person 1: Yeah, but what if they are going to eat you first?

Person 2: No way.

Person 1: Yeah but if they're really big and they gots real big teeth and big claws how can you stop them?

Person 2: Then you look deep in their eyes and say *ee na pow whan nut*. I know some kind of magic language and then it'll go to sleep.

Person 1: Like hibernate?

Person 2: Yeah. O.K., close your eyes.

Person 1: *Ee pow cow law ... what?*

Person 2: *Ee na pow whan nut*

Person 1: *Ee na pow whan nut*. Quick, let's go to the other side... we have to go to this place then to this place and to this one. Now we're gonna build a cabin now on this big place.

Person 2: What about a cave?

Person 1: No, a cabin. There's this big field... this is where we live now. We gotta build it now. We're pioneers.

Person 2: O.K.

Person 1: We just portaged across and we subdued the elements.

Person 2: Yeaaaaaaa!

Person 1: What's your name?

Person 2: .Nose.

Person 1: Tail and Nose... Tail knows... like a plane, I'm the tail and you're the nose.

Person 2: Like a plane... flying... I can see the monster down there. Do you see it? We can make it really small... all we gotta say is Oochunga.

Person 1/2: OOOCHUNGA!!!!

Person 2: Do you see it?

Person 2: Let's fly down and see how small it really is. Do you see it anywhere?

Person 1: It's hiding.

(Person 1 is busy)

Person 2: Whatcha doin'?

Person 1: Makin' a fort.

Person 2: Why are you making a fort?

Person 1: So I can protect myself from monsters. Monsters from the magic kingdom?

Person 2: I don't know any monsters.

Person 1: You never know when they're coming, so that's why this'll protect me ... and my friends. So if you're ever in trouble... knock on the door of the fort and I'll let you in if you're a friend. Do you want to come in?

Person 2: I don't know.

Person 1: It's really nice.

Person 2: Knock knock knock.

Person 1: Who is it? Friend or -

Person 2: It's Nose.

Person 1: Hi Nose.

Person 2: Hi.

Person 1: Do you want to come in? Here? More than anywhere else?

Person 2: Right now.

Person 1: Come on in.

Person 2: Okay. Heh.

Person 1: This is the fort... I'll show you around....

Person 2: It's neat.

Person 1: Yeah there's huts with food and/

Person 2: D'you have chips ahoy?

Person 1: No, chunks a plenty.

Person 2: I've never heard of them.

Person 1: They're good, they got chocolate chunks this big and hazelnuts and white chocolate and brown

Person 2: But then I've got all the fort. . . rooaar!! And I've got all them for myself and... Arrrrggggg ARRRRRGGGGGG RRRGGGGG ppttu!

Person 1: What are you doin'?

Person 2: I dug a tunnel from your fort to mine... my fort.

Person 1: HELLOOOOH!!

Person 2: Whatcha doin'?

(Tail picks up a gun)

Person 1: Look what I found.

Person 2: It's mine.

Person 1: No it's not. I found it.

Person 2: Give it.

Person 1: It's mine... It could hurt you.

Person 2: Only if you're making it up. If you're not making it up you won't get hurt. It can't hurt you... Only what other people make up can hurt you.

Person 1: It's mine.

Person 2: Mine.

Person 1: Mine.

Person 2: Mine.

(Tail holds gun to Nose's forehead - music plays - beat - (if slides of art-work are available, this would be a spot to show some of them - with or without commentary) - the players re-shuffle (Person 1 carefully places the gun baack on the desk) - beat - the music fades out)

Person 1: (slowly) Let us examine -

Person 2: We will access -

Person 1: The war cycle.

Person 2: The cycle of war that seems endless -

Person 1: Interminable -

Person 2: Ceaseless -

Person 1/2: Un-stoppable?!?

(beat)

Person 1: The people... The people of... say any given country, become repressed -

Person 2: Oppressed -

Person 1/2: (emphatic) Poor and Hungry.

Person 1: They grumble -

Person 2: They groan -

Person 1: (having an idea) They find ways to rebel against the government!

Person 2: The government - wanting to remain stable -

Person 1/2: Keeping the wheels of industry turning -

Person 2: Reinforces andbuilds up the military to control the people...

Person 1: Logical -

Person 2: Makes sense -

Person 1/2: (as if the lights have been turned on) Criminal!

Person 1: The government then buys weapons and expertise from other countries -

Person 2: Smart country -

Person 1: Progressive -

Person 2: Very cutting edge...

Person 1: Thinking of the government's future, they export more of their country's cash crops...

Person 2: Anything will do -

Person 1/2 : (inquisitively) They know no better?...

Person 1: (with great gusto) The future is now -

Person 2: Live every moment to it's fullest -

Person 1: Resources -

Person 1/2: We sometimes think - act -

Person 1: Are un-limited? -

Person 2: (more gusto) The global economy!

person 1/2: And the people work -

Person 1: Sacrifices must be made -

Person 1/2: And work -

Person 2: For the common good -

Person 1/2: And work -

Person 1: For the betterment of all -

Person 1/2: And work -

Person 2: (quietly) To the bone...

Person 1/2: (like a celebration?) For what's mine?!?

(slight beat)

Person 1: (quietly) And the people are Poor and Hungry.

(pause)

Person 2: How are we doing?

Person 1: Not good. Many dead that could be living.

Person 2: Many broken by -

Person 1: The wheels of industry?

Person 2: Nature?

(slight beat)

Person 1: Can we not learn?

Person 2: From nature?

Person 1: From our mistakes?

Person 2: From who -

Person 1: And what.

Person 2: We are?

Person 1: (echo) What we are?

(beat)

Person 1: How are we doing?

Person 2: Let's see.

(music plays - the plays re-shuffle themselves - (again, if there are slides of art-work available, this would be another spot to show them))

Person 1: Welcome.

Person 2: Good afternoon/evening.

Person 1/2: Hi.

Person 1: Welcome.

Person 2: To who we are/

Person 1: (echo) Who we are?...

(beat - the music fades out)

Person 1: My name is (person 1), I am dreaming about being at the beach and I'm wondering whether or not any of the turtle eggs that have been hatched will get past the seagulls and into the water? I am fifteen years old. I'm in my bedroom with all my favourite things: my favourite/special bear, a chest with all my jewellery, my - very expensive - clock radio/CD player; my stuff. I have a walk-in closet for all my cloths and a desk for all my concerns, and a carousel lamp - with little horses - to light me by. It's 7:20 am.

Person 2: My pillows are the best - good cotton sheets. My mother's clock radio goes off - it is 7:45 am - and it annoys me. It speaks of news... and blares music that I don't understand. I was thinking/dreaming about someplace-else...

Person 1: In another time and place my name is Henry Taylor, it is very muddy and cold in my tent. The orderly has just come to collect a few of us to bury soldiers - it's still dark. I wasn't picked - I am so tired. *(beat)* It is almost 8:00. My bed is warm, the bathroom on the second floor of my house is full of siblings and parents and I think to myself; "I'll skip the shower this morning".

Person 2: I am to guard the prison today. They make me run there - a long way. I stand with my gun for twelve hours straight in the rain - I am very hungry. When I get back to camp, I hear that two of my friends from the village were killed today. I want to cry, but I can't. I feel like maybe I've been shot too. It's very muddy and there is little to eat - it's dark.

Person 1: I always turn off the clock player before it plays, cause I can hear the mechanics of the CD player slipping into place before it plays. I don't think about what I wear too much. As long as my teeth are clean and my hair isn't too radical, I feel okay. Breakfast is whatever, some fruit, some cereal, some milk - whatever, as long as it doesn't take too long. I pick up my lunch and I'm out the door - It's ten to 9.

Person 2: In another time and place, I eat my meal slowly - so it will last. There is not too much to it. I wonder what will happen tomorrow? I can't remember what I'm here for... then, the role call. I stand at attention. These are my people, this is where I come from.

Person 1 : My first class is either "art" or "boarding". I don't like key-boarding, it's boring... and my art teacher changes what I do. So anyway, then I have

math and lunch and after I have "Vet"; something to with technologies. I don't know, the computers always seem to be down and everyone thinks our school is on welfare or something, so basically, he gives us "free" time. I like to see my friends at lunch, we check-in and play volley-ball and stuff. I have a busy schedule.

Person 2: When you see the enemy. They look like us? We lay our zones - we fire our guns - We fight? Twenty-five of us were killed...

Person 1/2: The rest scattered.

Person 1: It is well past 9:00 am, eastern standard day-light savings time, I am late?....

(music plays - pause - and the music fades out)

Person 1: I am confused. What exactly is the time?

Person 2: We are being interested in people elsewhere.

(beat)

Person 1: So, what is war? ...

Person 2: What isn't war?

Person 1: War has always been -

Person 2: Will always be -

Person 1: What we have always done -

Person 2: Who we are -

Person 1/2: *(like a celebration)* Who we think we are!

Person 1: My ball -

Person 2: My ball -

Person 1: You're different -

Person 2: I want what you have -

Person 1: It's mine -

Person 2: No mine.

Person 1: Mine...

(slight beat)

Person 2: I believe we've been here...

Person 1/2: (annoyed) Before?!

(pause)

Person 1: What is this all about anyway?

Person 2: Territory... what we think we want and don't have, I think.

Person 1: You know...

Person 2: What?

(slight beat)

Person 1: My place is the best place, because where I am is comfortable.

Person 2: My place is the best place, cause I;m here.

Person 1: Okay. My place is better, cause of the coupons.

Person 2: Well, I have Belgian chocolates!

Person 1: I have arm-rests!

Person 2: Guns?

Person 1: Many.

Person 2: My place comes with Xmas presents that you can open all-year round.

Person 2: Yeah right. (beat) Remember Henry?

(slight pause)

Person 1/2: (knowingly) Well, this is ridiculas.

(beat)

Person 1: Can we lay new ground and seed and -

Person 2: That might change what we know?

Person 1: History is confusing.

Person 2: Henry is dead.

Person 1: History is important.

Person 2: I just want to remember something better.

Person 1: So, let us think of a landscape that might make it better?

Person 2: For example?

(slight beat)

Person 1: Alas, how can we help - us all?

Person 2: By maybe doing things differently and watching what we do at the same time!

Person 1: Well, yes, of course.

Person 2: Let us first know from whence we came.

Person 1: Elements...

Person 2: Split into two and...

Person 1: And so on.

(slight beat)

Person 1: I have an idea.

Person 2: A bright idea?

Person 1: A map maybe?

Person 2: You mean, if we change the terrain that we know then things might alter?

Person 1: Yes... an idea that we might see what we are doing and therefore change what we might be!

(slight beat)

Person 1/2: Huh, huh.

(slight beat)

Person 2: Well?...

Person 1: Well...

Person 2: I was thinking...

Person 1: Good God! Wonders, indeed, never cease...

(beat - music plays)

Person 1: You were thinking, for example, that if we had a kind of recipe... things would -

Person 2: Could -

Person 1: Yes!... Might be different. All-right.

Person 2: All right.

Person 1: Okay... (begins to pace the space) a kind of cooking show, maybe? -

Person 2: Like a demonstration -

Person 1: A parable -

Person 2; A game show like that we all might understand now.

Person 1: At the very least...

(The players re-shuffle and act others - the music fades out)

Person 1 Hi, And welcome to, "What's For Supper." I'm here with Cookie and Amy who will be our chefs today

Person 2 Today we're going to be making something, some really interesting dishes

Person 3 I'll be making a side dish of war

Person 2 And I'll be making the main dish, peace

Person 1 O.k. Let's get started. Amy, you're making up a batch of war, how would our viewers start with a recipe like that.

Person 3 To make a side dish of war, I'll begin by sifting some hate in with a little bit of anger. Almost all servings of war have economic hardship and injustice as the base, although when you see the final result, these ingredients are less visible.

- Person 1 Well, it's already starting to have that characteristic messiness and smelliness that comes with war, let's see how peace looks at the beginning.
- Person 2 Here I have some talking and listening and I am adding it to the acceptance and respect that I mixed earlier. For the peace to be lasting some understanding should be mixed into the batter early on.
- Person 3 Over here I am chopping up some violence. Make sure it's not cut in a circle because you need sides to make war.
- Person 1 I guess without sides the war wouldn't set well.
- Person 3 That's right, sides give the war it's structure.
- Person 1 And how is the peace coming along?
- Person 2 Great, we have some peaceful negotiation which we added in small amounts, if you add too much at a time it gets lumpy and it doesn't work out. Next I'm going to add liberal amounts of human rights and democracy. These are ingredients which must be treated with great respect.
- Person 1 I can see that, if you were to ignore democracy and human rights, the peace might rise, but when you tasted it, it wouldn't taste like peace, it would have a bitter flavour.
- Person 2 (nods in agreement while focusing on the cooking)
- Person 1 Let's take another look at the war that's heating up over here.
- Person 3 Over here we're adding some destruction. Make sure it simmers a little bit, so that its flavor blends with everything else. Once the destruction is mixed with the anger, hatred and violence we're going to add four cups of greed. You have to have a lot of greed so that the war is thick and sticky.
- Person 1 What always amazes me is the difference between these two dishes. When you put them onto the table, most people want to eat peace, but it's a tricky dish to make, it takes a lot of commitment and energy to have a good batch of peace. What else are you adding Cookie?
- Person 2 Here we're adding two cups of generosity, that's two cups, if you don't add enough it won't rise.
- Person 3 O.k. here we're adding some superiority, just a little is enough to make the dough larger and to make the whole thing bubble over. Great now we're almost done, I'm just going to garnish that with a bit of misunderstanding and it will be a huge mess, which is what you want when you are serving war.

Person 2 Now it's important to take a generous amount of equality and knead it well through all the dough. It's important that the equality be evenly mixed, so that the peace will rise evenly. You'll notice that over here I have a dish of peace that I mixed yesterday so you can see the finished results.

Person 1 Didn't you make up a batch of war yesterday too?

Person 3 Well, the war I made yesterday has gotten out of hand, it would have been too dangerous to bring into the studio.

Person 2 You'll notice that the peace is light and even, it's important that you make a fresh batch regularly, this isn't something that you can make once and keep in the fridge for months, it's a recipe that needs constant care.

Person 3: war, on the other hand is easy to make, but often gets out of hand. And the mess you have to clean up afterwards.

Person 1 Now that your dishes are almost done, I want to talk about the quality of these meals for children. It's true that children can survive on a steady diet of war. However, the nutritional content just isn't enough for a child to thrive on.

Person 3 Yes, unfortunately when only eating war, a child will often lack nutrition and education. And the violence that's mixed in can cause serious health problems.

Person 1 Peace on the other hand, provides a strong nutritional base for children. It allows them to have a childhood, with time to play and thrive.

Person 2 That's right, although, peace alone doesn't make healthy children. They also need food, education and to have their basic needs met.

Person 1 Yes, but so all those other nutrients won't be absorbed properly without peace, it's really an essential dish for childhood.

(Everyone nods)

Person 1 That's all that time we have, thanks for watching. Remember not to actually eat the war, it will give you a stomach ache,

Person 3 But it's hard to resist...

Person 2 but the peace will nourish large amounts of people at any gathering.

Person 1 / 2 / 3 See you next time.

(music? - long pause)

Person 2: This is for fun?

Person 1: In the theatre the lights can be turned on.

Person 2: We can go home?

Person 1: No.

(pause - music out?)

Person 1: This is a replica of an 8 millimetre, K-calibre, Bruni, Semi-Automatic. Allow me to acquaint you with some of it's characteristics and mechanics. If and when you pull the trigger, the firing pin will fall onto a soft metal cap at the rear end of the cartridge. The detonating compound will ignite, sending a flash into the main body of the powder case, and the charge will explode. The bullet will be forced out and the cartridge will be blown back against the breech block, under 5 tons per square inch of pressure. Driven by a muzzle energy of 200 foot-pound, the bullet will travel at 755 feet per second. *(pause)* Does this appear to be a toy to you?

(slight beat)

Person 1/2: The choice is yours.

(another slight beat)

Person 2: Can we go home, this is scary?

Person 1: Not until this is...

Person 1/2: Over?

(music out/curtain)

end