

Women4Peace: Transformative Learning through International Collaboration and Peacebuilding

CHRISTINE LYNN NORTON
Texas State University

JORGE ANDRES MORA
Universidad de La Salle – Colombia

CARRIE J. BODEN
Texas State University

AMERICA AMBRIZ
Texas State University

Abstract

Recent literature suggests that education abroad programs provide a unique opportunity for transformative learning experiences (Gibson, 2017). This paper examines one such approach through a case study of an international exchange program called Women4Peace that offered education abroad opportunities for students and faculty from the United States and Colombia. This program was developed to intentionally maximize opportunities for transformative learning that could enhance key skills for global citizenship, including empathy, collaboration, and self-awareness (Hanson, 2010). This paper provides a detailed summary of the Women4Peace initiative, along with a historical and sociopolitical rationale for the program. This paper also presents strategies that Women4Peace employed to maximize transformative learning among participant to contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Colombia. Student and faculty reflections are provided to highlight the transformative learning that occurred during Women4Peace.

Keywords: transformative learning, study abroad, Colombia, women’s leadership, collaboration, peacebuilding

Introduction

International education provides students opportunities to interact with people from other cultures, and can be a catalyst for ongoing personal and professional development. Recent literature suggests that education abroad programs provide a unique opportunity for transformative learning experiences (Gibson, 2017; Hunter-Johnson & Newton, 2016). These experiences are considered transformative because they promote emancipatory principles in which “the learner is presented with an alternative way of interpreting feelings and patterns of action; the old meaning scheme or perspective is negated and is either replaced or reorganized to incorporate new insights” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 88). This process helps the learner develop empathy and embrace differing world views, especially when there is meaningful collaboration towards a common human rights goal (Hawkins & Knox, 2014). Likewise, the cross-cultural, experiential learning that takes place in international education helps develop collaboration and problem-solving skills that can aid in diplomacy and peacebuilding (NAFSA, 2020a). In fact, experts from both higher education and foreign relations have called for a national strategy that recognizes the role of international education in the peacebuilding process (NAFSA).

This paper examines one such approach through a case study of an international exchange program called Women4Peace that offered education abroad opportunities for students and faculty from the United States and Colombia. This program was developed to intentionally maximize opportunities for transformative learning that could enhance key skills for global citizenship, including empathy, collaboration, and self-awareness (Hanson, 2010). This paper provides a detailed summary of the Women4Peace initiative, along with a historical and sociopolitical rationale for the program. This paper also presents strategies that Women4Peace employed to maximize transformative learning among participants to contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Colombia. Student and faculty reflections are provided to highlight the transformative learning that occurred during Women4Peace.

Background of Women4Peace

Women4Peace arose from a grant winning team, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the Colombian Institute of Educational Loans and Studies Abroad (ICETEX) within the framework of the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund. A network of eight higher educational institutions from Colombia (Universidad de La Salle, Universidad de Los Andes, Universidad Nacional, CESA School of Business, Fundación Universitaria del Área Andina, Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, Universidad del Tolima, and Universidad de Santander, as well as three from the U.S. (Texas State University, Purdue University, and North Carolina State University) created this project to develop leadership and academic knowledge of undergraduate women from different disciplines interested in research and academic training, in working with communities, and in the implementation of regional projects that contribute to peacebuilding and social development in rural areas of Colombia. The project was made up of a team of mostly female students and professors, with one student and one professor from each university, who developed academic work that led to the formulation of four regional interventions to empower women as agents of change in a post-conflict scenario in Colombia.

The project was developed in three main stages: online academic training, student mobility, and project formulation. During the first stage, the professors designed four specific training courses in peacebuilding, rural development, business, and innovation that students took to create effective interdisciplinary engagement and learn about peacebuilding key issues. In the second stage, two academic visits were conducted, one in the U.S. and one in Colombia that allowed participants to develop intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue, teamwork, and critical thinking. During the visits, students exchanged ideas and information of local good practices in agriculture, social innovation, entrepreneurship, and they also learned about Colombia's armed conflict and the current implementation of the peace accords with the FARC guerrilla movement. The visits provided students with tools and knowledge and paved the way to formulate regional intervention proposals on women's empowerment and social development in Colombia. As a result of the project, three women-targeted initiatives were proposed: 1) cultivating support networks to empower rural women, 2) using art as a form to promote well-being, and 3) promoting start-ups driven by Colombian women who have been victims of domestic violence.

Women4Peace is an example of cross-cultural, interdisciplinary work among students to develop critical thinking and understand social issues from different perspectives. The fact that the consortium was made up of such a diverse group of higher education institutions facilitated an inclusive study where the diversity of the profiles of teachers and students was highly valued. Not only was there cross-cultural exchange, but the project also brought together female students from high-income, urban universities with students from regional universities with particular backgrounds such as those coming from indigenous communities or those who had been directly affected by violence and war. American students learned that limited resources did not stymie Colombian local farmers to develop exemplary good practices in agriculture. In addition, Women4Peace prepared female students to overcome language and cultural barriers, allowing them to praise values that transcend geography and underscores women as agents of change.

Historical and Socio-political Rationale for Women4Peace

There are two main factors behind the rationale of the Women 4 Peace project. The first one has to do with the consolidation of peace and social development in a post-conflict scenario in Colombia. After a five-decade internal conflict which claimed at least 220,000 lives and displaced more than six million people, on November 24th, 2016 the Colombian Government signed a peace accord with the FARC-EP guerrilla movement (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), which laid the foundations to end conflict and build a stable and long-lasting peace (Morales, 2018). Taking into account this context, the Women4Peace project was designed to address key issues in peacebuilding, such as the development of productive projects, social innovation and entrepreneurship, among others.

The second factor attends to empowering women, especially from the rural sector, as a result of a glaring gap between men and women, as well as traditional gender roles. According to the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia – DANE (Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural, 2017), a high percentage of rural women (37.4%) live in poverty, compared to a much lower percentage (12%) of women who live in the same condition in the cities. In addition, the percentage of female-headed households who live in poverty amounts to 41.9% in comparison to male-headed households (37.6%). Rural women and girls continue to take care of domestic tasks, partly because men take on the hard tasks related to agriculture, such as livestock, fishing, mining, and felling trees and, in part, because this division of labor is more a cultural phenomenon. Both men and women who live in the rural area feel that the house belongs to women. Based on this context, the Women4Peace project aimed to increase awareness about this situation by training female students willing to contribute to peacebuilding by enhancing women's participation in economic decision-making.

International Collaboration and Peacebuilding

Experts in conflict resolution and peacebuilding assert that “international engagement and global learning can help mitigate conflict and empower individuals to become peacebuilders” (NAFSA, 2020b, para. 4); therefore, international collaboration and peacebuilding were key elements of the Women4Peace initiative. Given the collective trauma that Colombia has sustained, along with increasing rates of violence in the United States, both Colombian and U.S. students had a vested interest in working together as women to address these issues by engaging in peacebuilding projects on the local level. Students formed small teams to initiate these local projects, but first, they had to develop their collaborative skills and abilities to work together as a group. In order to achieve group cohesion, Women4Peace utilized experiential peacebuilding activities that gave students and faculty opportunities to develop their communication and problem-solving skills. Group members engaged in physical activities, such as problem-solving and trust-building games and initiatives that promoted transformative learning through interaction and play.

The Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding (2020) provides a comprehensive definition of experiential peacebuilding:

Experiential peacebuilding is best thought of as an active process with transformative power. It is truly an experience, comprised of rigorous learning and physical activity – two aspects that unite in a kinesthetic effect on the body and mind. The theory behind this work is that experiential learning can build common language and empathy, accelerate trust and facilitate positive experiences within a group. Substantial evidence shows that certain types of experience, particularly cooperative learning toward the mastery of critical life skills, such as communication, creative problem solving, and leadership, and sharing a peak life experience, are especially likely to increase the capacity for compassion towards others and promote group solidarity. (para. 1-4)

Based on Lederach's (1997) book *The Moral Imagination*, experiential peacebuilding highlights the importance of building relationships, positive risk-taking, creating space for creativity, and promoting curiosity about varying worldviews. According to the Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding, these

types of experiences assist with “leadership development, the formation of viable communities and organizational capacity building” (OBP, 2020, para. 4).

Along with the implementation of experiential peacebuilding activities with the students and faculty, Women4Peace was also diligent about incorporating transformative learning best practices for education abroad.

Maximizing Transformative Learning in International Education

In order to maximize transformative potential for students, it is critical to understand what program components lead to transformative learning in an international context. First, Women4Peace ensured that students were selected into the program for the right reasons. Students’ views of education abroad experiences as personal vacation time have been identified as a block to transformative learning (Bain & Yaklin, 2019); therefore, only students who demonstrated a serious commitment to the human rights goals of the project were selected. Women4Peace also focused on maximizing transformative learning by priming students for the transition into a new culture by educating students on the cultural, economic, and historical background of the host countries. Women4Peace did this very intentionally for both travel to the U.S. and travel to Colombia.

In addition to priming students and faculty, Women4Peace included experiences that aided the academic objectives of the project, as well as put students in contact with immersive cultural experiences. Maximizing the contact students had with a culture different from their own helped facilitate student transformation (Bain & Yaklin, 2019). However, these transformational changes can be preceded by an experience of culture shock and feelings of “otherness” (Klein & Wikan, 2019). For this reason, Women4Peace was careful to make sure that the initial introduction to cultural differences was not so great as to induce feelings of powerlessness or helplessness within students, as such feelings may result in emotional disconnect or egocentrism which can block transformative learning (Foronda & Belknap, 2012).

Assignments were given which promoted a deeper understanding of the host culture, coupled with opportunities for personal reflection, which encouraged students to compare their personal beliefs with the new culture, a process known to lead to deep personal transformation (Dunn, Dotson, Cross, Kesner, & Lundahl, 2014; Namaste, 2017, Intolubbe-Chmil, Spreen, & Swap, 2012; Stone & Duffy, 2015). Research shows that the prevalence of these well-constructed assignments appears to have a greater influence on transformative experience than program length (Strange & Gibson, 2017), so Women4Peace was intentional in providing these types of assignments ahead of time because the program only included one week in the United States, followed by a week in Colombia.

Though students completed the assignments, Women4Peace maximized transformative learning for both students and faculty. On an individual level, transformative learning was fostered in students by methods that required deep learning and catered to students as whole, complex individuals, rather than information receptacles (Davis-Manigaulte, Yorks, & Kasl, 2006). Common tactics included interactive and collaborative, experiential exercises such as group problem-solving, case-studies, discussion, and self-reflection (Adelopo, Asante, Dart, & Rufai, 2017; Alterio, 2011; Brock, & Abel, 2012; Cranton, 2002; Yarosz, & Fountain, 2003; Laver & Croxon, 2015; Xing, Popov, Zhu, Horwitz, & McIntyre, 2019). Self-reflection is critical to transformative learning; therefore, Women4Peace gave students an opportunity understand their own beliefs, explore new avenues of perception, and rework mental schemas. Students were exposed to opinions and views that differed from theirs, which increased their likelihood of experiencing an activating event or catalyst to begin the transformative process (Cranton, 2002). Women4Peace also gave students the opportunity to apply previous life knowledge to the new situations to which they were exposed, in order to generate the reworking of mental frameworks and also enhance the process of transformation (Stacey, Oxley, & Aubeeluck, 2015; Wyant, & Lockwood, 2018).

Not only did students experience transformative learning, but so did faculty members from different disciplines. When faculty experienced this type of transformation, it impacted their beliefs about the nature and methods of pedagogy, often resolving discrepancies between their belief in pedagogical

theory and actual practices. Both self-study and critical reflection were implemented to promote transformational learning, all with the goal of enabling faculty to better understand their own teaching practices (Samaras, Hjalmarson, Bland, Nelson, & Christopher, 2019). Through critical reflection, faculty reflected on the role of education within their culture, the link between education and the creation of a better society, and their place within that system (Liu, 2015). According to Franco (2019), this process required “constant analyzing, questioning, and critiquing the established assumption and implementing changes...” (p.199). Therefore, Women4Peace incorporated methods that supported transformative learning for faculty, including peer groups that utilized a systematic method of self-reflection (Samaras, et al., 2019) and reflective writing (Sockman, B. R., & Sharma, 2008). The following reflections from a Women4Peace student and faculty member, demonstrate the transformative learning that occurred as a result of international collaboration and experiential peacebuilding, as well as the intentional use of transformative practices in education abroad.

Student Reflections: America—“In Her Words”

I used to think that because I am a Latina, a daughter of Mexican immigrants and a first-generation college student, I would never get to have an opportunity like Women4Peace. I also thought that because I was only a student, there was nothing I could teach others. As a social work student, I am exposed to the disparities and injustices in the world on a daily basis. This makes it much easier to feel small and hopeless, which is how I was beginning to feel. Nevertheless, in the face of those feelings, this project allowed me to flourish personally as a student, a friend, and a future social worker. Women4Peace gave me the opportunity to travel both in the United States and abroad, learn more comprehensively about peacebuilding, make connections around the U.S. and Colombia, and make lifelong friends.

Not only did this project impact me and the other Women4Peace faculty and students, but it also made an impact on my parents, social work peers, and friends on social media, as I made sure to share the concepts and ideas we discussed throughout the process. I passed on the new information I learned to my parents when I returned home, and to my social work peers through updates and discussions on social media. I know that this project planted a seed of hope for peace that not only motivated me, but also motivated others to be a part of the peacebuilding process.

Although there were many things I learned from this experience, there are two specific skills that were strengthened that I know will help me as a professional in the field of social work. My intercultural communication skills were strengthened in a way that could not have occurred in the classroom alone. The importance of learning about other cultures and their history is especially significant in the field of social work in order to understand peoples’ different needs and worldviews. A social worker cannot meet a client’s needs if they are not aware of the individual’s culture and background. To complete this project, our small group had to identify the needs of the rural women with whom we developed our project, so that the projects we incorporated were relevant to those specific communities.

I also learned how important it is to consider and incorporate different educational backgrounds, perspectives, and cultures when working together to try to solve social and political challenges in our world. While working on these projects, we all had different perspectives, which allowed us to think outside-the-box and have a holistic approach. The students and professors involved in this project came from a wide range of disciplines such as business, social work, soil sciences, psychology, communications, and more. This taught us how to look at a problem from many different angles and gave us the skills to work together with people with different mindsets and approaches to solving political and social issues.

On a personal level, this project helped me build confidence as a student and future social worker. I used to believe that, because I am a young woman and a student, nobody would see any value in what I had to say. Throughout this project, I was able to use my life experiences to contribute ideas for the formation of the project. I did not think that my life story had any meaning, but this experience made me realize how valuable and powerful every person’s story really is. I learned that it does not matter where you come from, or what you have been through, your story matters.

This experience also helped me improve my self-efficacy and willingness to set more challenging goals for myself. During the process of the Women4Peace project, I was a full-time college student, an intern at an adult education organization (interning 40+ hours per week), and was in the process of developing *Healthy Hermanas*, a social media platform that my colleague and I created to share health-related content geared toward the Latinx community. However, I participated in and completed the Women4Peace curriculum, which consisted of four modules, video calls, and group work with my peers from around the U.S. and in Colombia. This meant I had to organize and plan accordingly for the project to be a success. Regardless of how much was on my plate, I successfully completed my internship, graduated summa cum laude, and completed the life-changing Women4Peace project with my peers.

This international experience also gave me several tools that will be used in my work as a social worker. It improved my cultural competency and allowed me to see social and political issues from a bird's eye view. It strengthened my ability to work with people from other cultures by learning about their history, their society, and how interconnected we all are around the world. This experience gave me comfort in working with people from cultures different than my own. Overall, this experience helped me identify many qualities and skills I did not know I had and allowed me to flourish and realize my true potential.

Faculty Reflections: Jorge—"In His Words"

In my opinion, the Women4Peace project was a very valuable practice of transformative learning because it took into account two important features: diversity and experience. The project was diverse in nature, as its participants came from different backgrounds and disciplines. As the consortium consisted of American and Colombian universities, we were able to look at things from different perspectives and experience different languages, cultures, and lifestyles. Furthermore, the students' areas of study ranged from Engineering and Administrative Sciences to Arts, Agriculture, and Social Sciences, which promoted the emergence of varying positions that incited critical thinking and reflection. Students and faculty from different universities had their own expertise and backgrounds. Thus, urban affluent students could exchange points of views with low and middle-income students who lived in small municipalities or rural areas, sometimes affected by the armed violence in Colombia.

This dynamic created empathy in the group and an interest in what happens to others. I was struck by how we developed a true feeling of solidarity due to the experiences we shared. The experiential nature of the project brought about profound changes in peoples' thoughts and perspectives as students directly encountered how people live in other parts of the world. In addition, experiential learning allowed us to perceive and assess concepts and impressions that were previously overlooked.

Through my own experience as coordinator of the project, I was able to undergo a meaningful change in my way of thinking. Only by sharing everyday situations with the group of female professors and students was I able to understand the importance of using gender-inclusive language in daily communication, which led me to reflect that in many different aspects women do not feel represented. These experiences helped me own some of my male privilege and taught me that it is vital to promote the empowerment of women and fully embrace gender equality. Thanks to my work in this project, I realized that reclaiming women's rights and bridging the gender gap in the workplace deserves the highest importance. However, it seems that there is not enough consciousness about this; however, the experiential learning opportunities provided by Women4Peace helped us build relationships with each other and become aware of situations and tacit assumptions that can be problematic.

Discussion

These student and faculty reflections provide insight into the power of transformative learning. Shifts in identity, attitudes, and perceptions were some of the profound results of the Women4Peace project, all of which have been identified in the research as key aspects of the transformative learning process (Baldwin, 2019; Illeris, 2014). However, another profound outcome occurred during Women4Peace that can deepen our understanding of the power of international transformative learning

experiences: the development of empathy. Though there is little research showing the link between transformative learning experiences and empathy development, Livingston's (2019) exploration of a transformative learning experience on the Texas-Mexico border, comprised of a 4-week program for medical students to develop compassionate leadership focused on social justice, does begin to shed light on the role that transformative learning can play in empathy development. Students in this program had encounters with the "other" and bore witness to many social injustices, which led to the development of emotional empathy, not just cognitive empathy (Livingston). A similar process occurred during Women4Peace, as demonstrated by the student and faculty reflections shared in this essay.

This process of transcending cognitive empathy, which is defined as having a mental model of someone else's emotional state based on one's own experience, fails when encountering people who are different from us because it is only propositional knowledge (Livingston, 2019). However, transformative learning in an education abroad context seems to help move participants towards emotional empathy, which comes from having shared experiences with those who are different from us, which is experiential knowledge (Herron, 1992). Additionally, Kasl and Yorks' (2016) strategies for creating empathic space among diverse groups is relevant to what occurred during Women4Peace. Women4Peace employed the strategy of whole-person dialogue, which Kasl and Yorks define as an "encounter with feelings, ideas, and actions from within the other's life world" (p. 6). Women4Peace participants joined together in whole-person dialogue around such difficult topics as gender roles, armed conflict, sexual violence, drugs, and poverty. However, these discussions were open-hearted and empathic, leading to greater cross-cultural understanding and awareness.

Implications for Practice

This program was developed to intentionally maximize opportunities for transformative learning by enhancing key skills for global citizenship, including empathy, collaboration, and self-awareness (Hanson, 2010). The strategies used in this project to achieve these goals have broad implications for the larger field of education abroad. In particular, the human rights focus of this program could be applied to other international exchange programs, along with opportunities for cultural immersion, self-study, and critical reflection. At the core of this program were experiential learning opportunities, in which faculty and students engaged in novel experiences together, followed by opportunities for reflection and integration of learning. The role of experiential learning as a transformative practice is one that is well documented in the education abroad literature, and should be a core element of international education (Bain & Yaklin, 2019).

Conclusion

Successful education abroad programs that incorporate transformative learning result in significant positive personal and professional changes for both students and faculty. These changes are typically the result of perspective transformation and are marked by an expansion of participants' attitudes, ways of thinking, and frames of reference to a more global and conscious level i.e. global citizenship (Daly, 2019, Dass-Brailsford & Serrano, 2010). However, students and faculty also develop a new sense of empathic identity, grounded in self-efficacy regarding helping others and contributing to building peace in the world. This was certainly true for participants in the Women4Peace project, as articulated through these final reflections from America, the social work student who participated in the project:

It was not until the Women4Peace project was completed that I realized that I *did* deserve to be in this position. I did deserve to bask in this experience with my peers because my contribution matters, our contribution matters. Our stories and ideas as young Latina women matter in the peacebuilding process. This experience fostered deeper learning and engagement, and I know it

will have a lasting impact on myself and my peers. I will use the skills I learned during Women4Peace to deepen my work serving others in my community and beyond.

References

- Adelopo, I., Asante, J., Dart, E., & Rufai, I. (2017). Learning groups: the effects of group diversity on the quality of group reflection. *Accounting Education, 26*(5/6), 553–575. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0963924.2017.1327360>
- Alterio, M. (2011). Using a narrative engagement framework to encourage transformative learning. *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics (Learning & Teaching), (4)*, 10–23.
- Bain, S. F., & Yaklin, L. E. (2019). Study abroad: Striving for transformative impact. *Research in Higher Education Journal, 36*.
- Baldwin, C. K. (2019). *Transformative learning and identity: A review and synthesis of Dirkx and Illeris*. Adult Education Research Conference. New Prairie Press.
- Brock, S. S. B., & Abel, A. L. (2012). Creating a learning climate for the 21st century: Applying transformative learning to teaching methods in business schools. *Transformative Dialogues: Teaching & Learning Journal, 5*(3), 1–16.
- Cranton, P. (2002). Teaching for transformation. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, (93)*, 63–71. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.50>
- Daly, N. (2019). “It inspires and motivates you to do something that makes a difference”: Transformational education experiences and global citizenry in a tertiary travel award. *Waikato Journal of Education (2382-0373), 24*(1), 21–31. <https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v24i1.643>
- Dass-Brailsford, P., & Serrano, A. (2010). The transformative effects of international education at an HIV/AIDS clinic in South Africa. *Journal of Transformative Education, 8*(4), 269–285. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344611428158>
- Davis-Manigaulte, J., Yorks, L., & Kasl, E. (2006). Expressive ways of knowing and transformative learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, (109)*, 27–35.
- Dunn, A. H., Dotson, E. K., Cross, S. B., Kesner, J., & Lundahl, B. (2014). Reconsidering the local after a transformative global experience: A comparison of two study abroad programs for preservice teachers. *Action in Teacher Education, 36*(4), 283–304.
- Foronda, C. L., & Belknap, R. A. (2012b). Short of transformation: American ADN students’ thoughts, feelings, and experiences of studying abroad in a low-income country. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship, 9*(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1515/1548-923X.2411>
- Hawkins, C. A., & Knox, K. (2014). Educating for international social work: Human rights leadership. *International Social Work, 57*(3), 248–257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872813519462>
- Hunter-Johnson, Y., & Newton, N. (2016). *Exploring the transformational learning experiences of Bahamian students studying in the United States*. Commission for International Adult Education.
- Illeris, K. (2014). Transformative learning and identity. *Journal of Transformative Education, 12*(2), 148–163.

- Intolubbe-Chmil, L., Spreen, C. A., & Swap, R. J. (2012). Transformative learning: Participant perspectives on international experiential education. *Journal of Research in International Education, 11*(2), 165–180.
- Kasl, E., & Yorks, L. (2016). Do I really know you? Do you really know me? Empathy amid diversity in differing learning contexts. *Adult Education Quarterly, 66*(1), 3-20.
- Klein, J., & Wikan, G. (2019). Teacher education and international practice programmes: Reflections on transformative learning and global citizenship. *Teaching & Teacher Education, 79*, 93–100. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.12.003>
- Laver, S., & Croxon, L. (2015). Narrative pedagogy with evolving case study – A transformative approach to gerontic nursing practice for undergraduate nursing students. *Nurse Education in Practice, 15*(5), 341–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2015.04.002>
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *The moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace*. Oxford University Press.
- Liu, K. (2015). Critical reflection as a framework for transformative learning in teacher education. *Educational Review, 67*(2), 135–157. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2013.839546>
- Livingston, J.E. (2019). Developing professional identities and fostering resilience in medical students and residents: Transformative learning on the Texas-Mexico border. In T.J.Carter, C.J. Boden, & K. Peno (Eds.). *Transformative Learning in Healthcare and Helping Professions Education: Building Resilient Professional Identities*. IAP.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural. (2017). *El Desarrollo Rural en Cifras. 2. Evolución de los determinantes de la pobreza rural en Colombia 2010-2016*. Retrieved from: <http://bibliotecadigital.agronet.gov.co/handle/11438/8597>.
- Morales, J. S. (2018). The impact of internal displacement on destination communities: Evidence from the Colombian conflict. *Journal of Development Economics, 131*, 132-150.
- NAFSA. (2020a). *International education: What place in U.S. diplomacy?* Retrieved from: <https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-international-education/international-education-what-place-us-diplomacy>
- NAFSA. (2020b). *The role of international education in peacebuilding*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-international-education/role-international-education-peacebuilding>
- Namaste, N. B. (2017). Designing and evaluating students' transformative learning. *Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 8*(3).
- Samaras, A.P., Hjalmarson, M., Bland, L. C., Nelson, J. K., & Christopher, E. K. (2019). Self-study as a method for engaging STEM faculty in transformative change to improve teaching. *International Journal of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education, 3*(2), 195–213.

- Sockman, B. R., & Sharma, P. (2008). Struggling toward a transformative model of instruction: It's not so easy! *Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies*, 24(4), 1070–1082.
- Stacey, G., Oxley, R., & Aubeeluck, A. (2015). Combining lived experience with the facilitation of enquiry-based learning: a “trigger” for transformative learning. *Journal of Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing*, 22(7), 522–528. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpm.12228>
- Stone, G. A., & Duffy, L. N. (2015). Transformative learning theory: A systematic review of travel and tourism scholarship. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 15(3), 204–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2015.1059305>
- Strange, H., & Gibson, H. J. (2017). An investigation of experiential and transformative learning in study abroad programs. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 29(1), 85–100.
- Wyant, B. R., & Lockwood, B. (2018). Transformative learning, higher order thinking, and the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 69(3), 49–67.
- Xing, W., Popov, V., Zhu, G., Horwitz, P., & McIntyre, C. (2019). The effects of transformative and non-transformative discourse on individual performance in collaborative-inquiry learning. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 98, 267–276. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.04.022>
- Yarosz, D. & Fountain, S. (2003) Facilitating transformative learning groups: Reflections on Mexico and Highlander. *Adult Learning*, 14(3), 17–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104515950301400306>

Author's Note: Christine Lynn Norton, PhD, LCSW, is an associate professor of social work at Texas State University. Jorge Andres Mora is a coordinator of Global Initiatives of the Directorate of International and Interinstitutional Relations. Carrie J. Boden, PhD, is the former Chair of the Department of Occupational, Workforce, and Leadership Studies at Texas State University. America Ambriz is an undergraduate social work student at Texas State University.

Citation: Norton, C. L., Mora, J. A., Boden, C. J., Ambriz, A. (2020). Women4Peace: Transformative learning through international collaboration and peacebuilding. *Journal of Transformative Learning*, 7(1), 23-32.