The Language of Justice:
The place of the arts in religious education for prompting the imagination, both for seeing and responding to domestic and global issues
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Précis:
The classroom can be a place of isolation with various experiences of otherness as the educator attempts to bridge the social divides. Although students and educator alike might not speak the same language, it is the privilege of the educator to aid everyone in communicating together as a religious learning community. As the community begins to make meaning together they learn new languages. As Augusto Boal states “by learning a new language, a person acquires a new way of knowing reality and of passing that knowledge on to another.” In addressing issues of equality, justice and freedom in the classroom and in the world, it is vital that we value and give space for every language and use education as a work of justice. This workshop, informed by the work of bell hooks, Maxine Greene and Augusto Boal, will engage participants in non-dominant language forms in order to prompt imagination for seeing and responding to domestic and global issues.

Main concepts/issues, and or practice(s) being addressed:
The main concepts/issues being addressed in this workshop are providing new languages for acquiring new ways of knowing and acting within a religious learning community to both see and respond to domestic and global issues.

Intended Audience: Who would benefit from attending your workshop? (e.g. teachers of religion in school? In communities of faith? In higher education? In wider community?)
The persons that would most benefit from attending this workshop would be teachers within graduate theological education schools or communities of faith who are looking for ways to inspire creative involvement in challenging issues of justice and peace.

What will participants do in your workshop? Provide an outline of the event with a clear description of what will be experienced and learned by participants:
Through the use of images, sound, Theater of the Oppressed exercises, and discussions, participants will be drawn to reflect on concerns and hopes for global issues of injustice.

What theories inform your workshop?
This work is influenced by the engaged pedagogy of bell hooks, the potential of the arts and imagination that Maxine Greene affirms and Augusto Boal’s Theater of the Oppressed.

What resources will be presented and/ or used in the workshop?
• bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994).