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Bildung as a core requirement for democracy

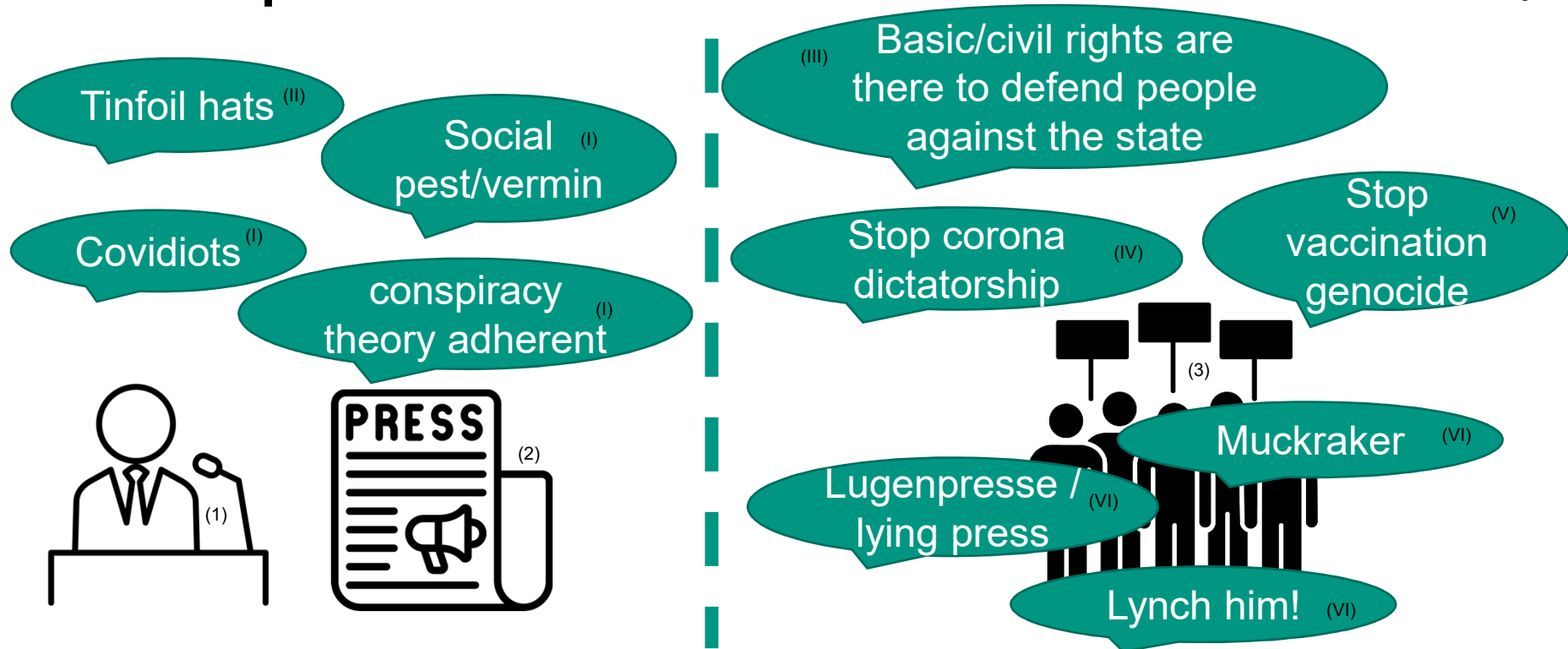


Overview of presentation

- I. Examples of political debates
- II. What has this to do with Bildung?
- III. How to reach this goal?

I. Examples of political debates

Corona pandemic



Impressions of some consequences

- „I can't simply follow the narrative of the government and the press. I would have wished to be seen, respected and informed.“ (Halbach, 2022, p. 24; translation by E.Z.)
- „The corona policies have brought me painful experiences. In my closest, intimate circle of friends, my increasingly critical stance was rejected very harshly without even asking me why and how I came to this position. This experience is very hard for me until today, because nothing has been discussed oder clarified since then. Regarding this, I can't continue my earlier political work as I did before.“ (Halbach, 2022, p. 24; translation by E.Z.)
- „I feel powerless. Somehow, democracy isn't there where I am. When we talk to each other there is acknowledgement of my or of your opinion or there is incomprehension. We are way too fast at a point, at which we search for majorities for one or another opinion. I am afraid because we are so fast determining and damning people with other opinions.“ (Halbach, 2022, p. 27; translation by E.Z.)
- „The polarization of the public discourse and the rash assignment to one or another group lead to powerlessness and speechlessness.“ (Halbach, 2022, p. 25; translation by E.Z.)

What happened?

- Very harsh and polarized discussion
- People felt unheard and stopped being political
- People retreated from society

Letzte Generation („Last Generation“)

(Climate activist organisation in Germany, Austria, Italy)

Consequently
anti climate
gluers

Activists who
block streets (VII)
shall go to jail

100 km/h
speed limit

Save our future!

Bring climate
terrorists to
justice!



(4)



(5)



(6)

public transport
for 9 €

Violence and death threats

- „The often affective, in many cases aggressive, statements that insult people as well as groups of people and are contemptuous of politics and the political system, jeopardize the level of a civilized political discourse and peaceful conflict settlement which has been reached in western democracies to a great extent. There is a relationship to media reporting on a proliferation of violence and death threats against politicians, association representatives, journalists and people that are very engaged for the public welfare. (Gerdes, 2022, p. 1328; translation by E.Z.)

Summary

- Very harsh and polarized discussion
- No dialogue
- Insulting
- Increasing number of violence and death threats

II. What has this to do with Bildung?

Bildung includes...

- (Democratic) Values
- Toleration of different opinions
- Critical reflection
- Ability to shape social and political environment
- Individual self-determination

(Democratic) Values

- No democracy without democrats (e.g. Gerdes, 2022, p. 1327)
- Based on human rights (e.g. Damerau et al., 2017, p. 2)
- Critical of discrimination (Damerau et al., 2017, p. 3)
- Resistent (Lederer, 2014, pp. 422–423)

➔ Solid basis for democracy

Toleration of different opinions

- Toleration of different opinions
 - Taking different opinions respectfully into account
 - Analysing and understanding what leads to different opinions
 - Analysing and understanding utmost concern of the other person (look behind what other person is saying)
-
- ➔ more understanding and respect
 - ➔ people feel heard and recognized

Critical reflection

- Critical reflection of oneself
 - Opinion
 - Guidelines
 - Behaviour
 - Allows to overcome destructive guidelines
- Critical reflection of practical constraints
 - Political, economic, social, ecological constraints
 - Understanding, how political decisions are made
 - Allows to identify things in need of improvement

→Basis for improvement

→Conditio sine qua non for self-determination (Lederer, 2014, p. 35)

Ability to shape social and political environment

■ Ability to shape social and political environment (Lange, 2020, p. 49, in: Gerdes, 2022, p. 1330).

- people don't feel powerless
- more interest in politics
- more people active in politics
- rising acceptance of democracy

Individual self-determination

- Bildung includes ...
 - Non-conformism
 - (reflected) refusal
 - (reflected) dysfunctionalityagainst external demands (Lederer, 2014, pp. 571–572)
- Citizens shall shape the system as they think is best (Lange, 2020, p. 49, in: Gerdes, 2022, p. 1330).
- “Regarding to Humboldt, (B.L.) ‘Bildung’ stands against engulfment of learners for social, economic or political purposes. Bildung marks the effort, to empower human beings, to decide for themselves in favor of or against such requests.” (Arnim und Ruth Kaiser, 1996, p. 65, in: Lederer, 2014, p. 436)

III. How to reach this goal?

Strengthen civic education

- „if the institutions for civic education are weak, only one satisfactory solution remains. They must be strengthened.“ (Dahl, 2000, p. 80, in: Gerdes 2022, p. 1333).

„Beutelsbacher Konsens“

- No indoctrination
 - Controversy is important
 - Participatory learning processes
- (Sander, 2002, in: Gerdes 2022, p. 1337)

Competence-based education and Bildung

- Competence-based education in universities
- European commission: „talents-on-demand“-approach in universities (European Commission, 2020, p. 12; Zimpelmann, 2022)
- Need for critical reflection, especially in competence-based education
 - vocational education and training (Luchtenberg, 1952, 17 f.)
 - at universities
- Expand and transfer the concept of „gestaltungsorientierte Berufsbildung“ (Rauner, 1995): critically reflect work-processes and their political, economic, social, ecological constraints
- Consider Beutelsbacher Konsens

Thank you for our attention!
I'm looking forward to the discussion 

IV. References

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