

Christie, D. J., Wagner, R. V., & Winter, D. A. (Eds.). (2001). ***Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century***. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

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PREFACE

Psychologists have been interested in psychological aspects of war and peace since the beginning of modern psychology. Early in the twentieth century, William James challenged the overly simplistic and misguided view that war was an inevitable result of human nature (James, 1910). He also cautioned about the allure of the military in the military-industrial-university complex. Military service emphasizes duty, conformity, loyalty, and cohesion, virtues that are likely to attract well meaning conscripts unless suitable civic substitutes are found. It seems appropriate that Morton Deutsch (1995) referred to William James as the first peace psychologist in an article that appeared in the first issue of *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*.

Peace psychology as a distinct area of psychology did not begin to emerge clearly until the latter half of the twentieth century, when the United States and Soviet Union were locked in a nuclear arms race that had compelling psychological features and threatened the survival of humankind. The nuclear threat peaked in the mid-1980s, igniting a counter-reaction by a generation of psychologists who began to identify themselves as peace psychologists. These psychologists were trained in traditional areas of psychology, typically, social, developmental, cognitive, clinical, and counseling psychology, and they

were eager to apply concepts and theories that held the promise of preventing a nuclear conflagration.

Two events helped to establish the legitimacy and value of peace psychology. In 1986, Ralph K. White published an important volume on “Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War” which helped identify some of the content of peace psychology. The destructive consequences of mutual enemy images was focal in the book and approaches to peace emphasized tension reduction strategies. In 1990, institutional support was forthcoming when the American Psychological Association recognized a new division, the Division of Peace Psychology (Division 48).

As the Soviet Union began to unravel, leaving only one superpower in the world that could claim economic and military supremacy, the threat of nuclear war seemed greatly diminished, at least from the perspective of scholars in the United States. Nonetheless, the Cold War left in place institutions and professional affiliations that supported research and practice aimed at the reduction of violence and the promotion of peace. The general contours that would form the content of peace psychology were becoming clear as peace psychologists turned their scholarly tools toward an examination of the psychological dimensions of the continuing and ubiquitous problems of peace, conflict, and violence.

Our purpose in editing this volume is to bring together in one place international perspectives on key concepts, themes, theories, and practices that are defining peace psychology as we begin the twenty-first century. We share with our international colleagues a broad vision of peace psychology, covering a wide range of topics such as ethnic conflict, family violence, hate crimes, militarism, conflict management, social

justice, nonviolent approaches to peace, and peace education. In addition to providing a useful resource that integrates current research and practices for scholars and practitioners, we wanted the book to be accessible enough to introduce a new generation of students, both graduate and upper-division undergraduate, to the field. When organizing the topics in the book, we have tried to capture the four main currents in peace psychology: (1) violence, (2) social inequalities, (3) peacemaking, and (4) the pursuit of social justice.

In the first section of the book, contributors examine violence at various levels of analysis, from the micro to the macro, reflecting the wide range of interests in peace psychology. For example, at the micro level, we examine violence in intimate relationships. At the macro level, we consider nationalism and interstate war. At intermediate levels, we include violence against gays and lesbians, and various forms of intergroup violence. We draw a sharp distinction between conflict and violence, emphasizing the distinction between thought and action. Conflicting viewpoints are not inevitably linked with violence and may even lead to constructive conflict resolution.

In the second section of the book, we distinguish direct violence from structural violence: direct violence refers to events that harm or kill individuals or groups as contrasted with structural violence which is manifest in social inequalities. In structural violence, hierarchical relations within and between societies privilege those who are on top while oppressing, exploiting and dominating those who occupy the bottom. Like direct violence, structural violence also kills people but does so slowly, by depriving people of basic necessities. There are important psychological reasons why people tolerate and

rationalize structural violence and we identify some of these reasons in this volume. We examine structural violence within societies but also include in our analysis the problem of militarization, which contributes to structural violence globally, most often depriving those with the fewest resources, usually women, children and indigenous people. The organization of the book reflects our bias that violence is best understood from a systems perspective with overt forms of violence manifest in micro and macro contexts, and conditioned by structural and cultural configurations.

While the first half of the book deals with systems of violence and links direct and structural forms of violence, the second half examines systems of peace. In the third section of the book, we examine peacekeeping and peacemaking, both of which are methods that are designed to stop or prevent direct violence. The section on peacemaking emphasizes positive approaches to peace in which rules for cooperating are added to the repertoire of adversaries in a conflict situation and conflict resolution is achieved when the adversaries arrive at mutually agreeable outcomes. In nearly all the chapters on peacemaking, the authors emphasize the importance of being sensitive to cultural differences.

In the fourth section on peacebuilding, the authors present psychologically informed approaches to social justice that are designed to reduce structural violence. Structural peacebuilding matters to peace psychologists because the roots of direct violence can often be traced to structure-based inequalities. Accordingly, chapters in the fourth section identify psychological concepts and processes involved in the nonviolent pursuit of socially just ends. Taken together, the sections on peacemaking and structural

peacebuilding offer a roadmap for peace psychologists who are dedicated to theory and practices that promote peace with social justice.

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