
Peace Psychology for a Peaceful World

Daniel J. Christie
Barbara S. Tint
Richard V. Wagner
Deborah DuNann Winter

Ohio State University at Marion
Portland State University
Bates College
Whitman College

Although the literature in peace psychology has been growing rapidly, many American psychologists are unaware of how conflict is resolved and peace is conceptualized and achieved. This article reviews the long history and broadening scope of peace psychology and introduces a model of peace that is useful for organizing the literature. The model suggests that peace can be facilitated at four different points of intervention. The authors discuss relationships between positive and negative peace, structural and direct violence, and peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. They advance some challenges for peace psychologists and conclude that peace psychology is a crucial field for grappling with humanity's most pressing problems in the coming decades.

Keywords: peace psychology, positive peace, negative peace, conflict, violence

Although human beings manage to resolve their conflicts peacefully much more often than they resort to violence, many American psychologists remain largely unaware of how peace is accomplished. The comparative psychologist Franz deWaal (1989) once lamented that he had

asked a world-renowned American psychologist, who specializes in human aggression, what he knew about reconciliation. Not only did he have no information on the subject, but he looked at me as if the word were new to him. . . . He reflected on my remarks, yet the concept had evidently never taken center stage in his thinking. (pp. 233–234)

In fact, work on the psychology of peace has been accumulating for decades, yet it is still an emerging area of inquiry for the larger psychological community. A significant increase in literature on peace psychology is evident in several databases (Blumberg, 2007). Since the 1970s, peace psychology citations increased not only in absolute terms but also in proportion to the growing number of records added to the PsycINFO database. Several thousand research studies on peace psychology since the Cold War were reviewed in the recent publication *Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction* (Blumberg, Hare, & Costin, 2007). Moreover, although the recent emergence of positive psychology converges with peace psychology's emphasis on the creation of positive social conditions, we are aware of no introductory psychology text that has a chapter devoted to peace psychology. Ironically, the lead author of the most widely used text in the interdisciplinary field of

peace studies (Barash & Webel, 2002) is a psychologist, and the text has a substantial amount of psychological content.

The Division of Peace Psychology (Division 48), which was established in 1991, shares with the American Psychological Association (APA) a commitment to promoting human well-being. The goals of peace psychology are to "increase and apply psychological knowledge in the pursuit of peace . . . [including] both the absence of destructive conflict and the creation of positive social conditions which minimize destructiveness and promote human well-being" (Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence, 2006, para. 3).

The lack of knowledge about the psychology of peace reinforces a faulty assumption that peace is precarious, unusual, short-lived, or fragile and that the true state of human affairs arises from deep-rooted urges for aggression, which sooner or later give rise to violence and war. Such assumptions contradict empirical evidence (Adams, Barnett, Bechtereva, & Carter, 1990; Ury, 1999) and also increase the probability of violence, because often, attempts to defend against assault are interpreted by adversaries as aggressive behaviors (Jervis, 1989; Winter & Cava, 2006).

Clearly, human beings have abilities to manufacture both peace and violence. As Deutsch (1999) put it,

Humans have the potential for a wide range of thought, feeling, and behavior: the potential for love as well as hate, for constructive as well as destructive behavior, for "we" as well as "us versus them." There is no reason to assume that one potential or another is inherently pre-potent without regard to particular personal and social circumstances as well as life history. (p. 19)

Finally, ignorance about the rich domain of peace psychology prevents practitioners from applying its valuable insights to promote peace in families, workplaces, communities, and between nations. Such ignorance denies citizens and policymakers insights that could inform their approach to critical issues such as the best ways of pre-

Daniel J. Christie, Department of Psychology, Ohio State University, Marion; Barbara S. Tint, Conflict Resolution Graduate Program, Portland State University; Richard V. Wagner, Department of Psychology, Bates College; Deborah DuNann Winter, Department of Psychology, Whitman College.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Daniel J. Christie, 351 Hawthorn Boulevard, Delaware, OH 43015. E-mail: christie.1@osu.edu



**Daniel
J. Christie**

venting terrorism, the costs and impact of torture, and possible means of ameliorating protracted conflicts. Lack of visibility and misconceptions about the psychology of peace also hinder the attraction of new students and scholars to the field.

For these reasons, we present a current synopsis of peace psychology, outlining its rich history, scope, and promise. Our intention is to articulate its themes by providing both a historical account and a new model that represents the current state of the field. Our hope is to make peace psychology more accessible to the broader community of psychologists and, by doing so, to promote scholarly development and citizen awareness in the interest of contributing to a more peaceful world.

Historical Roots of Peace Psychology

Long before there was a field known as peace psychology, psychologists were concerned about wars and how to prevent them. Perhaps the first peace psychologist was William James (Deutsch, 1995), who, in a speech at Stanford University in 1906, coined the phrase “the moral equivalent of war” (James, 1910/1995, p. 22). James argued that war provides human beings with opportunities to express their spiritual inclinations toward self-sacrifice and personal honor; consequently, to end war, societies must find alternative “moral equivalents” for the expression of these profoundly important human values (James, 1910/1995). Though his proposal to create a young citizens service corps for building communities (rather than destroying them) garnered little attention at the time, James’s phrasing about “the moral equivalent” entered the modern lexicon as an insight about the deeply rooted motivations behind war and provided a hint about what might need to be done to avoid armed conflict.

By the close of World War II, 13 well-known American psychologists (including Gordon Allport, Edna Heider, Ernest Hilgard, Otto Klineberg, Rensis Likert, and Edward Tolman) circulated a “Psychologists’ Manifesto: Human Nature and the Peace: A Statement by Psychologists” (reprinted in Jacobs, 1989, and in Murphy, 1945), which was signed by almost 4,000 psychologists (M. B. Smith, 1999). The Manifesto argued that “war can be avoided: War is built, not born” and urged lawmakers to work toward peace with attention to “the root desires of the common people of all lands” (M. B. Smith, 1999, p. 5).

For several decades thereafter, social psychologists accrued insights about the situational mechanisms that produce conflict and contemplated how situations might be altered to create peace. For example, Allport (1954) argued that conflict escalates from ignorance of one’s adversaries and that contact between groups in conflict is crucial for reducing enmity and prejudice. That same year, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed, ruling in favor of school desegregation to reduce racism. However, desegregation produced mixed results, and social scientists have since sought to clarify conditions under which contact is likely to be effective (e.g., cooperative interdependence, equal status, support from authorities; Pettigrew, 1998; Wittig & Grant-Thompson, 1998). Closely aligned with the various formulations of the contact hypothesis is the powerful effect of superordinate goals, that is, shared goals that parties in conflict can only attain through mutual effort. Such positive interdependence can transform group conflict into cooperation (Sherif & Sherif, 1953), provided the goals are attained (Worchel, 1986).

Cold War Peace Psychology

The Cold War created widespread fear of nuclear annihilation, which supported further work in peace psychology. In 1961, a collection of articles on “Psychology and Policy in the Nuclear Age” was published in the *Journal of Social Issues* (Russell, 1961). The articles were written by well-respected psychologists who advanced some of the most durable concepts in peace psychology. For example, Urie Bronfenbrenner (1961) argued that the United States and the U.S.S.R. held mirror images of one another; Charles Osgood (1962) promoted graduated and reciprocal initiatives in tension reduction, or GRIT, as a means of countering enemies’ perceptions of each other’s malevolent, deceitful intent; and Morton Deutsch (1961) noted how the interaction of trust or distrust and the perception of superiority or vulnerability led to the policy of mutual deterrence, which guided much of the superpowers’ foreign policies during the Cold War. Many of these concepts were further developed in books published during the Vietnam War, such as *Misperception and the Vietnam War* (White, 1966), *International Behavior: A Social-Psychological Analysis* (Kelman, 1965), and *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (de Rivera, 1968).

These Cold War publications contrasted sharply with earlier publications on war and peace in several ways. First, the level of analysis was shifted from an exclusive focus on the behavior of individuals to a more inclusive focus on the



Barbara S. Tint

behavior of nations. Second, psychologists began to emphasize the prevention of war rather than preparations for war. And third, whereas previous research had attempted to document or generate public consensus with government policy, the new work was critical of U.S. foreign policies (Morawski & Goldstein, 1985).

A second wave of interest in peace appeared in the 1980s, this time in response to the increasingly hostile rhetoric between the leaders of the superpowers and the growing awareness that the threat of nuclear war was driven by human behavior, which meant that the field of psychology had a central role to play in reducing the threat (Wagner, 1985; Walsh, 1984). A corpus of literature, loosely cohering under the rubric of political psychology, soon emerged. White's (1986) edited volume, *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War*, was particularly instrumental in shaping some of the rudimentary dimensions of early peace psychology, offering articles that conceptualized the threat of nuclear war in psycho-political terms and, in the process, gave some scholarly attention to psychological analyses of national security issues. White elaborated on the psychological dimensions of the nuclear arms race with an emphasis on mutually distorted perceptions and destructive communication patterns, all taking place in the context of competition for allies around the world.

Several topics related to peace and U.S.–Soviet relations were soon addressed in the *Journal of Social Issues*. A special issue titled “Beyond Deterrence” (Levinger, 1987) provided some conceptual scaffolding for improving superpower relations. Contributors responded to the central article of the issue written by political scientists Lebow and Stein (1987), who presented historical case studies in which the policy of deterrence broke down and failed to keep peace. Lebow and Stein proposed a complementary

policy of “reassurance” to shore up peace and improve the U.S.–Soviet relationship.

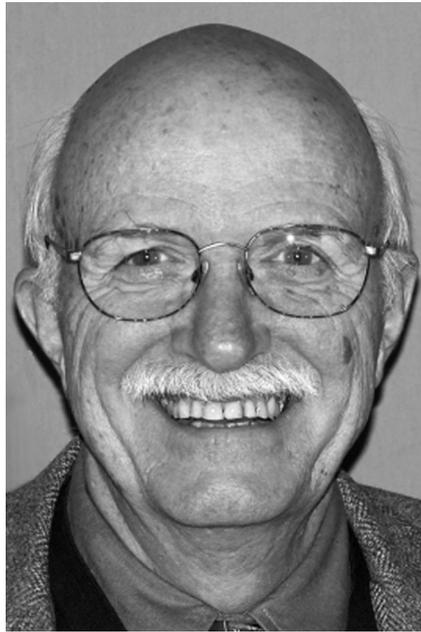
In the following year, another issue of the *Journal of Social Issues* focused on “Psychology and the Promotion of Peace” (Wagner, de Rivera, & Watkins, 1988). Rather than viewing peace as merely the absence of war, it defined peace in active terms, that is, as the building of cooperative relations between peoples and nations, a long-term process thought to be dependent on the satisfaction of human needs. At the close of the 1980s, the problem of enemy images (Bronfenbrenner, 1961) was reexamined, this time with a stronger emphasis on perceptual and cognitive biases (Holt & Silverstein, 1989).

The nuclear threat of the 1980s ignited a coordinated concern among some psychologists, who began to identify themselves as peace psychologists and, in 1991, established Division 48 of the APA (Wessells, 1996). However, by the end of the century, national concern about the prospect of nuclear war had diminished, and peace psychology began to grapple with newer threats to peace and human well-being, including internationally armed insurgencies, environmental deterioration, displaced populations, and child soldiers. Today, several themes are emerging in post–Cold War peace psychology: (a) greater sensitivity to geohistorical context, (b) a more differentiated perspective on the meanings and types of violence and peace, and (c) a systems or multilevel view of the determinants of violence and peace (Christie, 2006a, 2006b).

Post–Cold War Peace Psychology

The focal concerns of post–Cold War peace psychology have become more diverse, global, and shaped by local geohistorical contexts in part because security concerns are no longer organized around the U.S.–Soviet relationship. For example, countries aligned with the Global South and developing parts of the world tend to associate peacebuilding efforts with social justice, in part because political oppression and the unequal distribution of scarce resources diminish human well-being and threaten survival (Martín-Baró, 1994; Montiel, 2003). In geohistorical contexts marked by deeply divisive intractable conflicts and oppositional social identities, such as the conflicts in Northern Ireland (Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006), the Middle East (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Zelniker, Stephan, & Stephan, 2004; Kelman, 2008), and parts of Africa (Staub, Pearlman, Bubín, & Hagengimana, 2005), research and practice often focus on the prevention of violent episodes through the promotion of positive intergroup relations. In the West, the research agenda is dominated by efforts to more deeply understand and prevent terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005; Moghaddam & Marsella, 2005; Wagner, 2006).

Post–Cold War peace psychology has drawn substantially from the conceptual work of the eminent peace researcher Johan Galtung (1969), who made a pivotal distinction between direct and structural violence. *Direct violence* is episodic, manifests as an acute insult to well-being, and typically harms or kills people quickly and dramatically. In contrast, *structural violence* represents a



Richard V. Wagner

chronic affront to human well-being, harming or killing people slowly through relatively permanent social arrangements that are normalized and deprive some people of basic need satisfaction. There are other differences: Episodes of overt violence are often intentional, personal, instrumental, and sometimes politically motivated; structural violence is a result of the way in which institutions are organized, privileging some people with material goods and political influence in matters that affect their well-being while depriving others. Unlike direct forms of violence, these structures are social arrangements that are relatively impervious to change, and although the structures are socially constructed, they typically are not imbued with motives or intentionality. This distinction is widely used in the interdisciplinary field of peace studies (Barash & Webel, 2002; Brock-Utne, 1985) and has recently been adopted in peace psychology around the world by scholars in Africa (Mukarubuga, 2002), Asia (Montiel, 2003), Europe (Fuchs & Sommer, 2004; Scotto & Satio, 2004), and the United States (Christie, Wagner, & Winter, 2001; MacNair, 2003).

Closely related to structural violence is *cultural violence* (Galtung, 1996), which refers to the symbolic sphere of our existence that reinforces episodes or structures of violence. For example, the “doctrine of just war” is a cultural narrative that supports episodes of violence by specifying conditions under which direct violence is justified. Analogously, the cultural prescription of the “Protestant ethic” promulgated primarily by Western elites, supports structural violence by emphasizing the values of individualism, hard work, and delay of gratification. Social institutions that develop in the context of the Protestant ethic reward those who conform to this ethic successfully and ignore those who do not or cannot. Then, by “blaming the victim” (Ryan, 1971), these institutions locate the ori-

gin of social problems in the purported failings of those whose basic needs are unsatisfied rather than implicating political and economic institutions. A cluster of companion beliefs cohere under the umbrella of “just world thinking,” which rationalizes disparities in power by assuming the world is just. Hence, according to such beliefs, people get what they deserve, thereby justifying structural violence (M. J. Lerner, 1980).

Galtung (1975) also found it useful to differentiate three kinds of peace activities—peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding—as differing and complementary dimensions of peace work. *Peacekeeping* is a response to an acute situation and typically involves the containment or de-escalation of violence and the enforced separation of would-be combatants. In contrast, *peacemaking* is focused on arriving at settlements or agreements within a conflict situation. *Peacebuilding* is a more proactive attempt aimed at healing a postconflict society and reducing structural violence in an effort to prevent conflict and violence from erupting in the future. Peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding can be used ad seriatim to move a relationship from violence to nonviolence (peacekeeping), to conflict resolution (peacemaking), or to social equity or transformation (peacebuilding), although these three dimensions of peace intervention are fluid and not mutually exclusive.

Theory in peace psychology is becoming increasingly differentiated and sensitized to geohistorical context. Violent events are viewed as manifestations of interactions among a host of destructive inputs that are embedded in social, cultural, and historical factors. Not surprisingly, peace psychologists are actively engaged in multilevel scholarship and practice that attend to the reciprocal links between the psychological level of analysis and macrolevel phenomena, most notably at the political and cultural levels (Cairns & Darby, 1998; Christie, 2006a, 2006b; Kelman, 1995; Pilisuk, 1998; Schwebel, 1997; D. N. Smith, 1998; Wagner, 2002; Wessells, 1999). As an example of how multilevel analysis can work, we present a conceptual framework for organizing contemporary peace psychology.

A Conceptual Framework for Peace Psychology

In the following model, we focus not only on *negative peace*, by which we mean efforts to reduce violent episodes, but also *positive peace* (Galtung, 1985; Wagner, 1988), which refers to the promotion of social arrangements that reduce social, racial, gender, economic, and ecological injustices as barriers to peace. Thus, a comprehensive peace would not only eliminate overt forms of violence (negative peace) but also create a more equitable social order that meets the basic needs and rights of all people (positive peace). The pursuit of both negative and positive peace is articulated in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO’s) definition of peace:

There can be no genuine peace when the most elementary human rights are violated, or while situations of injustice continue to exist; conversely, human rights for all cannot take root and



**Deborah
DuNann
Winter**

achieve full growth while latent or open conflicts are rife. . . . Peace is incompatible with malnutrition, extreme poverty and the refusal of the rights of peoples to self-determination. Disregard for the rights of individuals and peoples, the persistence of inequitable international economic structures, interference in the internal affairs of other states, foreign occupation and apartheid are always real or potential sources of armed conflict and international crisis. The only lasting peace is a just peace based on respect for human rights. (UNESCO, 1983, pp. 259; 261)

Negative and Positive Peace: A Multilevel Analysis

Negative Peace

Figure 1 presents our model of negative peace. The ovals in Figure 1 represent three different and potentially overlapping kinds of relationships. Moving from left to right, the first oval depicts a conflictual relationship in which the perception of incompatible goals dominates the relationship. The overlap of the “Conflictual” oval with the “Violent” oval suggests that conflictual relationships may become destructive, that is, marked by periodic episodes of violence. The “Violent” oval depicts a relationship that is dominated by violent behavioral episodes; here there is the potential to move the relationship away from violence and toward an examination of the conflicted features of the relationship (i.e., the overlap between Violent and Conflictual) or beyond violence toward a postviolence arrangement. The “Postviolence” oval indicates the relationship is dominated by nonviolence but has the potential to return to conflictual perceptions or violent actions. A relationship may cycle through all three ovals, from Conflictual to Violent to Postviolence.

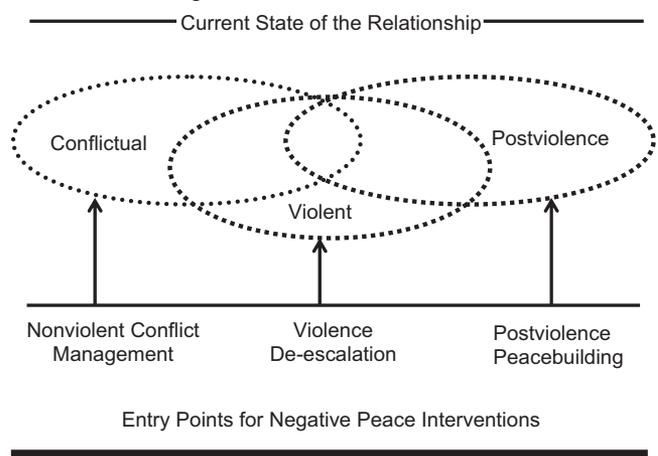
The arrows below the ovals represent entry points for the promotion of negative peace: nonviolent conflict man-

agement, violence de-escalation, as well as postviolence peacebuilding. The entry point is contingent on the current state of the relationship.

Conflictual relationship and nonviolent conflict management. The potential for a violent episode exists when the predominant state of a relationship is conflictual. Peace psychologists view conflict as ubiquitous, arising in the context of perceived or real incompatibilities in goals between individuals or groups; however, conflict does not inevitably lead to violent action and may even present the opportunity for constructive relationship building. By convention, psychologists separate perception from action, which allows conflict practitioners to explore the bases of conflict and, where appropriate, to decouple perceived conflict from violent behavior (action), and manage the former before the outbreak of the latter (cf. Deutsch, Coleman, & Marcus, 2006). Social psychologists have generated a number of theories to account for conditions under which conflicts might arise, three of which are briefly examined here: realistic group conflict theory, relative deprivation theory, and absolute deprivation theory.

One of the earliest social psychological explanations for conflict was realistic group conflict theory, which posited that hostility is likely to occur when groups are in competition for scarce resources (Campbell, 1965; Sherif & Sherif, 1953). Realistic group conflict is likely to increase as resources grow scarcer and environmental problems become more pressing (Winter, 2000; Winter & Koger, 2004). Depletion of natural resources such as clean water, arable land, and precious minerals, combined with population growth and displacement, will increase dramatically in the next decades (Klare, 2001). Intergroup resource contests are often saturated in perceptual distortions in which efforts to acquire resources by one group are perceived as offensive and aggressive by another group. During such conflicts, attributional biases can cascade into scapegoating, antagonistic ideologies, and blaming (Winter & Cava, 2006.)

Figure 1
A Model of Negative Peace



But even without limited resources, conflict can arise through perceived relative deprivation. Studies on relative deprivation theory have demonstrated that one group's perception of a discrepancy between its current standard of living and that of another group can result in conflict and intergroup hostility. For example, an increase in xenophobia occurred among East German youths during the period of German reunification because of their relative deprivation in disadvantaged school tracts (Boehnke, Hagan, & Hefler, 1998). Similarly, in post-apartheid South Africa, increases in racism, especially among groups previously advantaged under apartheid, have been documented. White adolescents in particular had strong negative orientations toward Blacks, exhibiting both subtle and blatant forms of racism (Finchilescu & Dawes, 1998). Hence, on a macro level, globalizing trends in the worldwide spread of capitalism and democracy can leave in their wake increases in intergroup prejudice because of the perception that one's reference group is losing economic or political ground relative to another group.

Third, regardless of perceived differences, absolute deprivation can trigger conflict. Difficult life conditions, such as severe economic deprivation, can frustrate human need satisfaction and lead to the adoption of destructive ideologies in which others are viewed as barriers to need satisfaction. Taken to an extreme, absolute deprivation can be a precondition for mass murder and genocide, as has been demonstrated in a number of historical case studies, including the Holocaust, the genocide of Armenians in Turkey, the Cambodian genocide, and mass killings in Argentina (Staub, 1989).

There are other theories of intergroup conflict that have been useful to peace psychologists: social identity theory (Ashmore, Jussim, & Wilder, 2001), existential psychodynamic analyses (Pyszczynski, Solomon, & Greenberg, 2003), and positioning theory (Moghaddam, Harré, & Lee, 2007), to name a few. As we move from theory to practice, the question of how to manage conflict nonviolently takes center stage for peace psychologists.

We use the term *conflict management* broadly to refer to efforts that prevent violent episodes by containing differences in views (conflict management) or by reaching an agreement (conflict resolution). Although it is not possible to review the voluminous research on conflict management here (cf. Hare, 2007), some of its most important principles and historical developments are worth noting.

One of the earliest and most important insights about conflict resolution is that it often requires finding "integrative solutions," that is, outcomes that satisfy the needs of all parties (Follett, 1924). However, conflicts often arise out of negative interdependence between parties that have mixed motives with both competitive and cooperative dimensions (Deutsch, 1973, 1985). Competitive relations are fraught with impaired communication, suspicion, criticism, disagreement, power plays, coercion, and the belief that solutions benefit one party but not all parties. However, competitive features of a relationship can be transformed by emphasizing cooperation, which is characterized by effective communication, friendliness, helpfulness, coordination

of effort, shared values and beliefs, willingness to enhance the other's power, and the viewpoint that conflict is a mutual problem to be solved.

Conflicts can be especially difficult to manage constructively when they are structured in a zero-sum fashion (Deutsch, 1973), in which one side's win is the other side's loss, or when parties believe this to be the case even when it is not. The ability to generate a variety of creative alternatives in a conflict can be especially difficult under stressful conditions because high levels of stress shorten time horizons, constrict the number of options that are seen as feasible, and produce solutions that are not integrative (Hare, 2007; Holsti, 1972). Various conflict resolution techniques used to reduce tension and conflict include negotiation, mediation, arbitration, diplomacy, interactive problem solving, cooperation on superordinate goals, and unilateral initiatives (Hare, 2007).

Approaches to conflict resolution tend to fall within two broad categories: interest based and needs based. The interest-based approach was pioneered by Fisher and Ury (1981) in their best-selling and highly influential book on negotiation strategies, *Getting to Yes*. Widely applied in domestic and international contexts, this technique has helped negotiators separate what may seem to be intransigent positions from the parties' deeper underlying interests by encouraging intergroup empathy and mutual understanding, separating thinking about players' personalities from the problem, avoiding criticism of the parties by each other while critically analyzing the issue, inventing options that yield mutual gains, and using objective criteria to judge whether proposed agreements satisfy everyone's interests. This "principled negotiation" tends to yield creative options, positional flexibility, mutually satisfying (win-win) solutions, and improved relationships through mutual learning and problem solving.

A needs-based approach called interactive problem solving (IPS) has been applied in a large variety of settings marked by violent episodes (i.e., the overlapping ovals of Conflict and Violence in Figure 1). Pioneered by Kelman (1995, 2008) and Fisher (2001a), IPS uses unofficial representatives of groups or states, who come together for several days to engage in dialogue and problem solving. The facilitators of these workshops are typically academics or other well-regarded citizens. IPS is designed to promote greater mutual understanding between parties, stronger intergroup relationships, new perspectives on old problems, and a loosening of entrenched and polarized positions. Agreements are nonbinding because participants do not officially represent their governments; but because participants are widely respected, workshops not only induce change in the individuals participating but serve as a catalyst for change in wider political communities. IPS has been applied in many conflicts, including those in Northern Ireland (Hall, 1999), Cyprus (Fisher, 2001b), Israel/Palestine (Kelman, 1995; Rouhana & Kelman, 1994), Argentina (Mitchell, 2000), Sri Lanka (Hicks & Weisberg, 2001), and the Horn of Africa (Beyna, Lund, Stacks, Tuthill, & Vondal, 2001).

Violence and de-escalation. Although peace psychologists draw a sharp distinction between conflict and violence, conflict can be an antecedent condition for violent episodes. Once a relationship becomes dominated by violent episodes, de-escalation is crucial because violence tends to intensify psychological processes that resist peaceful overtures: faulty, rigid, negative attributions of the other; us–them/black–white thinking; selective inattention to disconfirming evidence and attention to confirming evidence; strengthening of patriotism (in-group favoritism) and nationalism (in-group favoritism coupled with out-group derogation); and a host of other processes that make constructive dialogue between combatants difficult (Kimmel & Stout, 2007).

Successful peacekeeping that separates would-be combatants and reduces the likelihood of violent episodes can lay the groundwork for peacemaking in which the parties begin to work toward mutually satisfying outcomes. Sometimes determining when a situation is ripe for peacemaking is difficult. Protracted conflicts that are punctuated by violent episodes can reach a point of equilibrium in which both sides are unhappy with the violent relationship and neither side is moving closer to reaching its goal. When such a mutually hurting stalemate of this kind develops, one or both sides may realize that the costs of continuing the stalemate exceed the benefits. At this point, the situation is ripe for the introduction of peacemaking initiatives (Coleman, 2004; Zartman, 2000).

Postviolence peacebuilding. Although peacekeeping aimed at separating combatants is often the first order of business, in 1992, United Nations (UN) Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali introduced an Agenda for Peace in which he proposed that UN peace interventions go beyond their traditional emphasis on military peacekeeping and address the root causes of conflict. Indeed, the range of activities involved in peacekeeping has expanded in recent years to include, for example, monitoring elections and training nonmilitary enforcement groups (Langholtz, 1998), partly because it has been recognized that traditional peacekeeping is not likely to produce a durable peace unless there are also efforts at peacemaking to move the parties toward mutually satisfying outcomes and peacebuilding to address structural issues such as economic well-being and political representation. Since the Agenda for Peace was issued, there has been growing recognition that the foundation for a lasting peace requires (a) “integrated missions” in which peacemaking and peacebuilding processes are inextricably linked in ways that establish minimum conditions for security; (b) disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants; and (c) new political structures that are more transparent, accountable, and equitable (Eide, Kaspersen, Kent, & von Hippel, 2005). Peace psychologists have become increasingly active in peacemaking and peacebuilding in postviolence situations, particularly in regard to the assessment and treatment of trauma, support for resilience and community development, and the facilitation of dialogue and reconciliation.

The interdependence of healthy individuals and com-

munity development is widely recognized by clinicians and community psychologists (Lumsden, 1997). Worldwide, since the 1990s, most instances of violence have been intrastate, typically occurring within and around communities (Eriksson, Wallensteen, & Sollenberg, 2003). Not surprisingly, most casualties have been civilians (Sivard, 1996). Community-based violence is intensely personal, involving neighbors, friends, and family members. One problem for peacemaking and peacebuilding in these communities is that Western-trained practitioners are often deployed to treat trauma even though the imposition of Western-based constructs and practices can be a form of cultural violence that fails to honor local cosmologies. Clearly, whether or not victims experience trauma and lose their trust in a safe and predictable world depends in part on the cultural context and collective meanings attached to the violence experienced (Agger, 2001; Sveaass & Castillo, 2000). Accordingly, peace practitioners have increasingly integrated Western and indigenous systems of healing in many parts of the world, including Angola (Wessells & Monteiro, 2001), Bosnia (Agger, 2001), Mozambique (Honwana, 1997), South Africa (Eagle, 1998), and Nicaragua (Sveaass & Castillo, 2000).

Peace psychologists recognize that restored psychological functioning is crucial, not only to address the task of revitalizing public services and infrastructure but also in order to interrupt cycles of violence often perpetuated through the transmission of trauma across generations (Lumsden, 1997). For example, cycles of violence have been conspicuous in Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Rwanda, where collective trauma has laid the groundwork for future episodes of mass violence. Cycles of violence occur even between nations, as in the case of Turkey and Greece (Volkan & Itzkowitz, 2000). The intergenerational transfer of nationalistic identities replete with mental representations that depict past glories and humiliations constitutes a kind of maintenance of collective traumas; when not properly mourned, feelings of victimization are passed on from generation to generation, and collective memories create psychological conditions for more violent episodes (Roe, 2007; Tint, 2007).

Embedding reconciliation processes in community structures is crucial for building peace; groups in conflict must be brought together not only to articulate their past pain but also to envision an interdependent future (Lederach, 1997). In deeply divided societies, negotiated settlements are most likely to lead to durable peace when accompanied by reconciliation (Long & Brecke, 2003). In their study of 11 cases, Long and Brecke showed that success followed a four-step pattern: public truth telling, justice without revenge, redefinition of social identities, and a call for a new relationship. Similarly, Nadler (2002) demonstrated that reconciliation between aggrieved parties typically followed a slow and gradual process of change (instrumental reconciliation), not a sudden reconciliation in which the perpetrator engaged in truth telling and the victim forgave the perpetrator instantaneously. A key question for peace psychologists in postviolent contexts is how to assist war-affected people in coming to terms with their

violent experiences while promoting reconciliation processes more widely throughout society.

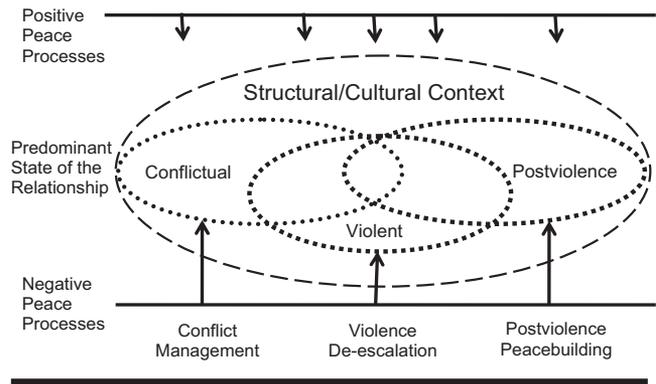
Reconciliation work is evolving from an exclusive focus on posttraumatic stress disorders to addressing a wider variety of mental health issues, including grief and depression, along with key psychosocial issues such as family separation, interpersonal and intergroup distrust, and the destruction of community resources. There is also growing awareness of the problem of gender-based violence (McKay, 2006). Interagency guidelines have been developed to coordinate social supports for mental health and psychosocial well-being in culturally sensitive ways (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2007). Because conflict remains ubiquitous, peacebuilding requires the institutionalization of nonviolent conflict resolution at a variety of levels of social organization and the creation of new social norms for managing conflict. Former soldiers, including child soldiers, need to be demobilized and reintegrated with civilian communities, a task that requires training youths in prosocial behavior and job- and school-related skills as well as the preparation of local communities to accept former combatants (Wessells, 2006).

Positive Peace

We use the term *positive peace* to refer to transformations within and across institutions that rectify structural inequities. Positive peace is promoted when political structures become more inclusive and give voice to those who have been marginalized in matters that affect their well-being. Economic structures become transformed when those who have been exploited gain more equitable access to material resources that satisfy their basic needs (Galtung, 1996). Culturally violent narratives that support structural violence are transformed when, for example, “just world thinking” (M. J. Lerner, 1980) is replaced with “conscientization,” or an awakening of a critical consciousness, a shared subjective state in which the powerless begin to critically analyze and challenge the oppressive narratives of the powerful (Freire, 1970).

As indicated in Figure 2, relationships (whether primarily in a conflictual, violent, or postviolent state) occur within a structural and cultural context. Whereas negative peace processes have three conceptually distinct entry points, contingent on the predominant state of the relationship, opportunities for positive peace processes are ubiquitous and can take place at any point in the relationship whenever social injustices are present, that is, regardless of whether the predominant state of the relationship is conflictual, violent, or postviolent. Working from the left in Figure 2, when the relationship is characterized by conflict, a host of conflict management strategies are appropriate for promoting negative peace; at the same time, positive peace, or “conflict transformation,” processes that move the structure of the relationship toward a more equitable arrangement (Lederach, 2003) can also be taking place. Indeed, it is desirable for both negative and positive peace processes to be undertaken. As Rubin, Pruitt, and Kim (1994) have noted, any approach that seeks only to manage conflict runs

Figure 2
A Multilevel Model of Negative and Positive Peace Processes



the risk of supporting an unjust and static society, a counterproductive and unsustainable condition.

Similarly, when the predominant state of the relationship is violent, an exclusive emphasis on peacekeeping and deterrence, without attention to structure-based injustices, can lead to the acceptance of “law and order” societies (Galtung, 1969), which conveniently leave the social order unaffected. Like conflict, violence can be an opportunity to move toward a change in cultural norms and structural conditions within or between societies. For example, in Malaysia, the intercommunal riots in May 1969 forced the government to reexamine its policies and institute an economic program that redistributed resources among several ethnic groups. The riots were seared in the memories of Malaysians, who continue to collectively share a cultural narrative that vows never to repeat the riots (Noor, 2005).

When a relationship can be characterized as postviolent, simply reconstructing the social arrangements that gave rise to violent episodes would be counterconstructive. Whereas negative peace processes tend to maintain the structures, positive peace processes challenge the structural status quo. Accordingly, peace psychology practitioners who intervene in war-torn societies and deal with trauma and community development are keenly aware of the importance of structural peacebuilding to preventing further cycles of violence (Wessells, 1999, 2006).

Integrating Positive and Negative Approaches to Peace

We have proposed a multilevel model that combines reactive interventions (negative peace) with proactive interventions (positive peace) at the interpersonal, intergroup, and international units of analysis. Such an approach recognizes that violent episodes have structural and cultural roots. In domestic violence, for example, the proximal cause may be an interpersonal conflict that escalates to violence. At the structural level, domestic violence is rooted in power asymmetry and women’s economic dependence on men worldwide. Similarly, organized forms of

direct violence are often rooted in institutional structures, military–political–industrial complexes, the existence of which is justified with cultural narratives (e.g., just war theory) that specify conditions under which war is regarded as legitimate (Christie & Wessells, in press).

Examined from a multilevel peace psychology perspective, the violence of Al Qaeda, which targets civilians, can be viewed as a tool of the weak, a structural precondition accompanied by a host of cultural narratives that mirror some of the usual justifications for the use of deadly force, including the beliefs that there is no legal means to redress grievances, that the ends justify the means, that dialogue is not an option, and that only violence will work (Moghaddam & Marsella, 2005). Accordingly, sustainable peace will require not only the removal of proximal causes of violence but addressing the structural and cultural roots of the problem.

Another example of the integration of negative and positive peace is the growth of large-scale nonviolent movements that have successfully toppled oppressive regimes, often in the face of overwhelming military power. Notable examples in the 20th century include India, South Africa, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Philippines, Chile, and Serbia (cf. Ackerman & DuVall, 2000; Zunes, Kurtz, & Asher, 1999). Among the more challenging projects for peace psychology in the 21st century is to understand the conditions under which active nonviolence (negative peace) can produce socially just ends (positive peace) (Mayton, 2001, in press; Montiel, 2006). Clearly, regardless of the size of the unit of analysis (interpersonal, intergroup, or international), or setting (family, community, etc.), sustainable peace requires multilevel interventions that integrate negative and positive peace processes.

Given the escalating importance of keeping, making, and building peace that is socially just and durable, we need a robust field of peace psychology now more than ever. Psychology should be at the forefront of efforts to promote a peaceful world because peace and violence involve human behaviors that arise from human emotions, habits, thoughts, and assumptions. Given the enormous contributions of peace psychology already, we wonder why it is not better integrated into the mainstream psychological community. Below we offer a few observations about possible reasons.

Four Challenges for Peace Psychology

First, for some people, “peace” sounds soft, weak, naïve, idealistic, and even dangerous and unpatriotic, particularly when the threat of terrorism is a salient concern for Americans (Lott, 2006; Unger, 2006). Although peace psychologists have contributed to our understanding of the roots of terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005; Moghaddam & Marsella, 2005; Wagner, 2006), in such a charged geopolitical context, the work of peace psychologists may be regarded as suspect, biased, even conciliatory, akin to appeasing one’s enemies and erroneously buying into Rousseau’s notion of innate goodness or Locke’s assumption about the mallea-

bility of behavior. For example, one retired Navy bomber, in opposition to a current proposal before the U.S. Congress to establish a Department of Peace, warned that Americans would become “a bunch of wusses” (Zwerdling, 2007). This narrow focus on peace through military strength is consistent with a Hobbesian perspective that assumes human relations in general, and the international political system in particular, are primarily competitive and anarchical. In a Hobbesian world, cooperative behavior invites exploitation. Therefore, nation states should be governed by *realpolitik*, or power politics, and strive to consolidate, maximize, and demonstrate power (Morganthau, 1972).

Although peace psychology does tend to favor cooperative over competitive relations (Bunker, Rubin, & Associates, 1995; Deutsch et al., 2006), and diplomacy over coercion (Milburn & Christie, 1989; Wagner, 1988), peace psychologists hold a range of views about the effectiveness of force in the pursuit of national interests. One of the field’s most influential scholars, Ralph K. White (1995), for example, identified conditions that favor the use of force in international politics. Elsewhere, White (1990, 1998) provided evidence suggesting that during the 20th century, nations that initiated aggression, including the United States, more often than not lost the wars they initiated. In our view, the important question is not whether peace is weak, but rather, what the conditions are under which cooperative and competitive approaches lead to constructive relationships (Deutsch, 1973).

A second possible reason for a lack of attention to peace psychology is its reliance on qualitative methods; hence, some might assume that it cannot be methodologically rigorous (Leininger, 1994). As a community of scholars and practitioners, peace psychologists embrace diverse epistemologies that accommodate both of Wilhelm Wundt’s visions of modern psychology: a lab-based experimental approach and a field-based cultural science (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003). Accordingly, theory in peace psychology has benefited from both laboratory-based research (cf. Hart, Shaver, & Goldenberg, 2005; J. S. Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003) as well as participatory action research (Brydon-Miller & Tolman, 1997; Wessells, 2006) and other field-based approaches to the generation of knowledge.

Third, because peace psychology was officially organized at the close of the Cold War—the APA approved the establishment of Division 48: Peace Psychology in 1991—some observers might mistakenly identify peace psychology as the study of nuclear issues. Whether valid or not, public concern over nuclear annihilation has diminished as fears of terrorism, climate change, and other concerns have grown. Hoping to mitigate the misperception that nuclear issues were its only focus, in 1997 the Executive Committee of Division 48 of the APA changed the name of the division from the “Division of Peace Psychology” to the “Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Division of Peace Psychology” to signify a larger scope of issues. Questions about the boundaries of peace psychology still remain in play. Some scholars have provided

evidence for the proposition that peace psychology ought to give more attention to inner (intrapsychic) peace and its relationship to attitudes such as the tendency to favor the use of military force over nonviolent alternatives for resolving international problems (Nelson, 2007; Nelson & Milburn, 1999). Notwithstanding the boundary question, peace psychology has undergone significant growth since the Cold War. Today, peace psychology seeks to more deeply understand the structural and cultural roots of violence and is emerging in many regions of the world with focal concerns nuanced by the geohistorical contexts within which violence occurs (Blumberg et al., 2007; Christie, 2006b).

A fourth misconception is that peace psychology has little to offer international relations, a specialty in political science that is well beyond the familiar moorings of mainstream psychology. Like all scientific disciplines, psychology has relied on reductionism as the explanatory mechanism of choice—hence, behavior and cognition at higher levels are often assumed to be eventually understood at the neurophysiological level. Recently, Berntson and Cacioppo's (2004) multilevel analyses have contributed a useful corrective, providing evidence that a target event at one level of analysis may have multiple determinants both within and across levels of analysis. Similarly, political scientists are aware of the value of identifying links between psychological and political processes. Realism, the dominant paradigm for macro-level analyses in political science, provides only a rough, and often misleading, fit with international interactions, largely because realism makes numerous assumptions about what is happening at the micro level, where the dynamics of human psychology operate (Herrmann & Keller, 2004). Accordingly, there is a great need for peace psychologists to resist the intellectual currents of reductionism while pursuing multilevel analyses that link up psychological processes at the micro level with events at the political and cultural levels of analysis, as we have proposed.

Conclusions

The scope of the threats to human security at the dawn of the 21st century is daunting. Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, nuclear proliferation, failed states, ideological struggles, growing scarcities of natural resources, disparities in wealth and health, globalizing trends, violations of human rights, and the continued use of force to advance state interests are all complex problems with psychological dimensions. During the past 20 years, peace psychology has emerged as a specialty in psychology with its own knowledge base, perspectives, concepts, and methodologies. Peace psychologists are now well positioned to further develop theory that will enable us to more deeply understand the major threats to human security and to engage in practices that promote human well-being and survival. We hope that this introduction to peace psychology issues a warm invitation to psychologists who wish to join a thriving research and practitioner community dedicated to the promotion of peace with social justice in the 21st century.

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