

INTRODUCTION

PEACE STUDIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Peace studies grew out of the ashes of twentieth century devastation. The existence of weapons of mass destruction, evidence of global warming, holocausts, world wars, ethnic, religious, and racial conflicts challenged educators on college campuses to seek alternative resolutions for human conflicts. The Second World War brought new horrors to the human imagination. Saturation bombing and the development of the atomic bomb meant that civilian populations were no longer spared the terror of war. The creation of the United Nations in 1945 spurred new interest in ways to avoid the scourge of war. The mid twentieth century saw the inception of programs devoted to an academic understanding of peace. The first of these was the Lentz Institute in St. Louis, the oldest continually operating peace research center in the U.S., founded in 1945. In 1948 Manchester College, a small Brethren college in North Manchester, Indiana, began an academic program in peace studies.

Fifty years later at the beginning of the twenty-first century the study of peace appears as a serious academic discipline on over 300 colleges and universities in the world. College and university students can take individual courses, earn certificates, and complete bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees in peace studies. In addition on many college campuses student peace organizations and college peace societies offer public forums on the problems of violence that plague the postmodern world. This proliferation of peace studies programs emerges from diverse peace movements and interest in peace research.

THE GROWTH OF PEACE RESEARCH

This growth in peace studies parallels world wide concern about how to stop the slaughter that accompanies the development of sophisticated weaponry and the proliferation of small arms. Activists build peace movements to protest the scourge of war. Peace researchers investigate the problems caused by the human commitment to violence and suggest remedies for these ills. The field of peace research developed as a “science of peace” in the 1950s to counteract the science of war that had produced so much mass killing. The first Pugwash conference was held in 1957 in the village of Pugwash, Nova Scotia, Canada, birthplace of the American philanthropist Cyrus Eaton, who hosted the meeting. The stimulus for that gathering was a Manifesto issued in 1955 by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein and signed by other distinguished academics that called upon scientists of all political persuasions to assemble to discuss the threat posed to civilization by the advent of thermonuclear weapons. Pugwash Conferences still bring together from around the world influential scholars and public figures concerned with reducing the danger of armed conflict and seeking cooperative solutions for global problems.

In 1959 the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) was founded in Norway under the leadership of Bert Roling. Johan Galtung, who has become a leading figure in the field of peace research, was active in PRIO, an organization that publishes two academic journals, *Journal of Peace Research* and *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, that have helped develop the field of peace research. In Britain, the Lancaster Peace Research Center, later to become the Richardson Institute, was also formed in 1959. That same year the Center for Research on Conflict Resolution was founded at the University of Michigan by economist and systems thinker Kenneth Boulding. These inchoate efforts become the founding infants of a new academic field, peace studies, that blossomed during the 1960s, an era when the world was focused on the injustice of the U.S. war in Vietnam.

In 1962 the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which had its origins during the First World War, set up an International Consultative Committee on peace research that was headed by Elise Boulding, who in 1963 started publishing an International Peace Research Newsletter. These efforts together with support from her husband, Kenneth Boulding, Bert Roling, and Johan Galtung among others culminated in the first International Peace Research Association (IPRA) meeting held in Groningen, the Netherlands in 1965. IPRA since that time through its biennial conferences and 20 different commissions has played a leading role in stimulating the growth of peace research.

One example of a major United States initiative for peace research in the late twentieth century is the establishment of the U.S. Institute for Peace. In 1978 the United States Senate amended an education bill to provide for a Commission to study proposals for a National Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution. The Commission decided to establish in the nation's capital an institute that would serve as a clearinghouse for peace research and peace education. The United States Institute of Peace was created in 1986. This institute has an international focus on the causes of war and promotes education and research on the effectiveness of various peace strategies.

The field of peace research began with the study of wars—why they occur and what can be done to stop them. This approach to peace became known as “negative peace,” e.g. stopping some form of violence. Partly under the leadership of Johan Galtung but also through concern for the problems of underdevelopment that plague countries in the South, peace researchers in the 1960s began to discuss concepts of positive peace that focused on human rights and justice. This impetus came from Gandhian scholars in India who were concerned about peacelessness and the challenges of development. Also in the 1960s scholars began to focus on the use of nonviolence as a creative tool to deal with oppression, following the success of Gandhi in overthrowing the yoke of the British empire in India and the nonviolent tactics of the American civil rights movement inspired by the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The second wave of the feminist movement of the 1970's contributed to the fields of peace research and peace studies by connecting the root causes of war (injustice) to both domestic and international violence. Feminists brought to the public an awareness of the breadth of suffering caused by violence in many forms, including child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse. These topics had heretofore been ignored by peace researchers focusing on finding a solution to the “war problem.”

This expansion of the field of peace research points to an important symbiotic relationship between peace movements, peace research, and peace studies. The activists lead, developing strategies to oppose violence, whether it be wars between nations, colonial aggression, cultural, domestic, or structural violence. Academics commenting on these developments further the field of peace research. The activists, seeking a way to broaden their message, seek to educate others through peace education. Teachers observing these activities promote peace studies courses and programs in schools and colleges to provide awareness of the challenges of war and peace in their classrooms. Peace researchers seek to promulgate their findings about the success or lack of efficacy of different peace strategies through peace studies programs. This creative recycling of insights into the causes of violence and the conditions for peace through the realms of peace action, research, and education provides dynamism for peace studies.

THE FIELD OF PEACE STUDIES

Courses about peace, human rights, and global issues began to proliferate on American campuses in the late 1960s. As a response to the Vietnam War, Manhattan College began a peace studies program in 1968, while Colgate University initiated a peace studies program in 1969. At this time several universities in Sweden established peace research institutes. In 1973 Bradford University in England established its peace studies program focusing on peace and security studies, conflict resolution, and social change. By the end of 1970s several dozen colleges and universities in the United States had peace studies programs, while many more had courses focusing on the problems of war and underdevelopment. Most of the academic programs were minors or certificate programs created by faculty responding to student demands to create courses of study that had relevance to their lives.

At the end of the decade of the nineteen sixties in a time of world wide questioning of state policies promoting violence and patriarchal power relations, peace researchers in the United States came together in 1970 in Boulder, Colorado to form an organization, the Consortium for Peace Research, Education and Development (COPRED) that brought together scholars and activists to discuss and analyze their practice. COPRED was the North American affiliate of the IPRA. This organization held annual conferences that brought together grassroots activists, k-12 teachers, scholars and researchers providing a forum for academics, activists, and educators concerned about wars, ethnic conflicts, and human rights to exchange insights about efforts to promote peace. In 1978 COPRED became an official cosponsor of *Peace and Change*, an academic journal started in 1972 by the Conference on Peace Research in History (CPHR, founded in 1964)—now called the Peace History Society. This journal publishes scholarly articles related to the creation of a peaceful and humane society.

By 1980 there were 75 peace studies programs in the United States. In the 1980s peace studies saw a huge growth on college campuses as a result of growing alarm about the Cold War and the production and threatened use of nuclear weapons. Concern about the fate of the planet created new courses and programs aimed toward promoting global survival. At this same time international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) reaching out across national boundaries fostered citizen to citizen exchanges (known as

“track two” diplomacy), so the focus of peace studies shifted somewhat from state actors to peace movements and peace organizations that contributed to the dissolution of the Iron Curtain and the end of the Cold War. During this decade a wide variety of conflict resolution programs appeared. These range from neighborhood centers to resolve marital conflicts, to public hearings for environmental disputes, to university based training and research programs, to peer mediation programs in primary and secondary schools, and to the development of national and international organizations promoting conflict resolution.

This interest in alternative disputes mechanisms expanded the field of peace studies further. From an original concern in political science departments about the international dimensions of conflict, professors from a wide variety disciplines offered courses that covered issues of environmental, structural, domestic, and civil violence. University faculty began to challenge concepts of national security based upon military might and to investigate concepts of collective security, environmental security and comprehensive security. In this time period the growth of peace studies paralleled interest in women’s studies, Black studies, and environmental studies.

In 1986 there were over 100 peace studies programs in the United States. University professors in COPRED, feeling the need for a more professional organization to promote the growing field of peace studies on campuses, broke away to form the Peace Studies Association. These organizations have subsequently merged in 2001 into the Peace and Justice Studies Association. COPRED in 2000 published the last Global Peace Directory which indicated that 46% of the peace studies programs in the United States are in church related schools; 32% in large public universities; 21% in non-church related private schools; 1% in community colleges; 76% undergraduate; 14% graduate; 10% both.

The United Nations and UNESCO declared the Year 2000 and the Decade 2001-2010 the Year and Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World. This was an initiative begun earlier by all of the living Peace Nobel laureates. The purpose of the decade is to promote activities which, according to a 1989 UNESCO monograph, are consistent with the “values, attitudes, and modes of behavior based on nonviolence and respect for the fundamental rights and freedom of all people.” Imbedded in the UNESCO program for a Culture of Peace is the recognition of the increasing role of citizens’ groups, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which provide awareness of war and peace issues for their constituencies. A key component of the culture of peace initiative is to use education to inform people about the promise of peace and teach them patterns of forgiveness. They promote post-conflict reconstruction to rebuild war torn countries, like Afghanistan, through peace building and reconciliation strategies. These programs in divided communities explore the role of civil society organizations, the media, schools, local authorities, religious and community groups, government and business in conflict transformation.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century peace studies programs focus attention on the threat of terrorism, as the disenfranchised of the world, unable to wage war against oppressive states perform individual acts of extreme violence to punish their oppressors. Fear of bio-terrorism, chemical war, and nuclear sabotage is complementing a deep concern about the health of the environment that is developing as sea levels rise, forests die, the ozone layer depletes, temperatures increase, and water becomes scarce. A further

concern is globalization, where large multinational corporations are accumulating power and wealth that transcend national boundaries. As the twentieth century came to a close, peace studies programs have diversified to include domestic violence, the teaching of mediation skills, an emphasis on ecology and have reflected the growing realization of the interconnectedness of the planet.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century some students come to college with an interest in peace studies and a background in the field. Many youth who have been introduced to peace concepts at the primary and secondary levels of education — serving as mediators in their schools, or by studying with teachers interested in topics of peace, security, and environmental sustainability — are seeking out programs that allow them to envision a more peaceful world. Young people, confused and bewildered over high levels of violence in their culture are eager to learn about peace. Because of the growth of peace studies as an academic field during the past fifty years, it is possible for students interested in peace studies to earn a masters degree and even a doctorate in these fields. Scholars who have completed their doctoral studies in the field of peace take positions in college and university peace studies programs or work for a variety of INGOs promoting peace. These professors study the illness of violence that permeates human societies and human/nature interactions, much in the same way as a doctor learns about sickness that inhabits an individual, seeking cures and remedies that will lead to physical, environmental, spiritual and mental health.

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*Violence solves no social problem; it only
creates new and more complicated ones.
Occasionally violence is temporarily
successful, but never permanently so.*

—Martin Luther King, Jr.