

H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXII-9

Randall Caroline Watson Forsberg. *Toward A Theory of Peace: The Role of Moral Beliefs.* Edited and with an introduction by Matthew Evangelista and Neta C. Crawford. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781501744358 (paperback, \$19.95).

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Contents

Introduction by Matthew Evangelista, Cornell University.....	2
Review by David Cortright, University of Notre Dame, Emeritus.....	6
Review by Catherine Lutz, Brown University.....	10
Review by J. Ann Tickner, American University.....	12

INTRODUCTION BY MATTHEW EVANGELISTA, CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Long before her untimely death from cancer in 2007, Randy Forsberg had established her reputation in two parallel, but related domains: as peace activist and founder of the Nuclear Freeze campaign of the 1980s, and as a researcher of military policy and arms control, first at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, and then at her own Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies (IDDS) in Massachusetts. With the posthumous publication of *Toward a Theory of Peace: The Role of Moral Beliefs*, she emerges in a third guise: as a theorist of social change. The book is Forsberg's 1997 Ph.D. dissertation from the political science department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, lightly edited and with an introductory essay by Neta Crawford and myself.

The editors were more than pleased when *Foreign Affairs* published a favorable capsule review in which John Ikenberry described *Toward a Theory of Peace* as a “remarkable book” and “a dazzling intellectual tour de force.”¹ We are grateful to Diane Labrosse and *H-Diplo* for providing space for a more sustained engagement in this forum. We sought, in particular, to recruit reviewers to carry out three tasks: 1) to put Forsberg's theory in dialogue with other theoretical approaches to war and international relations, including feminist ones; 2) to evaluate Forsberg's use of literature and concepts from disciplines outside the expertise of her political-science advisers at MIT and her political-scientist editors for Cornell University Press, especially anthropology; and 3) to provide the missing link between Forsberg's *longue durée* analysis and the actual mechanisms of social change as pursued by activists, including herself. Our three reviewers—David Cortright, Catherine Lutz, and J. Ann Tickner—expertly fulfill these tasks.

Forsberg enrolled in graduate school at MIT in the mid-1970s, when she returned to the United States from Sweden. She often described the benefits of the MIT program in terms of the technical military expertise she learned from former Pentagon officials such as William Kaufmann and George Rathjens. But in her Ph.D. application she had already hinted at her broader ambitions, as she described her own beliefs:

I think that the use of physical force is a primitive and undesirable form of behavior, on the social as well as the individual level. I favor more equitable distribution of wealth, power and opportunity, both within and among nations, but I think that the use of violence in this context is also undesirable and unnecessary. I believe that constructive social change, including the rejection of the use of military force as a political tool and a greater generosity of the haves toward the have-nots, can be brought about by education, information and persuasion, over a very long time span (vii).

Although founding and running IDDS and launching the Freeze campaign led Forsberg to abandon her dissertation research for more than a decade, the final product hews remarkably closely to the vision she articulated more than two decades earlier.

When Forsberg died in 2007, Professor Judith Reppy, her friend and chair of the institute's board of directors, inherited the vast archive of IDDS materials and convinced the Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections to house it and digitize part of it.² At about the same time, two IDDS veterans—Neta Crawford and I—undertook to edit and publish Forsberg's thesis, with an introduction putting it in the context of her life and work. With the support of

¹ G. John Ikenberry, capsule review, *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2020), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/2020-04-14/toward-theory-peace-role-moral-beliefs>.

² Cornell University, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, “Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies Records, 1974-2007. Collection Number: 8588” (finding aid), n.d., <https://rnc.library.cornell.edu/EAD/htmldocs/RMM08588.html>.

Cornell's Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, we published a version on the digital platform, Manifold,³ with much additional audiovisual and textual material linked to it, held a series of events to promote the book and the IDDS archive,⁴ and then published the book with Cornell University Press, and it is available for no cost as an e-book.⁵ Although written more than twenty years ago, *Toward a Theory of Peace* seemed to us to constitute an important and original contribution, a synthetic analysis that drew on multiple fields, including psychology, archaeology, anthropology, and history. It also deserved a wide audience to debate its claims and its conclusion that a world without largescale socially sanctioned violence (her definition of war) was possible, even if it would take a long time to achieve it.

The scholars assembled for this roundtable, although all 'friendly' reviewers and sympathetic to the project, reflect a range of backgrounds and areas of expertise, and their comments shed valuable light on the book beyond what the editors provided in their introduction.

As a specialist in the male-dominated field of security studies, Forsberg herself believed in and embodied gender equality. She was a valuable mentor to generations of women who made successful careers in the field. Yet feminist ideas *per se* are mainly absent from her scholarship, including this book. Professor Tickner, who first met Forsberg in Boston in the 1970s, adds valuable biographical detail to my short sketch above, summarizes the book's argument, and then evaluates its compatibility with feminist theories. She is well placed to do so, as one of the leading feminist theorists of international relations. Tickner focuses on gender stereotypes that associate masculinity with aggression and violence and femininity with cooperation and peace. She concludes with a discussion of evidence associating gender equality with peace and how countries such as Sweden have sought to make the links between gender and security manifest in their foreign policies.

In her formal education, Forsberg studied English at Barnard College and political science and military affairs at MIT. Fundamentally, though, she was an autodidact. I remember visiting her apartment in Brookline, Massachusetts in the mid-1990s and marveling at the stacks of library books on everything from Freudian psychotherapy to archaeological treatises on cannibalism. The editors of *Toward a Theory of Peace* were not in a position to solicit reviews from the myriad disciplines Forsberg had consulted or make substantive changes to the manuscript, so we were eager to learn the reaction of a specialist in one of the main disciplines upon which Forsberg drew: anthropology.

Professor Lutz is an ideal reviewer in that respect, an anthropologist by training who teaches about war and peace, and someone engaged in contemporary debates about military policy, as co-founder of the Costs of War project.⁶ She characterizes the book as "ambitious, unique, and hopeful," and, despite how long ago it was written, "extremely fresh in its relevance," including to concerns about racism in contemporary society. In addition to a cogent summary of Forsberg's argument, Professor Lutz offers some criticism. She finds, for example, that "Forsberg's review of the human history of socially sanctioned violence in Chapter 4 suffers from a paucity of archaeological sources on global patterns of human warfare in the past," and that she "sometimes underplay[s] the role of egalitarianism and the 'original affluence' of hunter-gatherer life."

³ Cornell University Press, "Towards a Theory of Peace: The Role of Moral Beliefs" (website), n.d., <https://cornellpress.manifoldapp.org/projects/toward-a-theory-of-peace>.

⁴ Cornell University, Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, Reppy Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, "Paths to Peace," n.d., <https://einaudi.cornell.edu/programs/reppy-institute-peace-and-conflict-studies/events/paths-peace>.

⁵ Project Muse, *Towards a Theory of Peace: The Role of Moral Beliefs* (eBook), 2019, <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/71579>.

⁶ Brown University, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, "Costs of War," n.d., <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/>.

Her more fundamental criticisms focus on Forsberg's highlighting of individual choice as the mechanism for changing societal beliefs about slavery, war, and other violent practices, and a lack of attention to the role that economic inequality played in the rise of war as an institution. Lutz mentions Forsberg's longtime advocacy of "confining the military to defense" as a route to disarmament and ultimately the abolition of war, and she praises her for not making an exception for "preemption" (the misnamed justification for the 2003 Iraq War) or "humanitarian wars."⁷ If Forsberg had lived, she would have devoted serious attention to developing solutions for how to cope with crimes against humanity and genocide without resort to national military forces—a likely prerequisite for the abolition of war as an institution.

Forsberg intended *Toward a Theory of Peace* as a starting point for a larger exploration of the relationship between moral beliefs and social change. The book itself flags certain topics that she would have wanted to develop in a revised version of the original dissertation or subsequent publications, had she lived. As David Cortright points out, one of the lacunae in her theory of how to abolish war—the "necessity of strategically sound citizen engagement and social organizing for peace"—paradoxically lay at "the heart of her life experience and her historical importance." He cites, in particular, the importance she accorded to bridging the gap between the self-styled experts and ordinary citizens when it came to debating the nuclear arms race and prospects for disarmament and peace. As a scholar-activist himself, a leading figure in the Nuclear Freeze movement during the 1980s, and a proponent of peaceful alternatives to military conflict, Cortright is ideally suited to fill in what Forsberg left out.⁸ He stresses in particular the "importance of citizen engagement" and the "commitment to promoting citizen action and applying sound strategy"—elements of Forsberg's activism that she promoted in the context of the Freeze movement, and theorized to a degree in other publications, but not in her *magnum opus*. Fortunately, these important questions have received attention from our roundtable participants, as well as from my co-editor Neta Crawford.⁹

Participants:

Matthew Evangelista is President White Professor of History and Political Science in the Department of Government at Cornell University. Among his publications relevant to this topic are: *Law, Ethics, and the War on Terror* (Polity, 2008); *The American Way of Bombing: Changing Ethical and Legal Norms, from Flying Fortresses to Drones* (Cornell University Press, 2014), co-edited with Henry Shue; and *Do the Geneva Conventions Matter?* (Oxford University Press, 2017), co-edited with Nina Tannenwald.

David Cortright is Professor Emeritus at the University of Notre Dame where he is policy studies adviser for the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies and the Keough School of Global Affairs. He is author or editor of more than 20 books, including mostly recently *Truth Seekers: Voices of Peace and Nonviolence from Gandhi to Pope Francis* (Orbis Books, 2020), and *Governance for Peace: How Inclusive, Participatory and Accountable Institutions Promote Peace and Prosperity* (Cambridge University Press, 2017). He was the Executive Director of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, from 1978 to 1988.

⁷ Randall Forsberg, "Confining the Military to Defense as a Route to Disarmament," *World Policy Journal* 1:2 (Winter 1984): 285-318.

⁸ David Cortright, *Peace Works: The Citizen's Role in Ending the Cold War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Cortright, Conor Seyle and Kristen Wall, *Governance for Peace: How Inclusive, Participatory and Accountable Institutions Promote Peace and Prosperity* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁹ Neta C. Crawford, "No Borders, No Bystanders: Developing Individual and Institutional Capacities for Global Moral Responsibility," in Charles R. Beitz and Robert E. Goodwin, eds., *Global Basic Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and her *Argument and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Catherine Lutz is Research Professor and the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Family Professor of Anthropology and International Studies Emerita at Brown University. She is the co-director of the Costs of War project (<https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/>) and the author of *Homefront: A Military City and the American 20th Century* (Beacon Press, 2001) and editor of *The Empire of Bases* (New York University Press, 2009) and *War and Health: The Medical Consequences of the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan*, with Andrea Mazzarino (New York University Press, 2019). She has consulted with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations on sexual exploitation and abuse among peacekeepers and with the government of Guam on the U.S. military's contamination of the island. She is past president of the American Ethnological Society and has been a Guggenheim Fellow and a Radcliffe Fellow.

J. Ann Tickner is Professor Emerita in the School of International Relations at the University of Southern California, and Distinguished Scholar in Residence at the School of International Service at American University, Washington D.C. Her principle areas of research include international theory, peace and security, and feminist approaches to international relations. Her publications include *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War World* (Columbia University Press, 2001) and *A Feminist Voyage Through International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 2014). She is a past President of the International Studies Association. She was named one of fifty key thinkers in Martin Griffiths, *Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations*.

REVIEW BY DAVID CORTRIGHT, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME, EMERITUS

To End War: Randy Forsberg's Moral Vision and Social Agenda

Randy Forsberg was a friend and colleague with whom I worked closely in the strategy committee of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign in the 1980s. We were together in many freeze campaign meetings and public events during those halcyon days, and we continued to cooperate in the years afterwards. She was a brilliant policy analyst and expert on strategic nuclear policy, but she also understood the importance of ethically-based citizen mobilization and the need for public pressure to reduce nuclear dangers and end the threat of war.

Her book has two core themes. The first is that we can and should abolish war, and that previously accepted forms of group violence have been eliminated in ways that provide guidance for how to accomplish that goal. The second is that moral values matter greatly in achieving historical change and are essential to the quest for abolishing war. The importance of moral beliefs relates to another theme of Forsberg's work, one of which is mentioned only briefly in the book but which lies at the heart of her life experience and her historical importance: the necessity of strategically sound citizen engagement and social organizing for peace.

In this essay I address both of her core themes but focus especially on the linkage between moral beliefs and social mobilization. I describe the innovations of the nuclear freeze movement, and examine how social movements and policy advocacy can advance the goal of abolishing war.

Forsberg defines the end of war as a condition in which recognized governments explicitly reject war as an instrument of national policy and agree that the only justifiable use of armed force is for self-defense. If this is the standard for realizing the end of war, nations are well on the way to realizing that goal. War between states has become very rare. Former senior British military commander Rupert Smith claims that the previous paradigm of industrial interstate war "no longer exists."¹ In central Europe, where previous world wars originated, the European Union has emerged as an integrated community of prosperous, secure, and interdependent nations, however contentious at times, which collaborate to foster peace and cooperative economic development. In East Asia newly prosperous states have maintained peaceful relations since the 1980s in a region that in earlier decades witnessed the world's bloodiest wars.²

The Charter of the United Nations, which 193 member states have ratified, establishes in Article 2 that "all nations shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means" and will "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state." These and other provisions of the UN charter outlaw war, building upon the legacy of the 1928 Treaty on the Renunciation of War, also known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The Charter incorporates the "inherent right" of self-defense in Article 51, but it calls on states to report such matters to the Security Council for cooperative action to maintain peace and security.³

The fact that that the United States and other states frequently ignore these provisions and deny the authority of the United Nations does not alter the de jure prohibition against war that exists in the Charter. The normative standard, as reflected in the Charter and other international legal instruments, prohibits war and restricts the use of force to self-defense.

¹ Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2006), 1-2.

² Stein Tønnesson, *Explaining the East Asian Peace: A Research Story* (Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2017).

³ The United Nations, UN Charter, New York, 1945, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/>.

Forsberg recognizes the need for similar commitments among non-state actors and rogue regimes. In this realm, much less progress has been achieved. Civil wars, insurgencies, violent coups, state repression, and international interventions are prevalent and account for nearly all violent conflict in the world today. According to the figures of the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, fatalities from intrastate armed conflict remain high, and increased markedly in 2012 with the Syrian civil war and the rise of ISIS, although there has been a modest decline in the past few years. In 2019 there were 54 armed conflicts in the world, including seven conflicts classified as wars with more than 1,000 fatalities annually, for a total of nearly 80,000 deaths in armed conflict that year.⁴

To address the problem of intrastate conflict Forsberg suggests a collective security approach of armed intervention by the international community to end genocidal bloodbaths. This concept is known today as humanitarian intervention and is embodied in the principle of the Responsibility to Protect, which was affirmed at the United Nations world summit in 2005 and approved by the Security Council a year later.⁵ The concept of humanitarian intervention was misused and manipulated in Iraq, Libya, and elsewhere, however, and many political leaders have become skeptical of the idea.

If Forsberg were with us today she might share that skepticism and recognize the limits of collective military responses to the challenge of civil war. Alternative nonmilitary means are available for addressing the threat of armed conflict within states, as her book acknowledges. She mentions Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence and the need to address the underlying political, economic, social and cultural factors that give rise to civil conflicts.⁶ She examines the importance of democracy as an essential condition of peace. In recent decades social scientists and political theorists have made progress in identifying the role of unresolved political grievances and failures of economic development as conditions that contribute to armed conflict.⁷ Many emphasize the importance of inclusive, participatory and accountable systems of governance within and between states.⁸ Scholars and policy makers have also demonstrated the importance of gender equality, as Ann Tickner writes in these pages.

Forsberg's most important contribution to the theory of peace is her emphasis on the role of moral values. Contrary to most analysts, who trace the roots of war primarily to institutional and structural factors, Forsberg focuses on the centrality of moral beliefs. She acknowledges the importance of institutional factors but argues that moral beliefs and culturally accepted norms are also essential. She describes moral beliefs as gateways that allow us to accept or reject ideas and values that shape public policy. Contemporary analysts use the concept of cognitive frameworks, which are the moral beliefs and principles through which we perceive and act upon images and information.⁹ Policy advocates are most successful when they frame their issues in terms that are resonant with widely accepted moral principles.

Moral beliefs are the fuel that propels social movements. Forsberg does not write directly about the role of social mobilization in her theory, but her leadership in the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign speaks volumes about her

⁴ Therese Pettersson and Magnus Öberg, "Organized Violence, 1989-2019," *Journal of Peace Research* 57:4 (2020): 597-613.

⁵ United Nations, *Security Council Resolution 1674*, S/RES/1674, 28 April 2006.

⁶ Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6:3 (1969): 167-197.

⁷ Ted Robert Gurr, *People Versus States: Minorities at Risk in the New Century* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2000); and Paul Collier, V.L. Elliot, Harvard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Marta Renal-Querol, and Nicholas Sambanis, *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁸ David Cortright, Conor Seyle and Kristen Wall, *Governance for Peace: How Inclusive, Participatory and Accountable Institutions Promote Peace and Prosperity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁹ George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

commitment to the necessity of social action. She believed strongly in the value of democratic citizen action, and she understood the importance of effective strategies for change.

Forsberg was the founder of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign and its intellectual author and primary spokesperson. She launched the campaign in 1980 while serving as director of the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies in Massachusetts. Her “Call to Halt the Arms Race” had a catalytic effect on public opinion and sparked one of the largest grassroots disarmament movements in history. The freeze proposition was simple yet profound in its political and strategic implications. It called for a bilateral verifiable halt to the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.¹⁰ Forsberg later published a feature article elaborating the rationale for the nuclear freeze in *Scientific American*.¹¹

The freeze proposal achieved an important political breakthrough by directing its demand to both the Soviet Union and the United States. Disarmament advocates had been criticized previously for protesting U.S. nuclear policy but having little to say about the weapons of the Soviet Union. By establishing political equivalence between the superpowers and demanding a freeze of both Soviet and American nuclear weapons, the freeze movement gained unprecedented legitimacy and dispelled the political stereotypes that had hindered earlier movements.

The freeze campaign democratized the discussion of nuclear policy. One did not need a Ph.D. in nuclear physics or strategic policy to understand and accept the logic of a mutual freeze. In the context in the early 1980s, in the midst of an accelerating arms race and widespread fear of nuclear war, the proposal was like a balm that helped to ease social anxieties and offered a potential solution to the nuclear dilemma. Previously a technical issue reserved for highly trained experts, most of them white males, nuclear weapons policy became a matter for everyone to discuss. The debate shifted from the cloistered boardrooms of Washington to the city square.

Forsberg was one of those highly trained experts, and could go toe to toe in debate with defenders of the nuclear establishment, but she also understood the importance of citizen engagement. She was tireless in her commitment to promoting citizen action and applying sound strategy. Her ultimate goal was complete nuclear disarmament, but she proposed the nuclear freeze as a popular and achievable first step toward that objective.

Forsberg was one of the featured speakers at the rally to freeze and reverse the arms race of a million people in New York’s Central Park in June 1982, the largest disarmament rally in history. That year activists across the country succeeded in placing a nonbinding freeze referendum on the ballot in nine states and dozens of major cities. One quarter of the American electorate voted on the freeze proposition, with 60 percent giving their approval, as the resolution passed in eight of the nine states and in many cities.¹² The freeze movement was able to turn grass roots support into “political muscle at the ballot box,” said congressional supporter Ed Markey, “delivering to the White House a resounding vote of no confidence in its nuclear buildup.”¹³

¹⁰ A copy of the original Call is available through the archives of the Wisconsin Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, <https://livingwiththebomb.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/call-to-halt-arms-race.pdf>.

¹¹ Randall Forsberg, “A Bilateral Nuclear Freeze,” *Scientific American* 247:5 (November 1982): 52-61.

¹² Cortright, *Peace Works: The Citizen’s Role in Ending the Cold War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 19-22.

¹³ Ed Markey, Interview with David Cortright, 28 August 1991.

Most analyses of nuclear issues neglect the role of citizen action in shaping public policy, but throughout the atomic age, waves of citizen mobilization have emerged to advocate for disarmament and restrictions on nuclear weapons.¹⁴ In the late 1940s atomic scientists sought to create a system of international control over atomic energy. In the late 1950s and early 60s, citizens protested atmospheric contamination from nuclear weapons testing, generating pressures that led to the partial nuclear test ban of 1963. In the 1980s, massive demonstrations against intermediate range nuclear weapons in Europe and the nuclear freeze movement in the U.S. transformed the political climate and generated significant support for arms reduction.¹⁵ Citizen pressures continued into the early 1990s, convincing the U.S. Congress to cut off funding for nuclear testing.

More recent examples of successful social action for peace and disarmament include the creation of the International Criminal Court in 1998, the Treaty to Ban Landmines in 1997, and the UN Treaty on the Prohibition against Nuclear Weapons in 2017, the latter two campaigns winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Today's social movements are focused on domestic racial justice issues rather than international peace, but public support remains strong for ending U.S. military interventions and further reducing nuclear weapons. Forsberg and the freeze movement paved the way for breakthroughs in arms reduction during the Reagan administration, especially in its latter years. Perhaps similar advances will be possible again now if there is a change of administration in Washington this November. The United States would then be able to return to negotiated arms reduction and more collaborative and peaceful foreign policies, while peace researchers and policy advocates carry on Forsberg's work to define and create the conditions for ending war.

¹⁴ See the three volume history by Lawrence S. Wittner: *The Struggle Against the Bomb: Volume One, One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953*; *The Struggle Against the Bomb: Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970*, 2; and *Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971-Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

¹⁵ David S. Meyer, *A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1990); Cortright, *Peace Works*.

REVIEW BY CATHERINE LUTZ, BROWN UNIVERSITY

This ambitious, unique, and hopeful book gives the academic and activist worlds an urgently needed overview of what we know and can say about the possibilities of a permanent peace. Randall Forsberg notes that her thesis covers ground that is quite distinct from previous writing about war and peace, which has either been quite limited in its ambitions or has represented a theory about when wars rather than peace will likely break out. In contrast, she offers a theory of peace which, in keeping with her ambition to change the world, rather than simply know it, is “the theory of the conditions under which war might end” (xxvii). Her primary premise is that there must emerge a broad moral revulsion towards war that will make war as unthinkable (even if it will sometimes still occur) as slavery has become. She centers this important comparison between slavery and war on the idea that they are two institutions that took a century of movement activism to change. Drawing this parallel makes the book even more relevant today as the continuing legacy of slavery in the United States has motivated renewed and broadened activism.

Cogently argued, Forsberg’s book outlines the various assumptions about war and peace that, in her view, have made war seem inevitable and peace chimerical. Identifying those assumptions as a crucial first step allows her to comb the various social scientific literatures that address and undermine some or all of the parts of those assumptions.¹ She puts alteration in moral beliefs at the center of her theory of change in the war system, not because she sees cultural/moral belief as the prime mover and instigator of the war system (there she features the standard list of incentive structures in political economy, conflict resolution laws, and institutional mechanisms, etc.), but rather as a lever of change that holds promise for activists trying to push the permanent peace forward.

These include four overarching assumptions: (1) that humans are hard-wired with instincts that trigger war; (2) that wars are fought for moral purposes that justify them and that these moral beliefs should motivate people to participate in the institution of war; (3) that there are insurmountable obstacles of a political, cultural, and/or economic nature that prevent our building international institutions to keep the peace; and (4) that if peace were accomplished in one period under favorable circumstances, peace should not be expected to be permanent because stress on the system would later emerge that would motivate circumvention of the global security system and beliefs meant to sustain it (11-12).

As an anthropologist, I am particularly taken with this emphasis on the power of belief about war in sustaining the institution. As someone who has taught courses on war and peace for several decades, I have encountered belief in many of these well-established fallacies among my students, undergraduate and graduate. These assumptions are also often held by those in the academy dealing with the historical record, international relations, or security studies. This is caused by the fact that as academicians we are created as subjects of our particular cultural place and time and because we assume we are not: the continuing ethnocentrism of much social science is a key obstacle because, as Forsberg notes, “the social sciences tend to treat moral beliefs as a constant rather than a variable—a constant which, though not necessarily uniform across populations nor well understood, remains substantially unchanged across cultures and over the course of human history” (13). Here one can witness the breathtaking errors of assumption and reading of the archaeological record by psychologist Steven Pinker in his book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* that have been pointed out by Brian Ferguson² and others who have mastered the literature on the prehistory of war and peace.

¹ A.K. Scherer and J.W. Verano, eds., *Embattled Bodies, Embattled Places: War in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica and the Andes* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2014); Brian Ferguson, “Why We Fight,” *Scientific American* 319:3 (2018): 76-81.

² Brian Ferguson, “Pinker’s List: Exaggerating Prehistoric War Mortality,” in Douglas P. Fry, ed., *War, Peace, and Human Nature: The Convergence of Evolutionary and Cultural Views* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 112-131. Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking Books, 2011).

The commitment to these moral assumptions can be deeply consequential and emotionally resistant to change. Forsberg references the “stickiness” (28) of the moral beliefs that are relevant to war and peace. This stickiness has two aspects which her theory encourages us to examine further. These include their legitimation function, which means that powerful forces – now in corporate and government hands rather than reflecting the will of the people – repeat and reinforce these moral beliefs. The stickiness of those beliefs is also the result of affect: people believe them because they serve emotional purposes. Take, again, the example of the popularity of Pinker’s thesis. The feelings of pride and hope that it inspires rest in part on the notion that we as a species have a devilish impulse to collective violence but that over the relatively recent past we have been increasingly and brilliantly designing methods to control it.

Although they have been deeply normalized, those assumptions are also, of course, articulated—or more often used as the silent, unspoken inferential basis for any discussion of security and international affairs in every political arena of our age.

While Forsberg’s review of the human history of socially sanctioned violence in Chapter 4 suffers from a paucity of archaeological sources on global patterns of human warfare in the past and while she does sometimes underplay the role of egalitarianism and the original affluence of hunter-gatherer life, she does appropriately note the importance of the rise of agriculture and the problems created by both the scarcity and the surpluses it first permitted. In her analysis in Chapter 6 of the cultural evolution of moral attitudes, however, she argues that “individuals sacrificed the autonomy, dignity, and nonviolence of hunter-gatherer groups for the physical security and longevity offered by large agrarian states” (140). This represents a problematic overemphasis on individual choice as an analytic device and on the rise of individualism as the route to rising moral revulsion at war and slavery. Rather she ought to have emphasized how agriculture allowed for the concentration of wealth and the emergence of inequality and so for the raising of armies by elites and the search for status and status goods through war.

The introduction by Neta Crawford and Matthew Evangelista gives the reader an intellectual and political history of Forsberg’s work that puts extremely helpful context around the manuscript itself. It traces where she developed her ideas at MIT and the necessity that setting imposed on her of dealing with the nitty-gritty details of military hardware and strategic thinking. It also shows the fundamental influence on her of the think-tank and activist worlds of both Europe and the U.S. and the contrasts she could observe between them. Finally, it shows how the larger global context, particularly of nuclearism and the military buildup of the 1980s, made the uptake or reception of her ideas more or less likely. It makes clear why the book is structured as it is, that is, as both academic treatise and as a blueprint for change, the latter in the form of the arguments that peace activists and politicians can and should make to a skeptical public and of insights into which levers of change are most likely to be efficacious.

Unusually for a new book, this one was written many years ago. It remains, however, extremely fresh in its relevance. Her proposition that the military should be confined to defense might find many takers in the abstract, but fortunately she thoroughly debunks the expansive, or bloated view of what a defensive war is in the era that saw preemptive, ‘defensive’ war in Iraq and elsewhere. Those on both the right and left today who argue for a more peaceful U.S. foreign policy, for example, can learn much from this book’s language and argument.

Forsberg’s language is much more straightforward and ambitious than is that of those who promote ‘restraint’ and ‘non-interventionism.’ These and related concepts can be more easily used to cover the host of sins that make possible humanitarian war and extended notions of counter-terror defense. The further move from restraint to abolition will depend on the democratization of foreign policy and the building of democratic political institutions which can insist on non-violent approaches to conflict and change.

REVIEW BY J. ANN TICKNER, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Randy Forsberg was an inspiration. It was a privilege to have known her. Like Forsberg, we lived in the Boston area in the 1970s and 1980s as my husband, Hayward Alker, taught at M.I.T., where Forsberg enrolled as a graduate student in 1974. Hayward served on her dissertation committee and was on the board of The Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies (IDDS) which Forsberg founded in 1979. It was a great time to be in Boston and to be exposed not only to some of the leaders of the peace movement, like Elise Boulding and Paul Walker, and of course Forsberg herself, but also to some of the leading defense analysts, like William Kaufman, who was also at M.I.T. Forsberg was a leading peace activist, but she was also a scholar trained by defense experts which meant that she was at home in both worlds, taken seriously by each. It gave her knowledge of the ‘enemy’ so she could speak authoritatively about nuclear weapons and the reasoning that went into their development and deployment. Forsberg devoted her life to working for peace. She took time off from her graduate studies, so it wasn’t until 1997 that she was awarded her Ph.D. in Political Science. But in the intervening years, Forsberg founded and directed IDDS, a think tank that produced and maintained a database of world armaments, both nuclear and conventional. IDDS operated on a shoestring budget; as Forsberg well knew it is harder to find money to study peace than to study war. Yet her contributions to the peace movement were immeasurable, earning her a MacArthur Genius Grant in 1983.

In 1980 Forsberg had issued the Manifesto of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign that called for a halt to the development, deployment, and testing of nuclear weapons. The Freeze Movement garnered enormous grassroots support, both in the U.S. and Europe in the early 1980s, culminating in a march in Central Park, New York in 1982 that drew over 1 million people. The Freeze was endorsed by various policy notables such as Averill Harriman and George Kennan, as well as by scientists, including Linus Pauling and Carl Sagan. In 1982 Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Mark O. Hatfield introduced a freeze bill into Congress. Although it did not pass, the widespread public support it received must have had an effect on President Ronald Reagan’s dramatic shift in his willingness to enter into negotiations with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to reduce their nuclear forces after the end of the Cold War. Forsberg’s remarkable success owes a great deal to her tireless efforts to keep fighting, even from her hospital bed when she suffered recurring bouts of cancer. She was a persuasive and skilled orator, with a wealth of knowledge about conventional and nuclear weapons with which to support her arguments. IDDS did meticulous scientific work; this helped her to be taken seriously by policymakers and the scientific community.

In spite of her life’s work, documenting and speaking about the vast number of weapons that could destroy the world many times over, Forsberg was an optimist. To read her book *Toward a Theory of Peace: The Role of Moral Beliefs*, at this particular moment, during a global pandemic when many things feel so wrong with our world, is uplifting, since Forsberg believed that war (albeit not a war of germs) could be abolished. Forsberg’s optimism led her to write a Ph.D. dissertation that developed a theory of peace that offered the hopeful message that, at some point, large-scale inter-state war would no longer be a sanctioned tool of states’ foreign policies. In this this essay I reflect on some issues raised by the book. Then, drawing on some feminist perspectives, I offer some additional reflections as to how this might be achieved. Feminist International Relations entered the International Relations (IR) discipline around 1989. Some of its ideas, which have also been taken up by the international policy community, resonate with Forsberg’s analysis and can offer further support for her arguments. I am sure Forsberg would be sympathetic to IR feminist ideas since they seem to parallel her own¹.

A world without state-sanctioned war, (Forsberg is careful to say that she is not suggesting all violence will cease) may seem like a pipe dream. But Forsberg, a good social scientist, carefully lays out her case, using slavery, and an exhaustive and carefully researched study of ritual sacrifice and cannibalism to support her claims. Relying on multiple anthropological sources, Forsberg described primitive societies’ assumptions about cannibalism that could equally apply to war. Cannibalism and ritual sacrifice were widespread, occurring in almost all hunter-gatherer societies; it was a socially sanctioned practice

¹ See for example, J. Ann Tickner, “Feminist Perspectives on Peace and World Security in the Post-Cold War Era” in Michael T. Klare, ed., *Peace and World Security Studies: A Curriculum Guide*, 6th ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994: 43-54).

that involved violation of the human body and was justified as an important social value necessary for the flourishing of society. Forsberg rightly claims that these practices would now be considered abhorrent (91). Their demise occurred with the rise of settled societies, which were dependent on agriculture and worshipping different gods who could assure rain and good harvests, rather than the sacrificing of humans and animals to appease other gods (127). Forsberg claims that it is change in institutionalized practices that precedes change in moral intolerance of certain practices; but she also claims that both practices and morality are continually evolving and dependent on each other for changes in what is considered, or not considered, morally just (23).

Turning to her more recent case, slavery, some might argue that America's 'Original Sin' is still manifest in contemporary racism.² The Black Lives Matter movement reminds us that the wounds of American slavery have not yet healed. Forsberg would counter that argument, saying that slavery is no longer a socially sanctioned practice that is considered necessary for the flourishing of society. As she says, there is no such thing as 'just slavery' comparable to 'just war' (8). In the U.S., slavery was officially abolished after the Civil War; before that slavery was seen as quite just to plantations owners in the antebellum South and to many others also. While the evils of racism are still very much with us, most Americans would consider the institution of slavery to be morally abhorrent.

Forsberg claimed that moral beliefs are a neglected but important subject in IR (13). Since they are constantly changing and evolving, as demonstrated by her studies of cannibalism and slavery, Forsberg believed that we will get to a stage in our evolution where the only permissible and morally acceptable wars are wars of defense or, occasionally, wars of intervention to prevent genocide (14). Forsberg acknowledges that we have not yet reached the stage where we think war is abhorrent, but she sees hope that, with the spread of democratic institutions, ending international war might not be a distant possibility (18). I wonder what she would have made of the retreat from democracy, occurring in so many states today, as her theory of peace depends on the spread of democratic institutions (22). Since her vision was for the long term, maybe she would see our present condition as merely a bump along the road.

One might think that a theory of peace should not be all that remarkable. But one must remember that IR scholars have written hundreds of books about war but comparatively few about peace. In the 1990s, after the Cold War, when Forsberg was speaking and writing, IR did open up to new issues and methodologies.³ Following 9/11, however, security studies once again assumed a more central role. Peace studies struggles for recognition in the academy and is amongst the first programs to be cut when university budgets are tight. Although the dangers posed by the United States' huge arsenal of nuclear weapons are almost as great as they were in the 1980s, peace protests are rare today. We are rightly concerned with racial injustice and economic inequality but as Martin Luther King made clear in his protest against the Vietnam War and, as Forsberg demonstrates in her book, racial and economic injustice go hand in hand with militarism, and huge defense budgets drain resources that otherwise might be used to alleviate these injustices.⁴

Having made convincing arguments about the moral abhorrence of cannibalism and slavery, the central question that *Toward a Theory of Peace* asks about war is: what are the conditions under which war, which Forsberg defines as a socially sanctioned instrument of national policy, might end? (5). IR has generally assumed that we live in an 'anarchic'

² I have taken the phrase "Original Sin," from the title of theologian Jim Wallis's book, *America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege and the Bridge to a New America* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press 2017). Wallis describes the evils of contemporary racism which go back to America's founding when a large portion of society depended on the institution of slavery for its economic livelihood.

³ See Yosef Lapid, "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era," *International Studies Quarterly*, 33:3 (1989): 235-254.

⁴ See King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" where he lays out his opposition to the Vietnam War and articulates his theory of non-violence more generally, https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html.

international system without any enforceable war-prevention measures, so war could break out at any time.⁵ Forsberg disputes this claim by pointing to the fact that a majority of states are not at war and also to federations of states where war is not expected to break out at any time. She acknowledges the difficulties of constructing a theory about the total absence of war, something that has not happened yet, but she points to what she claims is significant progress (5). Her claim rests on the democratic peace theory, first articulated by Bruce Russett in a book that came out around the same time as Forsberg was finishing her dissertation.⁶

For war cessation to become a reality, Forsberg claims that a critical mass of states would need to be democratic and would have to accept the idea that war is unacceptable. This would need to include a number of the great powers, such as the U.S. joined by some European powers and possibly Russia or China (19).⁷ Unlike earlier forms of government, democracies take into account the worth of the individual, which make decisions to go to war more problematic. Forsberg claims that at some point, with the spread of democracies with their regard for individual lives, war will no longer be a social sanctioned tool of state policies.

Important to this claim are arguments about whether individuals are aggressive and, therefore, inclined to conflict. Drawing from the work of various psychologists and behavioral scientists, Forsberg concludes that humans are not naturally aggressive (42).⁸ Aggressive behavior, except in the case of certain pathologies, is generally culturally determined, mostly dependent on childhood socialization. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that people do not like to kill other human beings. Military training emphasizes obedience and group cohesion to ensure that soldiers kill when required to do so. Militaries have developed ways of not involving individuals in face to face combat through the use of aerial bombing and drones. Publics in representative democracies are increasingly becoming less willing to tolerate wars, at least those with visible consequences, particularly when they involve deaths of their own military personnel. Fighting for one's country is becoming less attractive, and the U.S. military is hard pressed to find enough recruits in the absence of a draft. Nevertheless, the U.S. continues to conduct wars far from home that have little impact on domestic publics. But when acts of torture or wanton killing of individuals, such as Abu Ghraib in Iraq or the My Lai massacre in Vietnam are exposed, there is a moral revulsion by the American people and the U.S. government is hard pressed to claim that it has not actually committing torture or engaged in murdering innocent civilians.

Individual aggression is an issue of concern to feminist scholars. While most acts of aggression are committed by males, feminists are careful not to fall into the essentialist trap of 'peaceful women' and 'aggressive men.' Like Forsberg, feminists believe that, for the most part, aggression is culturally determined. In his book, *War and Gender*, political scientist Joshua Goldstein does an exhaustive study of the biological determinants of aggression and finds no evidence that testosterone

⁵ This is the key assumption of IR's realist school. For an example of classical realism, see Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1973). For an example of neo-realism which uses positivist rational choice methods, see, Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison Wesley, 1979). The anarchy assumption is central to both.

⁶ Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁷ Forsberg completed her dissertation around 1990 when relations between the great powers were considerably less conflictual than today. It is true that the European powers she mentions are all democracies and unlikely to go to war with each other, but the United States' aggression in Iraq and Afghanistan, wars that seem never-ending, are worrying. The United States' vast military industrial complex (and, to a lesser extent, those of Russia and China) seems to belie any movement toward a more peaceful world for a very long time.

⁸ See for examples, John W. Renfrew, *Aggression and its Causes: A Biopsychosocial Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) and Robert A. Baron and Deborah R. Richardson, *Human Aggression*, 2nd ed. (New York: Plenum Press, 1977).

levels or other male hormones are correlated with male violence.⁹ Male aggression, Goldstein claims, is related to the way young boys are socialized into becoming ‘real men.’ To become ‘real men,’ boys are expected to be autonomous, strong and powerful, characteristics that we associate with a socially constructed idealized form of masculinity. While not all males display these characteristics, it is, nevertheless, the way that society believes men *ought* to behave if they are to live up to this idealized vision of manhood. Feminists claim that realism, the International Relations approach most concerned with war and conflict, has projected these same characteristics onto the preferred behavior of states if they are to be successful and survive in the international system.¹⁰

If aggression is associated with masculinity, its opposite, peacefulness has been typically associated with femininity. Dependence, weakness and emotionality are socially constructed characteristics that we associate with femininity.¹¹ To achieve Forsberg’s goal of a world without war, I believe that we need also to think of a world of gender equality where masculine and feminine characteristics are valued equally. The devaluing of aggressive masculinity and the revaluing of feminine characteristics, such as interdependence and cooperation, might be a way towards a more peaceful international system that would accord with Forsberg’s hope for a moral revulsion against war.

Interestingly, we are seeing shifts in this direction in the international system. In 2014, Sweden became the first country to adopt what it explicitly called a feminist foreign policy, putting the promotion of gender equality and women’s rights at the center of its foreign policy agenda. Sweden committed to the promotion of the human rights of women and girls worldwide, combatting violence against women, and promoting the participation of women in peace processes¹² and women’s economic empowerment.¹³ Likewise, the government of Canada under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau committed to a similar agenda, emphasizing the empowerment of women globally through development assistance.¹⁴ Australia and the United Kingdom have similar platforms built into their foreign assistance programs. Multiple studies have shown that when women are empowered, countries make greater strides in terms of economic development. And importantly for Forsberg’s conditions

⁹ Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹⁰ J. Ann Tickner, “Hans Morgenthau’s Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17:3 (1988): 429-440.

¹¹ Clearly, these characteristics are not typical of most women. Nevertheless, they are a powerful social construct. For example, words like *bitchy* and *pushy* are used against successful women when they do not conforming to this stereotype. While being successful depends on acting like a man, these expectations put women in a double bind. For a more extensive discussion of the social construction of gender, see J. Ann Tickner, *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 15.

¹² There is evidence to suggest that peace processes have a higher likelihood of success if there are female negotiators. Thania Paffenholz, Nicholas Ross, Stephen Dixon, A.L. Schluchter, and Jacqui True, *Making Women Count—Not Just Counting Women* (New York: Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative and UN Women, 2016).

¹³ Government Offices of Sweden, “Sweden’s feminist foreign policy—examples from three years of implementation,” 30 October 2017, <https://www.government.se/information-material/2017/10/swedens-feminist-foreign-policy--examples-from-three-years-of-implementation/>.

¹⁴ Alex Bugailiskis, “Canada’s feminist foreign policy,” WIIS Italy, 2 July (Lug) 2018, <https://wiisitaly.org/canadas-feminist-foreign-policy/>.

that promote peace, there is evidence to suggest that countries in which there are active conflicts are countries that rank poorly in terms of the Gender Development Index (GDI).¹⁵

If Forsberg's claim that states, where individuals' rights are respected, are moving closer to a morally based intolerance of war, the rights of women, who constitute more than half the global population, must be included. Many states in the international system, especially those that have adopted a feminist foreign policy are beginning to realize that when women are flourishing, countries do better on overall economic and social development. That these same countries are not actively engaged in conflict is one step further towards Forsberg's vision of a world without war.

Sadly, Randy Forsberg's untimely death prevented her from turning her dissertation into a book. She was gratified to receive the offer of a named professorship at City College of New York in the last year of her life. She said that being free from financial concerns meant that she would have time to complete this project. Alas that was not to be, but we owe a debt of gratitude to Neta Crawford and Mathew Evangelista for bring this project to its completion. It is a fitting memorial to someone who devoted her whole life to creating a more just and peaceful world.

¹⁵ The GDI was first instituted by the United Nations Development Programme in 1995. It developed gender-differentiated quality of life indices, such as literacy, life expectancy, income and political participation.