

ENDING WAR, BUILDING PEACE

Edited by
Lynda-ann Blanchard
and Leah Chan



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FOREWORD

Ending war, building peace

Lynda-ann Blanchard and Leah Chan

The conference ‘Iraq never again: ending war, building peace’ held in Sydney, 15 and 16 April 2008, was made memorable by the motivation and passion of the participants. They were fed up with the belief that violence solves problems. They wanted to deliberate about peace in Iraq. In addition, the occasion was auspicious for other reasons. April 2008 marked the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the Iraq war. It was also the 20th anniversary of the founding of Sydney University’s Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS) and the 25th anniversary of the launching of the Japanese-inspired Peace Boat whose arrival at Circular Quay, Sydney Harbour coincided with the conference opening.

More than conference proceedings

This publication is born out of the conference. However, it is also born out of the theory and practice of CPACS in asking a central question: how does the peace studies perspective contribute to original thinking about the catastrophe of war? The introduction by CPACS founding director, Stuart Rees, sets up the dialectic of this edited collection: (i) how do we unmask our fascination with violence and, (ii) what might the nonviolent alternatives look like?

Therefore, part one of this book investigates the fascination with violence. In chapter one Mike McKinley begins from a position of “someone who believes it is possible to conceive of a just war – though almost

impossible to find one historically”. In confronting the truth about war McKinley explores themes such as commemorating violence and sacrifice; money in war; unrepresentative democracy; and divine justice. He suggests that we are so illiterate about nonviolence, we are only able to conceive of peace through war. The consequences of such a conceptualisation – including the human and environmental costs – are explored in the following two chapters by Richard Hil and Sue Wareham. The final two chapters in part one consider the dynamics of cultures of violence. In ‘Spectacles of honour’, Sandra Phelps considers ‘barbarism’ and ‘civility’ which, within cultures of violence, appear to be indistinguishable. In chapter five, Noah Bassil considers how the philosophy, language and practice of violence – exemplified in the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 – feeds ‘radicalism’, which according to the 2000 Sydney Peace Prize recipient Xanana Gusmao is a great obstacle to peace.

Part two of the book approaches nonviolent alternatives. In chapter six, freelance journalist and author Michael Otterman presents a pictorial representation of our ‘humanness’, a notion central to the philosophy, language and practice of nonviolence. Jake Lynch, in chapter seven, confronts the media as a pillar of power in our globally interdependent world and proposes ideas about peace journalism replacing war journalism. In order for that to happen, readers and writers of the media will seek to expose, and explore alternatives to, manifestations of cultural violence – such as the with-us-or-against-us statements of leaders – and structural violence, such as militarism and ‘disaster capitalism’. Kenji Isezaki, in chapter eight, suggests an alternative narrative of international peace and security in terms of our responsibility to protect one another. In chapter nine Hannah Middleton introduces the academic/activist voice, and her narrative, a history of the Anti-American Bases Coalition Campaign, reveals a global “empire of [military] bases”. In Middleton’s analysis we unmask indirect or structural violence: ‘what is not said’ by governments, what is not reported in the media, what is not visible in active urban centres. As peace theorist Johan Galtung has remarked about the language of violence, “what is said is interesting, but what is not said is fascinating”. The following two chapters are personal accounts of war and peace. Donna Mulhearn, in ‘The road to Fallujah,’

takes us to the frontline of war as a peace activist, as a human shield. In chapter eleven, the Peace Boat story fills us with hope for a new story of humankind:

Hope can neither be affirmed nor denied. Hope is like a path in the countryside: originally there was no path – yet, as people are walking all the time in the same spot, a way appears.¹

Finally, Mary Lane’s afterword tells such a story of hope as she recalls the prospect of “thinking slightly differently”. She details the experiment and struggle of establishing academic peace and conflict studies in Australia’s oldest tertiary institution twenty years ago.

Collaborative dialogue

This volume sets out to (a) avoid social scientific-style neutrality; (b) include a whole variety of perspectives – from academics of different persuasions, to poets, to activists, to refugee mothers; (c) address media constructions of war; and, (d) suggest what peaceful transformations look like. The collaborative approach to hosting the conference gives us the cue. That collaboration included the Sydney Peace Foundation, Macquarie University’s Centre for Middle Eastern Studies and the Peace Boat’s Global University. The participants, however, came from a much broader academic and community representation including Australian National University; Southern Cross University; Medical Association for the Prevention of War; University of Kurdistan Hawler; Tokyo University of Foreign Studies; La Trobe University; University of Western Sydney and so on. The collaboration included an orchestra of voices and instruments: from academics to activists, from politicians to refugees and to artists.

Ending war, building peace is about finding alternatives to violence. As the co-founder of the Conflict Resolution Network, Stella Cornelius, has remarked: “nonviolence is a beloved child who has many names”. The director of the Sydney Peace Foundation, Stuart Rees, calls that child “peace with justice”. He says, “to realise a vision of peace with

¹ From Lu Xun, to many the founder of modern Chinese literature, quoted in Kristof (1990).

justice requires inspiration and commitment” (Rees 2003, p. 82). That inspiration and commitment underpins the establishment and ongoing work of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney.

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Lynda-ann Blanchard is a lecturer at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney; executive member of the National Committee on Human Rights Education; executive member of the International Institute For Peace Through Tourism; and, consultant to the Conflict Resolution Network. She is co-editor of *Managing creatively: human agendas from changing times* (1996).

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Kenji Isezaki is professor of peace and conflict studies at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and lecturer at the United Nations University, Tokyo. He served as the Japanese Government Representative for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in Afghanistan and as Chief of DDR in the UN Mission in Sierra Leone. He has published widely on UN peacekeeping operations and NGO management.

Mary Lane is a guest lecturer at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and an honorary associate in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Sydney. Formerly a senior lecturer in social work, a major focus of her teaching and research has been community development, peace and conflict, and social work practice.

Jake Lynch is director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney. He has spent the past decade developing and campaigning for peace journalism and practising it as an experienced international reporter in television and newspapers. He is convenor of the Peace Journalism Commission of the International Peace Research Association; a member of the executive committee of the Sydney Peace Foundation and of the International Advisory Council of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research. He has authored numerous books, book chapters and refereed articles on peace and the media.

Michael McKinley is a senior lecturer in global politics at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the Australian National University. His teaching, research and writing encompasses work on global politics, international terrorism, security issues in Australia's strategic environment, Australia's and United States' foreign policy, and philosophies of war and peace.

Hannah Middleton is a guest lecturer at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and executive officer of the Sydney Peace Foundation at the University of Sydney. She is founding member and the national spokesperson of the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition. She is the Australian representative on the International Network Against Foreign Military Bases and on the Board of the Global Network Against Weapons in Space.

Donna Mulhearn is a postgraduate student at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney. As a peace activist, she volunteered in Iraq as a human shield and later as a humanitarian aid worker. She has also spent four months in the West Bank of Palestine. A book about her experiences in Iraq, 'The truth in Areeb's eyes: my journey to Baghdad as a human shield', will be published in February 2010.

Michael Otterman is a visiting scholar at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. He is an award-winning freelance journalist and documentary filmmaker, and author of *American torture: from the Cold War to Abu Ghraib and beyond* (Melbourne University Press 2007).

Sandra Phelps is a visiting scholar at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney and head of sociology at the University of Kurdistan Hawler, Northern Iraq. Her current research interests include gender and ethnic intolerance within social groups and critical studies of peace, human rights and UN organisations to gendered violence.

Stuart Rees is former director and professor emeritus at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and director of the Sydney Peace Foundation at the University of Sydney. He has worked in community development and social work in Britain, in Canada, in the War on Poverty programs in the USA and with Save the Children in India and Sri Lanka. He has published over one hundred articles and ten books including the poetry anthology, *Tell me the truth about war* (Ginninderra Press 2004). His other books include: *Passion for peace* (UNSW Press 2003); *Human rights, corporate responsibility* (Pluto Press 2000); *The human costs of managerialism* (Pluto Press 1995).

Tatsuya Yoshioka is co-founder and director of the Japan-based international organisation Peace Boat, which has been organising voyages for peace and sustainability education since 1983. He is a leading advocate within Japanese civil society and commentator in the Japanese media, as well as Regional Initiator of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (Northeast Asia).

Sue Wareham is president of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia), which works for the elimination of nuclear weapons and for the promotion of peace and disarmament. She has spoken and written widely on these issues. In April 1999, she took part in an international delegation to Iraq to raise awareness of the devastating impact of economic sanctions on the Iraqi people and in December 2006 travelled to Lebanon with a delegation to document the effects of cluster bombs on civilian populations.