

Fall 2018-Winter 2019

# THE PEACE CHRONICLE

The Newsletter of the Peace and Justice Studies Association



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The Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) is a non--profit organization that was formed in 2001 as a result of a merger of the Consortium on Peace research, Education and Development (COPRED) and the Peace Studies Association (PSA). Both organizations provided leadership in the broadly defined fields of peace, conflict, and justice studies. We are dedicated to bringing together academics, K-12 teachers and grassroots activists to explore alternatives to violence and share visions and strategies for peace-- building, social justice, and social change. PJSA serves as a professional association for scholars in fields including (but not limited to) peace, justice, and conflict studies, and is the North American affiliate of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA).

Our Mission:

PJSA works to create a just and peaceful world through:

- The promotion of peace studies within universities, colleges and K-12 grade levels
- The forging of alliances among educators, students, activists, and other peace practitioners in order to enhance each other's work on peace, conflict and non-violence
- The creation and nurturing of alternatives to structures of inequality and injustice, war and violence through education, research and action.

Editor:  
Brendan Newman &  
Michael Loadenthal

Template Design:  
Brendan Newman

The Peace Chronicle is a regular publication of the PJSA, and is circulated to current and potential members. The Chronicle features new scholarship and literature, the latest developments in peace research and education, discussion of central issues in the peace and justice movement, book and film reviews, and other important resources for scholars, educators, and activists.



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# Letter From The Editors:

Dear Readers,

It is our pleasure to introduce you to the Winter 2019 issue of The Peace Chronicle. First let us say, 'thank you' for being a member of the Peace and Justice Studies Association and for continuing to support such important work in these tumultuous times.

At Peace and Justice Studies Association we are dedicated to bringing together academics, K-12 teachers, and grassroots activists to explore alternatives to violence and share visions and strategies for peace-building, social justice, and social change. We thank all of the members who contributed content to this edition of The Peace Chronicle.

Starting last year in our Spring/Summer edition, the editorial team at the Peace Chronicle started asking our members to submit contributions. This move is in response to a request from our membership to have more input on the newsletter, and a desire from our editorial team to have the Chronicle more a collective effort and a shared reflection of the amazing work our members are engaged in.

In order to gather submissions for the next issue, we are using a Google form to collect material. In order to contribute, visit <https://goo.gl/D27w1f> and complete the fields to contextualize your submission. At the end of the form you may either paste your contribution in as text or email the file as an attachment.

As far as content, we are looking for book reviews (500 word max), film reviews (500 word max), position papers (1,500 word max), essays (1,500 word max), letters, news, event report backs (e.g. conference, demonstration), short blurb reporting (500 word max), job postings (500 word max), advertisements, announcements for new publications (500 word max), programs and projects, opportunities for folks to publish and collaborate, or other forms of commentary on our work, our world, and our struggles.

We hope that this new form of association-wide publishing will make for a more dynamic, diverse and engaging newsletter that more closely reflects our network. In conjunction with this new method of gathering content, the Peace Chronicle will look more modern. This change started last year in our Spring/Summer edition and this revision is continuing on through this edition.

The deadline for the Spring-Summer issue is May 4, 2019.

If you have questions, please contact [Michael@peacejusticestudies.org](mailto:Michael@peacejusticestudies.org) or [thepeacechronicle@gmail.com](mailto:thepeacechronicle@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Brendan Newman  
Editor In Chief



Michael Loadenthal  
Executive Director



# Co-Chair Letter

Greetings, PJSA Friends!

Here's hoping this letter finds everyone well and enjoying the holiday season. I am excited for the new year and in particular for some of the things PJSA has in store.

But first, a heartfelt thanks to Stephen Schroeder, who must step down as Co-Chair due to work obligations. Steve has been a true pleasure to work with and has helped keep the PJSA Board organized and motivated through his thoughtful comments and kind demeanor. Steve had graciously agreed to assist in the effort to find a replacement, so stay posted for the announcement of the new Co-Chair.

Second, on behalf of the Board, I want to thank everyone who helped make the 2018 conference a huge success. This year was bittersweet for me, as it was the first conference I have missed since becoming a member. Everything I heard, however, is that it was another amazing conference that energized both existing members and newcomers to the movement.

Third, join me in congratulating our Executive Director Michael Loadenthal on the birth of his baby in December. Michael is so dedicated to this organization that he made it on the Board call less than an hour after the baby was born and without having slept in days. Exciting times for Michael and his family!

The Board continues to work on various publication initiatives, under the leadership of our Publications Chair, Michael Minch. We are examining some possibilities relevant to PJSA's journal, and our book series with Cambridge Scholars Press, *Peace Studies: Edges and Innovations*, continues to grow and will feature a new title edited by PJSA Board member Niki Johnson. We encourage members to contribute to the series and to the proposed edited volume that emerged from the fall conference. Questions about those initiatives can be directed to [MMinch@UVU.edu](mailto:MMinch@UVU.edu).

Niki Johnson is also spearheading the Board's mini-grant initiative, which is nearly ready to launch. The goal is to support grassroots peace-related initiatives with small seed funds. Information about the mini-grant program will soon be available on the PJSA website.

PJSA has also re-launched its Speakers Bureau. The intent of the Speakers Bureau is to provide interested groups and organizations with highly qualified speakers while also generating some funding for PJSA. Persons interested in hosting a speaker can request one via the website and anyone seeking to be a profiled speaker can apply online as well. Information is available under the Resources tab of the website.

Questions can be directed to me at [lfinley@barry.edu](mailto:lfinley@barry.edu)

Finally, planning is under way for the 2019 conference, when we will be moving back to Canada. I want to remind all members that the Board seeks your input on conference planning and any of its efforts. Please do not hesitate to contact any of your Board members with questions or ideas for programs, funding or other things.



In Peace,  
Laura Finley Co-chair

# Our Future: A Letter From PJSA

2018 has been difficult a difficult year for many. Children have been separated from parents. Jews praying in a synagogue have been gunned down. Journalists have been killed. The threat to our global climate continues. These events and others demonstrate the urgent need for action and voices grounded in peace and justice. The Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) has been, and continues to be, an important voice and space for constructive, informative, and transformative experiences & conversations. PJSA brings together like-minded, committed individuals (activists, K-12 and university faculty) and provides support, resources, and a platform for scholarship, pedagogy, and activism. Membership in PJSA includes access to an active and engaging listserv that facilitates conversations and rich resources for teaching and working in areas regarding peace, peace building, and justice. We have a speaker's bureau, a book series, a syllabus project, a program review system, a process for delivering position papers, an engaging annual international conference, and much more. We are pleased by the steady growth of our organization and we look forward to the work we will continue to do.

As with any organization, it takes resources to operate. We are asking that you continue to be part of the PJSA team, both through your contributions of content and financially. If you are in the habit of making year-end or seasonal donations, please consider adding the PJSA (an established 501(c)3) to your list of organizations to support this year. As we enter this next year of promoting peace-oriented research, action, and education, we are counting on your ongoing engagement so that we can continue the crucial work of peace.

Tax deductible, secure online donations can be made at: <https://bit.ly/2G2EyZx>  
Or you may send a check (made payable to: Peace and Justice Studies Association) to:  
Peace & Justice Studies Association  
375 Upham Hall  
c/o Dr. Michael Loadenthal  
100 Bishop Circle  
Oxford, OH 45056

Additionally, please make sure your PJSA membership is current for 2019. Together, we ensure that PJSA provides multiple spaces and platforms for your work in peace and justice. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,



Swasti Bhattacharyya, PhD, RN  
Professor of Philosophy & Religion  
PJSA Fundraising chair

# Letter From The Gettysburg College

The Peace and Justice Studies Program at Gettysburg College is planning a conference for and by undergraduate students in peace and justice programs. It will be held at Gettysburg College in the Spring semester of 2020. We are seeking students from related programs in the United States, Canada and Mexico to join a national planning committee. This conference will feature students presenting their research and cutting-edge ideas around peace, justice and conflict transformation. We will also have workshops on organizing, activism and skills-building. If you are interested in joining this planning committee or just joining a mailing list to stay abreast of updates, please email the Director, Dr. Hakim Williams at [hwilliam@gettysburg.edu](mailto:hwilliam@gettysburg.edu). To fellow directors of related programs, we are also issuing a call to form CONAPP: Consortium of North American Peace Programs. CONAPP's main goal is to plan this student-run conference every 2-3 years. If you wish to join this consortium, please send an email to Hakim Williams [hwilliams@gettysburg.edu](mailto:hwilliams@gettysburg.edu). Many thanks



Hello, my name is Vanessa Martinez. I am a senior at Gettysburg College. This year I am working closely with the Peace and Justice department at my college. I am working alongside Dr. Hakim Williams, who is the director of the Peace and Justice studies program at Gettysburg College who has envisioned CONAPP: Consortium of North American Peace Programs and other Gettysburg College students. One of the main goals of the consortium is to convene a national conference in the Spring 2020 semester that will be led by students from across the country. This conference will occur every 2 or 3 years. It will feature students bringing their cutting edge ideas and research on peace and justice (domestically and internationally), as well as organizing, activism and skill-building workshops. We have not decided as yet on the exact dates or theme; this will be done by the student planning committee, so for now, we are seeking 1 or 2 students from your program who might be interested in joining the national planning committee. Please send me their names and email addresses so that we can begin planning in earnest. For the 2020 conference, we are hoping that your program or college/university will be able to send students to it and assist with some of the costs of their travel to and lodging in Gettysburg, PA. We are very excited to launch this consortium and to plan this student-centered conference; in about two weeks, we will send out a list of programs that have agreed to join this consortium and conference planning. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns please feel free to contact us at [gburgpjs@gmail.com](mailto:gburgpjs@gmail.com)

PJSA members in good standing (i.e. those individuals with current paid memberships) can access the "Job Postings" page under the RESOURCES tab ([www.peacejusticestudies.org/resources/jobs](http://www.peacejusticestudies.org/resources/jobs)) as well as the "Calls for Papers & Publications" page. These new resources, begun in September 2016, and have already featured hundreds of CFPs, job opportunities and other news relevant to the PJSA community.

Please send postings to [info@peacejusticestudies.org](mailto:info@peacejusticestudies.org).



The Director's Cut: "On Accessibility and Diversity"

Reflecting back on our 2018 conference in Philadelphia, attendees shared quite a lot of ways in which the Association, the field, and our networks can grow. We spoke of building and sustaining the beloved communities we inhabit, challenging those who may seek to sew discord, and defending the spaces and places we have grown to call home. We spoke of creating beautiful movements of resistance and cooperation; resilient to tragedy, and not mired in the traps of reactionism. We spoke of movements, based in our communities, that resemble the variety of our lived experiences and not simply the contributions of those most privileged.

We spoke of a desire to have more accessible, inclusive and diverse spaces, groups and gathering.

This was a resounding chorus from the conference. It was expressed at plenaries, repeated by keynotes, and championed at our board meeting, membership meeting and in dozens of conversations in crowded hallways and over meals.

The need to increase diversity, accessibility and inclusion was indeed a resounding point of conversation, but reflecting critically, the conversations resembled words spoken by mid-winter shut-ins hoping for a warmer weekend. Here in the mid-west, in the early weeks of a new year, people will often remark, 'I can't wait until Spring,' but much like wishing for the weather to change, hoping for movements which are more accessible, diverse and inclusive does little to foster them.

Herein lies the problem. In speaking about these issues in large groups, we can begin to assume that these conversations are only the tip of the iceberg—a deeply submerged behemoth that you assume is underneath you for support. However, in reality, sometimes the tip of the iceberg is deceptive and is in fact just that—a small, detached, piece of frozen water.

While I am inspired and energized by the discussions which peaked in Philadelphia, I fear that these may have actually slowed our speed of progress, as their presence carries the (false) assumption that the conversations are the result of something more substantial, something sustained, and something with its own inertia. In the case of efforts to increase accessibility of our spaces and events, I fear this is the case.

I firmly believe that the energy behind this effort can be mobilized and there is much reason to be hopeful. We have made strides in identifying the problem and raising money to address it, but

building justice is not formulaic and requires more than money and enthusiasm. We seem to have a critical mass of support from our board of directors and members, but popular support serves electoral politics more than creating deep institutional shifts. The problems we are facing are multi-dimensional and complex. They are embedded in the bureaucracies we operate in and within the laws that guide policy and exist as seemingly intractable barriers to the ways in which we imagine ourselves and others. The problem is discursive as much as it is institutional, resource-driven as much as it's not.

With the challenges heaved upon our field, our Association, and ourselves, where do we stand? We have begun to identify the problems but we are far from putting forth prefigurative solutions. In 1977, Carl Boggs helped to define a prefigurative approach, noting that "within the ongoing political practice of a movement... [prefiguration is] those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal." Keeping this in mind, I ask: What would a conference look like which was guided by a prefigurative aim at greater inclusion, diversity and accessibility? How could we, as Cynthia Weber (2014) suggests, '[make] better futures by enacting them now'?

As conference organizers we have tried to do this by curating and funding 'featured speakers' to both increase the diversity of highlighted voices and decrease financial barriers to participation. We have done this by gathering in places less familiar to us and organizing outside of our comfort zones. We have raised and budgeted to bring in more students and precarious academic laborers, more thinkers who exist outside of the Academy, and to help showcase the organic intellectualism of activists. We have done this by trying to balance who is given space and who is lovingly asked to make space for others.

This letter is not a cry for help, nor criticism, but rather an honest assessment of the conversation at hand. We are only one Association and I am only one person, but I feel immensely honored to be able to impact these efforts as they unfold. Let this be a formal invitation to all those who read these words, if you are interested in building towards a more accessible, inclusive and diverse association (and world), consider stepping up and sharing with us how we can. To quote Cynthia Weber (2014) again, "figure in advance—the better future you desire by trying to live it in the present, before it actually exists." What does this look like in this particular time and place, with this particular set of challenges and opportunities?



Michael Loadenthal  
(Michael@peacejusticestudies.org)



## ASK THE PEACE CAREERS COACH

By David J. Smith

I'm writing this while on vacation with my family in Colorado. For many reading this, you might be spending the semester break with friends and family in a place that is not your home (maybe it was your former home). Being in a new environment gives you a chance to experience different things and engage in conversations (not the online kind) that can be stimulating! It gives you the opportunity to renew friendships and revive common interests. But it also can be challenging. The issues of the day, particularly those that center on national and global peace and conflict issues, can be the basis for deep and at times contentious conversations. Not all members of a family are on the same page.

Being removed and away from it all doesn't mean you can't (or shouldn't) think about your future plans. Sometimes, others will prod you on them: "So you're graduating in May, what's next?" a grandparent might ask. Or, if you are faculty: "What project are you working or publishing on to get tenure?"

These are questions that at times you might like to avoid. Perhaps you'd rather not share too much (maybe you are not interested in the advice or response you'd get). Or maybe you really haven't thought about your plans much. That's fair, but it really should move you to start thinking about answering these questions. Writing a few notes or making a list can be an easy way of getting yourself to think about the year to come.

Your vacation or break will soon be over and you will be back at your home or college or university. Classes will start for many, and the grind will begin. That is the time to go back to your notes or the list that you developed while on break.

Now, think about the following:

In your notes, you probably wrote something like "get a job" or "get tenure." Now make that a strategic goal: maybe something like "secure a position in a political campaign" or "get a job in an international development NGO." A detailed style is best. Being more specific provides a clearer sense of what you are trying to attain.

A strategic goal requires a means to the ends. Think about the way you will get there. Will you network more, volunteer, or rewrite your resume? These are action items and a list, maybe developed on a weekly basis, can be helpful. Having a Monday morning list of things you need to get done that week can be useful in organizing yourself. A Monday list might include:

- Get a letter of reference from a professor (if you are a student)
- Share your research idea with a colleague (if you are faculty)
  - Rewrite a specific section of your resume
  - Attend a specific networking event

Consider who might be helpful in your efforts. These might be friends, colleagues or even family. What is important is that they act as honest coaches (sometimes your friends and family tell you what you “want” to hear, not what you “need” to hear). These individuals should be prepared to prod you periodically on what you are doing. They can be helpful in reviewing your plans or resume. They can make suggestions for you on people and organizations that you need to connect with in the coming year.

Finally, what are your expectations, given your situation? If you are a senior and graduating in May, your timeline will be different than if you are a first semester sophomore. Consider the other responsibilities that you are facing including family and personal commitments. If you are graduating, you might have a thesis to complete or another major project. If you are faculty, there are committee assignments and other duties that are part of academic life.

After going through this process, you will find yourself with an action plan for 2019. Type it up, frame it, post it on your refrigerator, and share it with others. Make sure you review (and revise) it frequently, and most importantly, follow through.

David J. Smith is the author of *Peace Jobs: A Student’s Guide to Starting a Career Working for Peace* (Information Age Publishing, 2016). He can be reached at <https://davidjsmithconsulting.com> or [davidjsmith@davidjsmithconsulting.com](mailto:davidjsmith@davidjsmithconsulting.com).

In conjunction with Lee Smithey and his Peace and Conflict Studies program at Swarthmore college, PJSa has created a blog! Lee has a blog that he has used for alumni of his program for years, so he suggested that PJSa also look in to creating a blog. The blog has been created as a resource for students of all ages who are interested in the field of peace studies. We asked people involved in the peace studies field to send us blog posts about their careers and how their degrees set them up for those careers. We hope to continue to get submissions so that we can grow the blog to be a well-known tool for students interested in this field. The goal is to eventually be so widely known that school counselors can recommend our blog to their high school students. It is sometimes hard to answer the “what are you going to do with that after school” question regarding a degree in the peace studies field, so this blog is the perfect place to find examples of how other students have found answers to that question. If you are interested about the blog, want to submit a blog post, or have any questions you can contact [gordonm5@miamioh.edu](mailto:gordonm5@miamioh.edu). Here is a link to the blog: <https://pjsablog.wordpress.com/author/pjsablog/>. Please don’t hesitate to let others know about our work on this blog, the more people that know the more useful this blog can become!

## ***Introducing a New Partnership : Bifrost***



*Three students successfully undertook the inaugural, semester-long PJSA/Bifrost internship at Miami University, receiving college credits for engaging in a range of assignments that reflect the concerted goals of both PJSA and the Bifrost project.*

BifrostOnline is an international, open-access website promoting education for sustainability and climate change awareness. A major focus of the site is to increase public understanding of the social and environmental challenges related to climate change. Another aim is to demonstrate the capacity for decisive individual, organizational and community engagement in climate-change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Bifrost is supported by the Nordic Network for Interdisciplinary Environmental Studies (NIES), whose members work closely to achieve these goals with numerous partners from civil society through the website, and through events, colloquia, seminars and public art interventions. Bifrost takes its name from the rainbow bridge in Norse mythology, which connects the Earth with the realm of the gods, symbolizing the link between the mundane material world and a more ideal existence. The Bifrost project aspires to a similar reconciliation, by bridging nature and culture, science and art, understanding and climate change action, challenges and solutions.

The recent partnership forged between PJSA and BifrostOnline has been an outstanding opportunity for both organizations to build a synergistic bridge to link to common goals, and to educate PJSA interns in issues surrounding climate change, while also providing them with practical, material skills that can help lay a foundation on which to build research protocol to organize and develop future projects they may become involved in. The Bifrost team look very much forward to continuing the PJSA/Bifrost internship program at Miami University. We are delighted to work with Miami university students and look very much forward to building new collaborative bridges with our outstanding partner PJSA.

[www.bifrostonline.org](http://www.bifrostonline.org)



## **Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War. Viet Thanh Nguyen.**

Nothing ever dies. Not the memories of war, not its trauma, not its controversies--and not the hope that we can one day extricate our present from our traumatic pasts in order to create a more peaceful future. This hope threads through Viet Thanh Nguyen's *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*. The book is about war, identity, and memory, Nguyen tells us. His goal is to "beat...hearts back to life." Our hearts, the hearts of the generations wounded, in different ways and to different extents, by war.

While Nguyen's primary focus is his own war, the war in Vietnam that was enmeshed in the last century's wars in Southeast Asia, the book's broader topic is war itself. *Radcliffe Magazine* has called the book a "bible for a new pacifism, more nuanced and wiser than 'make love not war'." But that does scant justice to its great value as a compendium of writers, filmmakers, and artists in Asia and America—and of creative spirits who claim "no country but the imagination." Nor does such a characterization do justice to the book's engagement with theories of memory and identity, or to the complexity of its meditations both on iconic representations of war and on historical sites in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Korea.

Part history, part memoir, part philosophical treatise, part cultural critique, and part introduction to creative work engendered by war, *Nothing Ever Dies* is also part disruption and part exhortation. Disrupting simplistic narratives that divide us into victim and perpetrator, friend and enemy, us and them, Nguyen calls us to make possible a greater humanity by recognizing that we all, ourselves as well as our enemies, are capable of both inhumanity and humanity. As he puts it, "...the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being." (72)

Nguyen argues that war haunts us not only because of what has been done to us and those we love, but also because of "the horrors we have done, seen, and condoned... the unspeakable things from which we have profited. Haunted and haunting, human and inhuman, war remains with us and within us, impossible to forget but difficult to remember."(19)

In order to move toward peace, Nguyen asserts, we need "just memory"--memory that includes what we have forgotten or excluded through self interest, trauma, and the excessive remembering of something else, like the heroism of our own side, or the atrocities of the other, or even through an empathy with the suffering of the "other side" that fails to recognize that these sufferers too are capable of inhumanity.

The core of the book is a sustained exploration of three requisite transformations—in ethics, industries of memory, and aesthetics--that Nguyen proposes as a foundation for just memory.

The first transformation required, according to Nguyen, is a move beyond the division of the world into "the near and the dear" and "the far and the feared," through an ethics that acknowledges our shared, simultaneous humanity and inhumanity.

The second requisite is to counterbalance the asymmetrical production of public memory, in which the voices of those with international power, position, and resources are amplified in widely circulated images and texts, while the voices necessary to create a more complete and consequently more accurate telling of history are not heard. *Nothing Ever Dies* itself embodies this rebalancing.

The third requisite is for powerful new stories that will enable us to "fight war and find peace"—not a nostalgic, utopian vision of peace, but one born of a "sober vision" of the self-destructiveness of war. Nguyen asks artists ethnic secrets, or anti-communist witnesses, or caught—whether painfully or to venture "into the no man's land

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between trenches, borders, and camps,” liberating themselves as they speak of the past in order to lay it to rest. He calls for stories of refugees who are not simply victims, or revealers of wondrously—between two worlds. He calls for war stories that are more comprehensive—soldiers and battles, yes, but also civilians, orphans, widows, refugees, factory workers, tax-payers, future generations. Most important, he says, is to tell stories that illuminate the workings of the machinery of war, power, and profit. By expanding our vision, such stories have the potential to lift us out of places where our memories and identities are stuck.

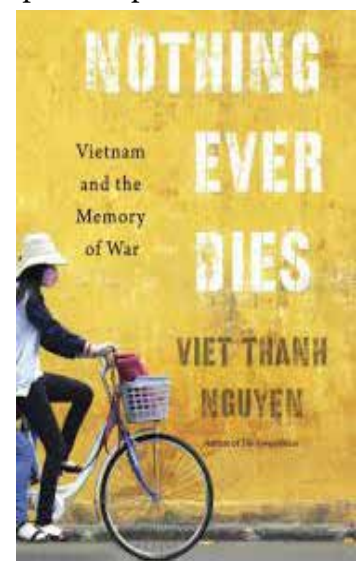
Yet to live, Nguyen writes, we must forget as well as remember. And for this forgetting to make possible a degree of reconciliation that can help disengage the present from the death grip of the past, it too must be just. That is, we cannot ignore the past, we cannot pretend it did not happen, and we should not write its history in a way that serves a predetermined agenda.

There is irony in Nguyen’s hope for a world where just memory can lead to just forgetting and the possibility of reconciliation. “Where’s the hope?” asked many of the 13 publishers who, looking for a happy ending, rejected the manuscript of his Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Sympathizer*. Should we read *Nothing Ever Dies*, then, as a capitulation to the publishing industry? I don’t think so. It seems to me rather the thoughtful and impassioned cry of a person who knows from painful first-hand experience the long-term, cross-generational, and ultimately suicidal costs of war, and refuses to shut his eyes or yield to its inevitability.

It is perhaps a sign of both Nguyen’s courage and the passage of time that he can so directly acknowledge that there was inhumanity on all sides of the war and yet speak of reconciliation. Readers old enough to remember past threats, fire-bombings, and assassinations of Vietnamese Americans who spoke for reconciliation, or who have seen the PBS Frontline report “Terror in Little Saigon,” may well be a little worried for Nguyen, while at the same time hoping that his ability to speak out is a sign that we have indeed moved some distance from his war.

In *Satanic Verses*, Salman Rushdie asks how we can move beyond our murderous pasts. “How does newness come into the world?” he asks. “How is it born? Of what fusions, translations, and conjoinings is it made? How does it survive, extreme and dangerous as it is?...Is birth always a fall?”

Desmond Tutu’s *No Future without Forgiveness* can be read as one part of an answer to Rushdie’s question. Nguyen Thanh Viet, who describes himself as “born in Vietnam but made in America”—a fusion, a conjoining—has written a book that could be read as another part, a first step toward that future, that newness born of forgiveness: contrition, or perhaps simply humility, a recognition of both the inhumanity and the humanity we share with those we once thought were unlike ourselves. The goal is to move beyond denial, paralyzing shame, resignation, and a desire for revenge. In the words of a Vietnamese proverb: “Close the past to open the future.”



## Resisting Occupation Nonviolently

### Russell Vandembroucke

Palestinian Nonviolence. The term seems an oxymoron to Americans whose comprehension of Israel and the Occupied Territories relies on news narratives and political discourse. This spring's "Great March of Return" in Gaza was organized to protest 50 years of military occupation. Palestinian demonstrators gathered on successive Fridays leading to May 15, Independence Day for Israelis and the Nakba, catastrophe, for Palestinians. This year it also marked the move of the US embassy to Jerusalem. Protesters massed at the fences confining them to Gaza, threw stones, and burned tires whose smoke, they hoped, would frustrate military snipers. They also launched kites whose burning tails might, if the wind cooperated, ignite fields of grain on ancestral lands outside the barriers that have confined Gazan Palestinians, now numbering 1,900,000, for generations in what is often called the world's largest open air prison.

The Israeli Defense Force announced in advance that anyone within 300 meters of these border fences would face its shoot-to-kill policy. Israel calls the protests a cover for violence and a prelude to attacks and infiltration. In June, the UN reported that 131 Palestinians died and 13,900 were injured; four Israelis were injured and none killed. The casualties confirm what Foreign Affairs describes as "Israel's long-established doctrine of disproportionate force." (6 Apr. 2018) Some call it an eye for an eyelash.

Despite routine violence while living under occupation, Palestinians who promote nonviolence remain resolute. One of the most articulate is prolific writer, scholar, and activist Walid Salem. I first met him when he addressed Americans visiting Al-Quds University for a 2016 seminar organized by the Palestinian American Research Center. Salem noted that most of the thousands of Palestinians in jail were students, as was he when first arrested in 12th grade. During the next ten months in prison he took his matriculation exams and eventually enrolled at Bir Zeit University where he was imprisoned again, this time for a year and a half that included 86 days of interrogation. He graduated after eight years instead of four because of these interruptions, then worked as a journalist for 11 newspapers and magazines. All opposed occupation and were eventually closed.

In the 1980s Salem was charged as a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a secular and militant group that embraced Marxism, as did Salem at the time. In 1991 he was charged with being a member of PFLP's central committee. He explains, "I was always involved in the political wing, I was never part of the militant wing; I never shot a bullet or learned how to use a weapon, which explains why my detention periods were not very long, relatively. . . . Militant activists were detained for longer periods."

By 1993 after another year and a half of detention, Salem had spent five of his 35 years imprisoned. He embraced nonviolence across those years, being gradually informed by Gandhi, King, and the goal to "love your enemy and resist your enemy." In a long interview in 2006, Salem explained his discovery that "it is not enough for us as Palestinians to work against the Israeli people from the outside; we need to work with the Israeli people from the inside in order to achieve equality."

He sees nonviolence as a means to communicate "to the dominant powers in the world that our struggle is a popular one. It calls for the end of occupation. It is not a terrorist struggle that aims to destroy the Jews and that is a threat to the stability of the region as we are accused." He favors "a comprehensive, continuous, nonviolent intifada" with coordinated civil resistance including: 1) legal and diplomatic resistance through the International Criminal Court and becoming a United Nations member; 2) sit-ins at checkpoints and around colonial settlements; 3) creating new facts on the ground by, for example, pitching tents on mountainsides to declare new Palestinian villages that echo settler colonizing; 4) resisting new houses for Israelis in historically Palestinian East Jerusalem; 5) boycotting Israeli products; 6) creative acts such as using tractors to create holes in the border wall for a few hours, "The army will come and destroy these, but we can persist and create another;" 7) furthering participation of Israeli peace activists in weekly demonstrations.

# THE PEACE CHRONICLE

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Salem's many articles, books, manuals, and research papers encompass democracy, civil society, citizenship, refugees, and strategy. He teaches democracy and human rights at Al-Quds University and contributes regularly to Transcend Media Service, which dubs itself "Solutions- Oriented Peace Journalism." "If I believe in academic freedom," he says, "then I have a social responsibility to promote it. Brining academics together from Israel and Palestine is practicing academic freedom."

Asked about "normalization," the term used to oppose "business-as-usual" relations with Israel that is sometimes described as "colonization of the mind," Salem replies, "People like me claim that normalization with Israeli peace groups is very important for building the future between the two countries and people." He opposes normalizing that implies acceptance of occupation. He admits his position differs from that held by some who perceive any "normal" interactions as tacit support of the status quo of oppression and occupation. The Centre for Democracy and Community Development that he has served since 1993 also works with Israelis "who believe in the pre-1967 borders." Other Palestinians, he continues, might agree with him in theory about engaging with Israelis "but not now." I accepted his invitation to a 2016 Hebrew University conference and pondered the moral absolutism of some "normalization" opponents while also reminding myself of Voltaire's aphorism that the perfect is the enemy of the good.

Salem's paper, "Palestine as Theater for Colonial and Postcolonial Experiments and Ways Out," is bleak, but he sees reason for hope: young Americans seem better informed than in the past "and for change here, we need change in Washington. Bernie Sanders may not win, but he is something new." He sees growing European support of the BDS Movement (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) as a good sign. He supports BDS but not delegitimizing Israel: "Israel has a right to exist, but Palestine has a right to pursue BDS to oppose occupation. How does Israel say it is against Palestinian violence and also oppose Palestinian non-violence through BDS?" Shifts in Israel are another reason for optimism, "We hear Israeli generals talk about the rise of fascism." He concludes, "We must rescue Palestine from occupation and also rescue Israel from the consequences of occupation. Palestine gets freedom from occupation and Israel gets emancipation from being an occupier." To an American, his words echo Dr. King's conviction that civil rights liberates oppressors as well as those oppressed.

In 2017 as Israelis celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Six-Day War and Palestinians lamented it, the Jerusalem Press Club invited Salem to address it. His blunt observations on his East Jerusalem neighborhood--now part of the capital the US recently recognized--reiterate his opposition to armed struggle: "I promote negotiation with inclusivists ideas, not exclusivist ideas. Negotiations of good will can lead to win/win for both sides, not win/lose." Moderator Uri Dromi poses a final question: "I've known you many years, Walid, and you never lost hope in a peaceful resolution of the conflict. How do you maintain this optimism?" He replies concisely, "I believe in non-violent struggle and negotiations. . . . I believe in the rights of two people on an equal basis--the rights of all and justice not on one side or the other. Fair justice is equal distribution of justice."

Few Americans associate strategic nonviolence with Palestine. Salem reminds the Jerusalem Press Club of something else most Americans do not recall: "the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 is steadfast. There is a consensus among all Arab regimes." Reaffirmed repeatedly, its call for "full diplomatic and normal relations" with Israel in exchange for a "comprehensive peace agreement" with Palestinians is endorsed by 56 of 57 members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Iran, the 57th, accepts it with reservation.

Violent response to peaceful demonstrations is hardly unique to Israel and Gaza. In 1919, the British Indian Army fired on 10,000 pilgrims and protesters against a ban on public gatherings. The Massacre of Amritsar left 379 dead and 1200 wounded. In 1960, at least 5,000 South Africans massed at a police station to protest Pass Laws. Police claimed they were in desperate danger because the crowd was stoning them; three officers reported being hit. The Sharpeville Massacre left 69 dead and over 180 injured.



Today we perceive Nelson Mandela as a secular saint who led his nation to liberation, but the US persisted in labeling him and his party terrorists until 2008, decades after his release from prison in 1990, receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, and being elected president in 1994. Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization once shared that State Department designation as being among the “world’s most notorious terrorist groups.” They were the very parties to the Oslo Accords of 1993.

This May, White House Deputy Press Secretary Raj Shah said, “the responsibility for these tragic deaths rests squarely with Hamas. . . . Israel has the right to defend itself.” The US vetoed a resolution supported by ten UN Security Council members that condemned “excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate force by the Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians.” An alternative US motion condemning Hamas for the violence in Gaza received no support. Holding Hamas responsible because it planned protests is as logical as blaming John Lewis for his 1965 beating on Alabama’s Pettus Bridge.

In Gaza, political power is held by Hamas. Official Israeli and lockstep American parlance always refer to it as a “terrorist” organization, sometimes using other pejorative adjectives: “militant,” “extremist,” “Islamic.” It is seldom identified as “democratically elected,” as occurred in 2006 when Israel and the United States supported an election they were confident Hamas could not possibly win. So much for the accuracy of polls and the messiness of democratic elections whether abroad or at home.

American historian Theodore Roszak once quipped, “People try nonviolence for a week, and when it ‘doesn’t work,’ they go back to violence, which hasn’t worked for centuries.” Walid Salem persists. “History since the French Revolution is not linear,” he notes, “it zig-zags. Change is slow as with, for example, increasing rights for women. The Middle East is an area of moving sands. Our ability to predict the future is low.”

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The Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) is dedicated to bringing together academics, K-12 teachers, and grassroots activists to explore alternatives to violence and share visions and strategies for peacebuilding, social justice, and social change.

This broad membership helps to facilitate research that is highly relevant, and it allows us to quickly disseminate the latest findings to those who will be among the first to implement new policies. Our abilities to do this have been greatly enhanced in recent years with the formation of a speakers bureau, a syllabus collection project, and the creation of a very active publications committee.

PJSA serves as a professional association for scholars in the field of peace and conflict studies, and is the North American affiliate of the International Peace Research Association. In 2013, our offices moved to Georgetown

University in Washington D.C., greatly enhancing PJSA's national and international visibility.

We are a nonprofit organization that was originally formed in 2001 as a result of a merger of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPRED) and the Peace Studies Association (PSA). Both organizations provided long-term leadership in the broadly defined fields of peace, conflict, and justice studies.

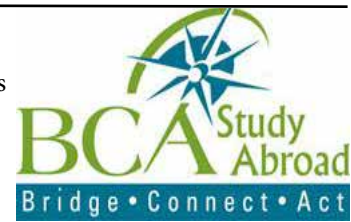
In 2010, PJSA became a bi-national organization with Canada, holding its first Canadian conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Since then, the PJSA has committed to holding its annual conference in Canada every third year; our 2013 conference was held in Waterloo, Ontario, and our 2016 conference was held at Selkirk College in Nelson & Castlegar, British Columbia

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A PROJECT BY THE WAR PREVENTION INITIATIVE

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the work of academics to practitioners, educators, media, policy-makers, and others who can benefit from the research. PJSA and PSD will co-author a joint issue every year in conjunction with their annual conference. In addition, PJSA membership includes a free digital subscription to all PSD issues as well as discounted print copies.