NEW BOOK PROVIDES FORUM FOR BUDDHIST PEACEMAKERS

WISDOM PUBLICATIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE
BOSTON RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE 21ST CENTURY INTRODUCES
SEMINAL TEXT ON CREATING CULTURES OF PEACE

Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace is a book that, as educator Joan Halifax Roshi suggests in her preface, "explores the lives and actions, insights and guidelines of some of the world's most beloved Buddhist practitioners, teachers, and social activists who are currently working to end suffering in the life of the world." It is a book that has a singular appropriateness as a millennial publication—its appearance coincides with the advent of the year 2000, designated by the United Nations as the International Year for the Culture of Peace—and as a celebration of the fundamental truth which the book's editor David Chappell summarizes this way: "Violence and peace begin and end with the human heart."

This project, according to Virginia Straus, BRC executive director, reflects "our modest effort to support UNESCO's Barcelona Declaration on the Role of Religion in the Promotion of a Culture of Peace." It is a book intended to help "deepen public understanding, and particularly religious understanding, of what peace in its fullest sense actually entails." Buddhist Peacework probes the link between inner peace and global harmony and examines the shift from isolated monasticism to an engaged activism for peace.

The 18 chapters of the BRC's newest peace-focused publication move from development of the theme of building inclusive communities to rebuilding moral cultures to a treatment of the correlation between inner peace and outer kindness. The text also includes an enumeration and continued on page 6

CREATING THE FOUNDATION FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO OFFER a few reflections at the start of a new year, which heralds the advent of the third millennium.

The United Nations has designated the year 2000 "The International Year for the Culture of Peace"—a title that can be seen as embodying humanity's earnest desire to transform the culture of violence and war that has prevailed for centuries into a new culture of nonviolence and peace. continued on page 8
Recently, I learned about the experience of a preacher from the United States who established a mission in Papua New Guinea. As we enter a new century crying out for tolerance and practices of peace, his story is instructive. This missionary became very frustrated about one thing in particular: he couldn’t get the local population to sing in unison during church services. After years of struggle, he finally discovered that these indigenous people knew very well how to sing in unison, but had resisted his entreaties because they thought the sound was so ugly. To them, the overlapping diverse rhythms of the rainforest were beautiful, and that’s how they always made their music sound.

During the past seven years of programs and publications at the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, through trial and error we’ve learned that when we bring people together in a warm educational setting, friendship and trust emerge. When dialogue is conducted in an open atmosphere where people are free to share their multiple perspectives, a "rainforest" harmony is created that has a natural beauty to it. This kind of dialogue—we realized in our spring conference series on cultures of peace—goes deeper, too. It reveals many truths about our common humanity. It begins to uncover an “authentic universality,” a concept described by Center founder Daisaku Ikeda in his millennial message beginning on page one.

Highlighted and excerpted in this newsletter, our latest book—Buddhist Peacework (Wisdom Publications, 2000)—opened the way this past year to new friendships among groups of Buddhists previously not very familiar to us. With the invaluable aid of editor David Chappell, we experienced a joyous communion across intra-religious boundaries. In addition, the Global Citizen Awards program became more diverse and flexible as we bestowed awards on outstanding individuals from Russia, the Philippines, and Colombia at ceremonies in locations far from our home site. We’re delighted to be sharing in these pages, too, the various insights we’ve gained from collaborative events with friends at the Coalition for a Strong United Nations (CSUN), the International Ethics Center at Brandeis University, Women’s Action for New Directions (WAND), and local peace studies programs.

In terms of the immediate future, we’re working with our “Creating Connections” coalition of Boston-area women’s groups to prepare for a gathering this April that will celebrate intergenerational sisterhood. The lively expression of “rainforest melodies” during our planning sessions, which have embraced women ranging from age 16 to 79, promises a remarkable and creative result.

Marking our second year of work on the theme of nonviolence, we look forward to co-hosting with CSUN this June a conference commemorating the U.N. International Year for the Culture of Peace (see details on page 18). Other plans include the launch of a new program this fall—a women’s lecture series on the four values the Center seeks to foster: human rights, nonviolence, ecological harmony, and economic justice. With this series, we will honor women in history who have stood for these values.

As I reflect on my own hopes and dreams for the world in this next century, I can’t help but think that human networks are THE most powerful force for peace in a fractured, dog-eat-dog world. We are very grateful to the inspired scholars, activists and other friends and neighbors who have helped, through their participation and support, to make the Center an oasis for dialogue—where people are free to express their humanity in all of its dimensions.

—Virginia Straus,
Executive Director

In the message which Daisaku Ikeda, founder of the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century and president of Soka Gakkai International, addressed to the secretary-general and BRC guests, he stressed the courage required by the past-president in fulfilling the obligations of his office. "Looking back, from the time of his election as president of Colombia, referred to as the most dangerous job on earth," he said, "President Gaviria’s actions have been characterized by steadfast, unflinching courage. This courage grows from the passionate determination to take on challenges that others may consider impossible, and to make one’s ideals a reality."

The former president of Colombia was introduced by Peter Hakim, president of Inter-American Dialogue, who said of the new Global Citizen, "I think there are really few people who have done more to make his own country and the entire hemisphere a more decent, democratic, and peaceful place than President Gaviria."

Among the specific accomplishments for which the author-lecturer praised the OAS Secretary-General were the following: As president, Cesar Gaviria opened the way for peace discussion with the guerrillas; he convened a constitutional assembly which drafted a new constitution expanding the participation of indigenous peoples and minorities while decentralizing power; he campaigned vigorously against drug trafficking, leading to the breakup of the largest cartels, an action requiring great personal courage; and he opened up and reformed the Colombian economy.

Cesar Gaviria graciously acknowledged that the Global Citizen Award "truly belongs to the joint efforts of the international community, to the many individuals who work together for the well-being of our hemisphere and who have dedicated their lives to public service. I share this award with all of you."

Alluding to his years of public service, the secretary-general continued, "We struggled steadfastly to eradicate our poverty and offer greater opportunities." Emphasizing the importance of interdependence and collective action, he underscored his view that "progress cannot be gained at the expense of one’s neighbor’s dreams and aspirations."

Global Citizen Cesar Gaviria concluded his remarks with a statement of his belief that "public service stems from the inner spirit and from an individual’s contact with his own reality. It is an opportunity to dream and to create, but this is only possible, as many great poets have said, with struggle and hope. And with this grain of knowledge, we continue fighting through our daily work for a better future for the peoples of the Americas."

Long-time friend of the secretary general, Ambassador Harriet C. Babbitt, added affectionate praise of Dr. Gaviria, saying, "Recognizing that the OAS serves as the region’s leading political forum for multilateral dialogue and decision-making, the secretary-general has helped expand the OAS’s political discussions to ministers of justice, labor, and education, addressing issues beyond the foreign affairs emphasis of the past."

Sir Rogelio M. Quiambado received his Global Citizen Award in Tokyo. Sir Quiambado is the Supreme Commander of the Knights of Rizal, a civil society organization dedicated to promoting social justice, the dignity and inherent rights of the individual, and mutual understanding among the peoples of the world. Rogelio Quiambado and the Knights have dedicated themselves to keeping alive the spirit and message of Jose Rizal, a man of culture and courage who was put to death at the age of 35 after he wrote two books which exposed the cruelties and injustices inflicted on the Filipino people by the colonial rulers from Spain.

His work, Virginia Strauss explained to the guests, "unleashed the Filipino longing for independence, triggering the Philippine Revolution that liberated them from centuries of colonial subjugation." Like the heroic Jose Rizal, Sir Quiambado has dedicated himself to grassroots activism and public continued on page 4
PEACE SCHOLAR
WELCOMED AT BRC

Peace Studies faculty members, authors, and activists met at the BRC in September to welcome David Little, who has been named the T.J. Dermot Dunphy Professor of the Practice in Religion, Ethnicity, and International Conflict at the Harvard Divinity School. Previously with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in Washington, D.C., Dr. Little is an expert in the fields of human rights and religion as they apply to international affairs. He has authored books on the Ukraine and Sri Lanka and has been examining intolerance and human rights abuses as sources of religious conflict in Ukraine, Israel, Lebanon, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Tibet.

Following an overview of what the U.S. Institute of Peace has been doing in the areas of peace enforcement, peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding, Dr. Little noted some of the Institute’s major initiatives, among them establishing a chair at the Institute for a former military official whose work is the redesigning of the military for peacekeeping. “We’ve done quite a bit,” he indicated, “on preventive diplomacy and multilateral, nonviolent peacekeeping.”

“I’ve been most active in peacebuilding with a particular focus on human rights,” David Little explained, “and on how religious communities can become more tolerant and open to a peace culture.” He described the creation of an interreligious council in Bosnia to bring religious leaders together to undertake joint projects of various kinds, including publications. In Bosnia, the USIP also brought people together to look at hate speech and hate media as part of an effort at tolerance training. The Peace Institute is active in Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in South Africa and in Bosnia.

Asked about his vision of his new position at the Harvard Divinity School, Dr. Little indicated that Mr. Dunphy, donor of the chair, has been very clear about his desire that the focus be on religion and conflict and not solely on peace and nonviolence—a position with which the author/educator is in accord. The new T.J. Dermot Dunphy Professor will teach a course on Religion, Nationalism, and Peace. He will work with colleagues at the Weatherhead Center at Harvard’s Center for International Affairs to develop conferences and projects in the areas of religion and conflict resolution and he will actively network with other peace scholars and activists because, he indicated, “This is a cooperative business.”

In the lively discussion that followed his remarks, participants stressed to Dr. Little the number of rich resources that exist in the Boston-Cambridge area, from the Peace Abbey to the Albert Einstein Institution to the variety of peace studies programs on local campuses to the significant numbers of writers, researchers, and activists who have committed themselves to the promotion of peace. Suggestions were made that Harvard has a great opportunity now to do more in the area of nonviolence and international law.

Winston Langley suggested that the interplay between human rights and belief systems must be further examined. Others, keying off of this suggestion, indicated that the religious freedom legislation that was recently passed continues to be highly debated. Dr. Langley also promoted the idea of further examining the link between justice and the ethics of care that has been explored by feminist scholars and the link between liberation theology and social justice issues.

The peace studies community, Elise Boulding offered, “needs to spend more effort on reconciliation and forgiveness.” The emerita professor went on to suggest that in this country we have not done the necessary grieving, listening, and engaging in dialogue related to Hiroshima and that we suffer the consequences of our failure to engage in necessary reconciliation efforts. She also indicated that peace researchers and activists should follow the progress of the various Year 2000 movements and should continue on page 19

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service. Accepting the award, Rogelio Quimbao paraphrased Dr. Rizal, “We must safeguard peace by exalting the dignity of the individual, by loving justice, right and greatness, even to the extent of dying for them.”

Honored in a November ceremony in Japan, Victor Sadovnichy, who is a member of Russia’s most prestigious academic society, the Russian Academy of Sciences, was named a Global Citizen for, in the words of the citation, “your determined actions to protect humanistic education of the highest caliber during the trying economic times following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and for your heartfelt commitment to creating friendship and collaboration among university leaders in Russia and throughout the world.”

The medal that is given to each Global Citizen has, on one side, a sea of human faces signifying the spirit of a global citizen to serve the people. On the other side is a sun shining above the clouds, which represents the courage and inner freedom of a global citizen.

—Helen Marie Casey
A JOURNALIST’S VIEW OF PEACE JOURNALISM

Taplow Court, the U.K. Centre for the Buddhist Society for the Cetration of Value in Buckinghamshire, U.K., is home to the Conflict and Peace Forums which, during each of the past three summers, has offered three-day programs on Conflict Transformation, Reconciliation, and Peace Journalism. BRC publications manager Amy Morgante was a participant in the summer peace journalism course, “News for a New Century,” held last September 2-5. The focus of the course is a re-thinking of the responsibility of the journalist in order to develop a new approach to news and the media. Here is Program Chair Jake Lynch’s summation of the dominant issues. (Jake is a correspondent for Sky News and The Independent.)

HOW OFTEN IS A CONFLICT PORTRAYED in our news as a tug-of-war, a zero sum game between two parties at loggerheads over one issue? Think back to coverage of the Kosovo crisis, characterized as “The Serbs” determined to stop “The Kosovars” from having their “independence.” Put it like this, and an inch gained by one side can only be the same inch lost by the other, so both cannot “win” at the same time. And if only one issue divides them, how can the motive for unexpected or disbelieving behavior be explained? A classic example of bias injected into reporting comes from Newsweek: the obduracy of President Milosevic was attributable to the influence of his wife, “an extremist even more fanatical than himself.” Extremists and fanatics cannot be reasoned with and must, perforce, be coerced into “backing down” — a logic which makes violence seem to make sense as a means of settling disputes.

Peace Journalism instead maps a conflict as a round table, consisting of many parties, many issues. It acknowledges a complex, interlocking pattern of fears, inequities, and resentments which can only be overcome by seeking, devising, and implementing complex, interlocking solutions.

What would happen, for example, if we focused in a new fashion on the continuing plight of Serbian refugees in Serbia, many more of whom were created as a result of NATO’s bombing? What if we breached the bipolar model by transgressing the boundaries between familiar — but simplistic — categories of victim and oppressor in this decade’s Balkan upheavals?

What if, in treatment of East Timor, we focused on the fears of transmigrants, standard-bearers for Indonesia’s post-colonial settlement, in a country where living standards had suddenly plummeted in a financial crisis precipitated by Western banks, and scapegoating of newcomers had already brought widespread violence?

What would happen in journalism if we humanized all sides, insisted on parity of esteem for testimony in place of “worthy” and “unworthy” victimhood? What if we stopped pinning all blame on one demonized party?

What if we truly aspired to agenda-free reporting? Currently, all reporting contains an agenda by the time the reporter gets the story. At present, there is not even a functioning distinction between journalism which is conscious of containing an agenda and that which is not so conscious. What is at issue is the analysis journalists bring to their work and how they share it with their audiences.

Fortunately, there are road-tested alternatives at hand, discussed in Conflict and Peace Forum publications, The Peace Journalism Option and What Are Journalists For? We must break the umbilical cord with official information sources, which has London or Washington “confirming” things reporters cannot possibly check for themselves while (say) Belgrade only ever “claims” them.

Privileged perspectives are all too often camouflage with weasel phrases like “said to be,” “thought to be,” and “it is being seen as.” These perspectives slide in at the top of program run-downs and onto front pages. We should be alerting audiences to a world of perspectives. We should equip them to ask: Who wants me to believe this, and why? In place of the traditional journalistic search for “the truth,” we should move toward a recognition of, and respect for, many truths. What is important may be to shed some light on the processes by which certain truths are routinely commended to our attention, while others are systematically ignored or suppressed.

A journalism capable of engaging readers, listeners, and viewers in such a dialogue would offer a new and long-overdue basis for trust. News determined to pick up and examine ideas for peaceful outcomes and solutions, no matter who suggests them, could start to provide incentives for conflicts to be resolved nonviolently.

Under the leadership of Professor Johan Galtung, a pioneer of peace studies as an academic subject and director of the TRANSCEND Peace & Development Network, the forums on peace journalism at Taplow Court have attempted to throw the spotlight on the issues of objectivity, impartiality, the so-called Official Sources industry, and on news distortions. The objective of the peace journalism seminars is to assess the impact of the journalist on war and peace and to alter the current bias-ridden

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elaboration of the Buddhist peace principles discussed within the book, the text of the Barcelona Declaration on the Role of Religion, and reflections on the Declaration by Janusz Symonides, director of UNESCO’s Department of Peace, Human Rights, Democracy, and Tolerance.

As Donald K. Swearer, Charles and Harriet Cox McDowell Professor of Religion at Swarthmore, observed at the BRC’s book launch at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in November: “This book is sure to have an academic use but, more important, its impact will move far beyond the classroom to have an impact on government. It will do this if we use it as a call to action.” Dr. Swearer noted that one of the main contributions made by the authors of this book is the practical way that they retrieve the Buddhist tradition and apply it to global and common concerns.

“The many conditions necessary for peace are better understood than they have ever been,” editor David W. Chappell, a scholar of Chinese Buddhism and graduate chair of the Department of Religion at the University of Hawaii, observed in the concluding chapter of Peacework. “Buddhists have always emphasized inner mindfulness work, but social mindfulness is increasingly important in Buddhist peace work… The essays in this volume contribute greatly to clarifying social guidelines for Buddhists.” Among the points of emphasis are the importance not only of mindfulness training but also of dialogue and social action. In addition, time and again the authors place emphasis on the Buddhist principle of interdependence with its implicit corollary of social responsibility.

In his chapter, “The SGI’s Peace Movement,” founder of the BRC Daisaku Ikeda envisions a global approach to peacebuilding. He articulates his conviction that “mutual understanding is always possible when we conduct dialogue from the common ground of our shared humanity.” Convinced of the importance of nurturing global citizens, the prolific author suggests that “it is vital to the human future that we learn to respect each other’s differences and peculiarities, feel empathy for, and learn from each other. I am confident that this will open the way for a new global culture for all humanity.”

Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace is dedicated to Aung San Suu Kyi, symbol of Buddhist peacework, compassion, and courage. “Several of the authors,” David Chappell observes, “are in political exile, others have endured civil war, and others are struggling to create social equality and justice under the threat of terrorism and arrest.” For these reasons, the editor insists, “This is not a theoretical book.”

One of the major successes and key inroads of Peacework is the non-judgmental manner in which the book reflects the diversity of traditions within Buddhism. The views of both monastics and laity are presented and the three different streams of practice commonly called the “three turns of the wheel” of Buddhist teaching are represented—Theravada Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, and Esoteric or Vajrayana Buddhism. Authors include: Dhammachi Lokamitra; Sulak Sivaraksa; Shih Cheng-Yen; Karma Lekshie Tsomo; Lama Bataa Mishigish; A.T. Atiyaratne; Stephanie Kaza; Robert Atiken; Jeon Chong-yoon; Judith Simmer-Brown; Kosan Sunim; Daisaku Ikeda; Maha Ghosananda; Thich Nhat Hanh; Bhante Henepola Gunaratana; Shih Sheng-yen; José Ignacio Cabezón; and the Dalai Lama.

The authors of Buddhist Peacework are simultaneously religious spokespersons and world leaders. Their efforts for global peace, with all that entails, are neither parochial nor nationalistic. They are motivated by spiritual conviction and profound compassion.

Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace builds on a growing library of peace-centered works the BRC has already created: Subverting Hatred: The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions; Abolishing War; and the Earth Charter Studies Kit. All of these books are appropriate for classroom use and as catalysts for community discussions.

See excerpts from Buddhist Peacework beginning on page 10.

(Buddhist Peacework can be ordered from Wisdom Publications on their website at www.wisdompub.org or with a credit card at 800-272-4050.)

—Helen Marie Casey
THE HAGUE PEACE CONFERENCE: RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

OF THE EFFORT TO PROMOTE A culture of peace, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, has said:

For many people in this world right now, things are not as they should be: Some people are wealthy, while their neighbors don't have enough to eat. Many communities live in peace, while war claims innocent lives close by. Some children can communicate with each other across oceans through e-mail, while others are not even able to go to school. And I'm sorry to say, children are still being brought up to hate or fear their neighbors just because they speak a different language or go to a different church... Things get better when enough people decide that they should get better... things can change when ordinary people come together in a common purpose.

The Boston Research Center hosted an all-day program, Dialogue on the Hague Peace Conference: Results & Next Steps, in cooperation with the Coalition for a Strong United Nations and the United Nations Liaison Office of Soka Gakkai International. The spring program was cosponsored by dozens of organizations working for a culture of peace and human rights. It offered an opportunity for those who attended the Appeal for Peace Conference in The Hague in early May—the largest international peace conference in history—to talk about proposed actions and to allow those who did not attend a way to respond to the recommendations of the conference.

The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice in the 21st Century has specified important actions in the area of: 1) Conflict Prevention, Resolution, and Transformation; 2) Disarmament and Human Security; 3) International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law and Institutions; and 4) Root Causes of War/Culture of Peace.

In his opening address on the history of global peace efforts, International Relations Professor Winston E. Langley observed that 100 years ago when the conference system—of which the Hague conference of 1899 was a part—originated, "the system was based on the thinking that the reason countries so frequently engaged in inter-state violence was because they generally did not meet to speak with each other, except when they sought to conclude wars. If they could meet and confer... during times of peace, they could perhaps solve many of the problems which invited wars." At the end of his retrospective view of efforts at peacebuilding, Dr. Langley concluded: "There is no substitute for real disarmament, global security institutions globally agreed on, and a culture of peace to maintain them."

Panel moderator John Malcolm Forbes, executive director of the World Federalist Association of New England, concurred with Winston Langley's view that we are again at a crossroads in history. "One area where transformation is being sought," Jock Forbes stressed, "is in the nature of government itself. There were several sessions at The Hague about how a People's Assembly or a World Parliament might be created." Alluding to the Millennial People's Assembly that will take place in 2000, Forbes reminded listeners that the Assembly "hopes to engage nongovernmental organizations, civil society representatives of many sorts, and representatives of governments at many levels to further pursue the development of a World Parliament. Some of us here will be working in a variety of ways to achieve that goal."

When panelist Cathy Hoffman of the Cambridge Peace Commission addressed the issue of conflict resolution, she began with the assertion that "the roots of violence lie in two places...messages in the media... and structures and belief systems that promote superiority and the notion of dominance." She criticized the racism, sexism, and economic systems that operate on the premise that "only some can prosper and many cannot" and argued that the Hague Conference was remiss in failing to place the issue of racism on the agenda. She urged conference participants to recognize all of the different voices engaged in conflict resolution and to acknowledge the need for reparations and reconciliation. She concluded that "we need to be about action."

Hiro Sakurai, deputy representative to the United Nations from Soka Gakkai International, indicated that "a culture of peace was one of the most discussed topics throughout the Hague Conference." He reported to the conference that the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees is now responsible for 26 million refugees and that "one of the difficulties that the refugee agency faces is the so-called CNN effect—that is, when the
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The staff of the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century have been consistently promoting dialogue between civilizations in an effort to build a network of global citizens. I have the greatest respect for your inspired efforts and outstanding achievements toward creating a culture of peace, making the new century a “Century of Life” illuminated by the reverence for the sanctity of all living beings.

Here I would like, from a Buddhist perspective, to consider some of the conditions that I think are indispensable to a genuine culture of peace. These are:

• mutual respect among diverse peoples and cultures;
• a penetrating, dialogic effort to recover what is meant by universality;
• the clarification of those ethical values and norms that are common to all humankind.

These three conditions embody the search for that which is truly universal and take as their point of departure a respect for and the desire to learn from cultures that are different from our own.

Respecting diversity
Each culture comprises both elements that are unique to that culture and a large measure of commonality with other cultures. Indeed, a rich history of contact and interaction with various other cultures extends the degree of deep commonality in a given culture, enhancing the possibilities of discovering universality.

In this sense, expanding dialogue and exchanges among the cultures of various peoples can have the effect of helping each culture discover in its own depths elements of other cultures, naturally encouraging an awakening to that which is authentically universal. This is something that transcends specific cultural or civilization traditions; it extends its embrace to the life which is shared by all humankind and to the global biosphere itself.

Recovering universality
It is my belief that each culture is a treasured legacy of the efforts of various peoples, through long spiritual tradition, to attain a sense of oneness with the cosmos and with eternity. Each culture reflects the interactions of a people with the cosmic and the eternal, and the inner richness they have gained from that communion. To the degree that people can sense the pulse of cosmic life that beats in the depths of their own culture, they can gain insight into those universal ethics and norms that are shared by all humanity.

To coexist creatively, cultures must be ready to respect their differences while at the same time maintaining an empathetic awareness of the elements of sameness and commonality that link them.

Throughout human history, world religions have played a pivotal role in forging great civilizations, and there is a common ethical outlook shared by these religions. All such religions expound a respect for life, and offer a basis for fundamental human rights in the values of freedom, equality and love of humanity. I believe it is crucial to recover an ethic that is fully relevant to our present circumstances and yet is rooted in changeless human values. Towards this end, continued dialogue between religions and between civilizations is essential, as is a scrupulous examination of the values on which contemporary civilization has been constructed.

Clarifying ethical values and norms
The first element of such an ethic must be a reverence for life. This is embodied in the Buddhist precept, or inner moral imperative, against the destruction of life. It can be found in Mahatma Gandhi’s development of the concept of ahimsa, or nonviolence. Ahimsa requires the abolition of nuclear arms and all forms of war and organized violence. It offers a paradigm of creative coexistence with nature and can even provide a conceptual basis for the idea of nonhuman nature as a subject or possessor of rights.

A second element of a universal ethic is economic justice. The Buddhist moral imperative against stealing offers a foundation for this element. In Mahayana Buddhism, the importance of the giving of alms is actively stressed. This embodies the ethic of offering assistance to others rather than exploiting others to satisfy one’s own greed.

A third element is the concept of equality—among peoples, rations, sexes, cultures, and so on. This means the right to equal treatment, which resists and transforms oppression and structural violence. In Buddhism, special attention has been paid to the question of gender. Among the teachings of Shakyamuni, the precept against sexual misconduct was revolutionary in that it applied equally to both sexes in a cultural setting—which century B.C.E. India—that accorded scant recognition to women’s humanity.

A fourth necessary element of a universal ethic must be truth. To use Gandhian language, this is the value of satya, or truth; Gandhi declared that Satyagraha, the realization or attainment of truth, is the end objective of ahimsa. In Buddhism this finds its equivalent in the precept against lying, which includes attempts to deceive, mislead, or incite the public.

These four elements—nonviolence, economic justice, the right to equality of treatment, and truth—can be found in all world religions, and together form the basis for a universal ethic.

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Women as Peacemakers
The Boston Research Center has to date taken up the issues of peace and nonviolence, environmental ethics, as well as human rights. From this year, I understand that the Center's focus will be on the role of women in building peace and also on economic justice. I have great expectations for your endeavors in these areas.

When mention is made of the role of women in creating peace, I cannot help but be reminded of Shrimala, a woman whose activities are described in the Buddhist scriptures. There we find her expounding, on Shakyamuni's behalf, the means by which all people, irrespective of gender, occupation, or social status, can reveal the Buddha nature that resides as a treasure in the depths of human life.

Shrimala's practice as a bodhisatva is expressed in the form of ten vows. Of particular significance in my view are the sixth: to use her accumulated wealth for the alleviation of the sufferings of the poor; and the eighth: "If I see lonely people, people who have been unjustly and have lost their freedom, people who are suffering from illness, disaster or poverty, I will not abandon them. I will bring them spiritual and material comfort."

Shrimala issues this "lion's roar," declaring a determination to fulfill her noble mission to work for peace and human rights. She does this as a woman committed to carrying out her own personal transformation—human revolution—as the basis for transforming society. The expression "lion's roar" is generally associated with the Buddha in the act of expounding the teachings. It is thus of great significance that the title of this scripture includes the phrase "the lion's roar of Shrimala."

I am convinced that the lion's roar of women committed to the creation of peace will be key in ushering in a new "Century of Life."

Finally, I would like to offer my prayers that the Boston Research Center will continue to develop as a fountainhead of wisdom as we enter a new era.

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media stops coverage of a particular situation, the funds stop." The SGI representative urged participation in a project called Commitment 2000, a signature drive to promote the culture of peace and nonviolence. He concluded his presentation by sharing an e-mail message he had received from an SGI member in Yugoslavia, a message remarkable for the spirit of empathy it exhibits: "Now I hear the big sounds of air attacks and sirens ... the SGI members in Yugoslavia are chanting and praying for peace to protect Yugoslavians, Albanians, and NATO soldiers, too, because they also have a family, a mother, a father, and children."

Miriam Butterworth of the American Friends Service Committee stressed the irony that this important Hague Conference received so little attention from the press: "This was the 100th anniversary of the first peace congress at which 26 or 27 heads of state met. They must have had a lot of clout. The people who were together at The Hague this time, however, eight-to-ten thousand representatives of grassroots civic organizations, had very little clout ... It was as if we hadn't existed ... nobody at home read anything about what we were doing."

Miriam Butterworth's final reminder was an urgent one: "There are, as you all know, 500 nuclear weapons still on alert ... We have to be very aware and very positive about the need for disarming weapons of mass destruction ... It isn't just nuclear weapons. It is also other types of weapons that we have not been willing to abolish, like land mines ... I heard somebody [at The Hague] call land mines 'weapons of mass destruction in slow motion.'"

When Dale Bryan, program coordinator for the Peace and Justice Program at Tufts University spoke, it was to explain, in part, how immense an undertaking the Hague Conference had been: "There were over 400 individual sessions planned during the meetings. There were probably as many that were impromptu sessions scheduled in between planned meetings." He observed that if one looks at all of the Hague agenda, "Education is a component in all of them," and he repeated the admonition of Professor Jackie Tak of South Africa, that prior to and simultaneous to peace education is the building of schools and provision of nutrition for children to attend schools.

In her commentary, peace educator Elise Boulding remarked, "It is absolutely crazy that there was nothing in The New York Times about the Hague Conference. We've got to become more visible." Elaborating on this theme, the lifelong activist urged "The gap between what people want and what political leaders in the U.S. Congress and security people in armies are doing is growing wider. We need to shake each other up by becoming more visible to each other. Our real task is to make visible the actual cultures of peace that exist."

If there was one theme that was reflected time and again, it was this: peacemaking begins with personal transformation and individual action. The work of peace begins with a single individual. ■

—Helen Marie Casey
EXCERPTS FROM
"BUDDHIST PEACEWORK:
CREATING CULTURES OF PEACE"

Foreword to Buddhist Peacework, by Roshi Joan Halifax

Many people have observed that where there is the deep shadow of suffering in the life of the world, then there is also penetrating light. Such are the lives, communities, and work of the compassionate people in this important and wise book. This book explores the lives and actions, insights and guidelines of some of the world's most beloved Buddhist practitioners, teachers, and social activists who are currently working to end suffering in the life of the world. These friends from different cultures and schools of Buddhism are all actively engaged in the singular activity of peacemaking. They express their work of compassion in profoundly diverse, wise, and brave ways. And they have used the philosophy, practice, ethics, community building, and beauty of Buddhism to help with this endless work of compassion in action.

Buddhism has since its inception inspired its practitioners to uncover the most radical form of inclusivity. This is the realization that all beings in all realms, no matter how miserable, violent, depraved and deluded, have a mind ground that is not only free of suffering and delusion but also not separate from the mind ground of any other being. Our individual suffering also unites us in a community of suffering as well. We may be a suffering buddha, a wounded buddha, a deluded buddha, but our basic nature, our basic mind ground is free from any defilements and not separate from others. Our wounds are commonly shared as well.

It is not necessarily so easy to realize this. Most of us have not allowed ourselves to see darker than our personality and culture to see and touch who we really are. Yet, Buddhists and contemplatives of many traditions are encouraged to go within in order to discover not only the so-called oneness of all things but also the peace that surpasses understanding, knowing, ideas, and conceptions, the peace that is basic to all beings when they have come home to a deep and abiding state of nonalienation.

This peace, however, is not complacent. Out of this wise peace arises compassionate, nondual action. If we see that we are not separate from others, then we not only share their enlightenment, we also share their suffering. The right hand of naturally takes care of the left hand, with no expectation of thanks or credit. In peacemaking, there is no self, no other; no peacemaker, no victim; no outcome, no gaining idea. Just making and being peace.

Our authors feel that peacemaking is about realizing and living nonalienation from all beings and living this realization as the Bodhisattva does, riding on the waves of change. Making peace is based in the experience of radical intimacy with the world. It is about the most basic realization that enlightenment is not an
individual experience, rather it is the liberation of intimacy in our relatedness with all beings. Enlightenment then is ultimately social, and Buddhism, Buddhists, and buddhas serve and awaken with and through relationships that are based in the functional experience of a deeply shared life, a life that is about non-harming and doing good, and a life grounded in kindness, compassion, wisdom, and skillful means.

Thus we as humans, as spiritual beings, beings who love and feel compassion, cannot hide from the truth of the pervasiveness of the particular suffering and alienation in the world in which we live today. We cannot turn our backs on the tendency to turn the world and its beings into objects which we call “other.” We are called more than ever to realize the obvious, that we are not, nor were we ever, living in a world of isolation. We are completely and inescapably interconnected and interdependent.

Like the Buddha 2500 years ago, Buddhists today work for the liberation of all beings from the illusion of separation. When there is an “other,” there is an Auschwitz, a Kosovo, a caste of people we will not touch, a ravaged and raped woman, a clean-cut forest, an abused and abandoned child, a young boy with fear and hate in his eyes and a gun in his hand, a man behind bars medicated or numbed out of his mind and heart, a rundown village of old women whose men have all died in war.

The basic vows that we take as Buddhists remind us that there is no “other.” The most basic practices that all of the schools of Buddhism engaged in point to the fact that there is no “other.” The fundamental teachings of the Buddha tell us that there is no “other.” Yet we live in a world peopled by those who are subject to the deepest forms of alienation from their own natural wisdom, a world where whole communities see “others” who should be done away with, liquidated, eliminated.

Today, more than any other time in human history, we are living in a kind of intimacy that can destroy or liberate. Our weapons can find their targets within minutes, our diseases can spread like a wildfire in a dry forest, and our delusions can contaminate the minds of millions instantaneously through the media.

At the same time, in the same instant, we can reach through to endless communities and individuals with acts of compassion and wisdom, making peace by strengthening values and behaviors based in compassion and wisdom. We can nurture cultures of peace by transforming our own lives through kindness, compassion, and wisdom. We can work actively for economic justice, racial equality, protection of the environment, protection of human rights and the rights of all beings, wise and humane education, the voluntary control of the growth of the world’s population, freedom from weapons, domination, exploitation and colonialism of all forms, and deep and true dialogue with respect for and appreciation of differences and plurality.

We have a responsibility today to work directly with our own suffering and the suffering in our communities, the world, and the environment. We all live under each other’s skin, and it is now more than ever functionally intolerable to turn away from injustice, corruption, violence, hatred, greed, and delusion.

The contributors to this volume, and many more individuals and groups around the world, are peace-makers whose lives and work are based in the realization that we are not separate from each other and that we must and can live sane, beneficial, and meaningful lives. Peace, however, is a process not a goal. It unfolds in the very details of our daily lives as well as in the broad brush strokes of the big picture. This marvelous and inspiring book is like the strong timber found in old bridge spans. May each of us, like the friends in this book, be a strong and joyful bridge that helps numberless beings and communities find their way to peace.

From the Conclusion by David W. Chappell

Dialogue as the Practice of Social Mindfulness

Dialogue takes Buddhist mindfulness practices into the social sphere. It is a way to become aware of the different social factors involved in our shared world to develop a more inclusive understanding and to create new choices for action.

Buddhist mindfulness has two dimensions: calming and focusing one’s mind (samma) and seeing the interdependent and transitory nature of all things (vipassana). Samma temporarily mutes external factors so that people can see the role of their mental and emotional habits in shaping their perception and creates a psychic space where people can experiment with alternative ways of viewing and reacting to the world. For the Buddhist, these alternative ways of thinking must involve vippasanna, namely, recognizing the interdependency and impermanence of each external object and inner personal experience. Seeing our interconnectedness and impermanence naturally leads to a sense of our common ground that leads in turn to empathy and compassion.

The Buddha’s meditation methods consisted of recognizing a plurality of forces that shape our expectations, our habits, and our decisions. He challenged his culture’s emphasis on a permanent, controlling ego (atman) that should be in charge. Rather, he demonstrated how our inner self was...
Excerpts from Buddhist Peacework
continued from page 11

constructed through many factors in the learning processes that work together to construct a moment of consciousness. He showed how these processes inevitably lead to conflict and misery when a single factor becomes dominant, but that conflict can be dissolved through noticing the different elements shaping our consciousness and recognizing that attachment to only one way of perceiving inevitably leads to misery.

The good news is that by developing this inner transparency and inner dialogue about our perceptions, we discover that there are choices about how to construct our awareness, and that there are peaceful and non-peaceful ways to perceive and respond to our world. Mindfulness training is a method to defuse our ego, our hurts, and our attachments, and a way to find sympathy and compassion with others, and an arena for discovering creative new options.

The Buddha taught that by taking time out from reacting to events and by using the disciplines of morality, mindfulness, and wisdom, his followers could discover that peace depends not so much on what happened to them, but on what attitude, understanding, and reaction they give to these events. The discovery that inner peace depends on our choices about our interpretation and attitude toward external events constituted a major turning point in human history and continues to constitute a major turning point in individual lives.

Just as mindfulness training requires stopping normal activities (sammaṭa) to see the factors that make up our awareness (vipassana), so developing compassion requires taking time out to become aware of beings other than oneself. To be effective rather than indulgent, compassion needs to be facilitated, nurtured, and guided by "regular and frequent" dialogue.

Today in business management, the old command model of top-down management has been replaced by an emphasis on teamwork and nurturing horizontal relationships. When a group has a controlling person, inevitably conflict will arise. In the political sphere, dictatorships in the twentieth century have killed more people than all the killing in previous human history. Peace requires checks and balances, participation in decision-making, and the recognition of diversity. Inner peace requires seeing the pluralism within, and social peace requires recognizing and collaborating with the pluralism without.

The mindfulness practices of Buddhism remain the major form of peacework and shape everything else. One reason that the Dalai Lama received the Nobel Peace Prize was his unusual reaction to the Chinese brutalization of his people. Instead of anger and violence, the Dalai Lama found common ground with the Chinese. He emphasized that the Chinese are just like him; they want to get rid of suffering and to find happiness. His capacity to find alternative ways of understanding and responding to the hurts of the world have convinced him that all people can develop a heart of compassion.

Dialogue is mindfulness training at the social level. It is not a discussion about external issues, but a sharing of personal experiences that opens awareness to the range of human factors involved in social decisions. In that way, dialogue requires an exploration of one's motivations and the motivations of others.

Robert Aitken says that "enlightenment is an accident, but meditation helps one to be accident prone." Similarly, compassion is a gift, but dialogue is an invitation for gift exchange.

Human Rights and Buddhist Social Morality

Dialogue is not enough. Dialogue requires mutual respect, equality, and willing partners. So long as governments or corporations control the media, communication technology will not bring peace, parity, and freedom. Modern technology in this century has facilitated the brutality of dictators as well as the compassion of peacemakers. Dialogue is a practice that needs a suitable context. Note, for example, that Jiang Zemin has refused to meet with the Dalai Lama. Aung San Suu Kyi is still under police restrictions. Willing dialogue partners are not there.

Buddhist morality is not enough. The Buddhist precepts apply to individual purity and the Mahayana bodhisattva precepts offer only general encouragement for universal compassion, caring for the sick, and treating all people, including enemies, as family relatives. However, the special problems of organized society, of structural violence, of social oppression, and environmental degradation, are not adequately addressed. In his acceptance speech for the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, the Dalai Lama said:

Peace, in the sense of the absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. It will not remove the pain of torture inflicted on a prisoner of conscience. It does not comfort those who have lost their loved ones in floods caused by senseless deforestation in a neighboring country. Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free....

Responsibility does not only lie with the leaders of our countries or with those who have been appointed or elected to do a particular job. It lies with each of us individually... What is important is that we each make a sincere effort to take seriously our responsibility for each other: and for the natural environment.
The Dalai Lama is very aware of the complex problems of our globe and urges each person to develop a sense of universal responsibility. Daisaku Ikeda similarly encourages and tries to prepare members of Soka Gakkai to be world citizens. But both the Dalai Lama and Daisaku Ikeda do much more. They offer concrete proposals and guidelines for governments to adopt. And they both appeal to and support the United Nations and the Declaration of Human Rights.

Scholars have argued that Buddhism has no doctrine of human rights and, technically, they are right. At a metaphysical level, Buddhist teaching has always rejected the concept of an unchanging, substantial self. But the Buddha warned not to take doctrines too seriously. At a practical level, human rights have been strongly affirmed by contemporary Buddhists such as the Dalai Lama, Sulak Sivaraksa, Maha Ghosananda, Daisaku Ikeda, and others. Human rights were not written in the heavens by gods, but constructed in history by mortals. They have no more, and no less, authority than the growing consensus of the human community about political limits to protect each of us, and social goals for all of us. As a metaphysical doctrine they are inadequate, but as social norms they are an invaluable and necessary tool for Buddhist peacemaking.

Most Buddhists in Asian countries have suffered invasion, civil war, or oppressive political regimes in recent times. The Buddhist leaders in this book make clear the classic Buddhist social teaching of the inherent dignity and spiritual equality of all people, the importance of having compassion for the suffering of others, and the necessity of including all people in the decision-making process. Human rights may not be inherent in people in a metaphysical sense, but they are strongly supported by Buddhist leaders as a negotiated social contract based on fairness and respect since everyone wants freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, health, food, self-esteem, and education.

Human progress has not been biological, but technological and institutional. While as consumers we are well aware of technological advances, none of our authors has mentioned the remarkable advances in legal safeguards for people in this century that have given new freedom to Buddhists to develop social programs. Although Buddhist thinkers have been critical of all absolutes, including legal ones, the practical benefits of law as social contract are an important part of peacemaking by stabilizing social compromise. Although the Buddhist tradition has been very good in its prohibitions, and very idealistic in its emphasis on universal responsibility, it has been rather weak in the intermediate steps of social responsibility — education, health, employment, welfare, and cultural development. This "middle path" needs much more attention by Buddhists. Fortunately, it is in this middle area where many of the new contributions of Buddhist peacemaking are being made, especially as seen in this book.

The 30 articles of the Declaration of Human Rights have a remarkable parallel to the threefold morality of Mahayana Buddhism: do no evil, cultivate good, and save all beings. The French jurist Karel Vasak saw the three values of the French Revolution (liberty, equality, and fraternity) as representing three levels or "generations" of human rights. The human rights articles consist of prohibitions that protect individuals from governments (2-21), those that nurture individuals in their economic, social, and cultural relationships (22-27), and those that affirm the need for a global order (28-30). This structural affinity with Mahayana ethics, as well as the importance of human rights in Buddhist liberation movements and peacemaking, and the global spread of human rights as a shared standard, is making the Declaration of Human Rights an essential new pillar of social ethics for contemporary Buddhists.

When the Diem regime outlawed public celebration of Wesak in Vietnam in 1963, thousands of Buddhists resisted nonviolently in public gatherings. The resulting arrests, torture, and killing of practitioners were detailed in a 45-page report on human rights violations submitted to the government by a Buddhist delegation. The appeal to human rights as a standard that is recognized worldwide has been a major advance of human civilization in the twentieth century. But it is the picture of Thich Quang Duc enveloped in flames at a Saigon intersection in 1963 that has seared itself into our collective global consciousness. Nonviolent protest reported widely by the media has transformed our cultures. Legal protection of individuals is the first level of human rights and Buddhist morality. But the second and third levels of human rights and Buddhist morality require mutual responsibility and global awareness that involve personal and cultural transformation that are emphasized by Buddhist peacemaking.

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PEACEBUILDING AND RECONCILIATION IN AFRICA TODAY

Many have asserted that Africa is the continent of the twenty-first century and that, despite its destructive conflicts, it has the potential to be a model to much of the world. The Boston Research Center was one of the recent cosponsors of a multi-part series organized by Brandeis University’s International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life to encourage study and discussion of peacebuilding and mediation on the African continent: “Doing Justice and Loving Mercy: Perspectives on Coexistence and Reconciliation from an African Peacebuilder.”

Dr. Hizkias Assefa, Visiting Fellow at the Center and world-renowned African peacebuilder, addressed the topics, “Conflict in Africa” and “Patterns of Peace and Peacebuilding in Africa.” He shared his extensive experience in negotiating an end to conflicts in Africa, addressed the issues relating to the hazards of bringing together warring parties for lasting peace, and the influence of spirituality and traditional institutions as part of the peacemaking process.

Dr. Assefa is an author, most recently of Mediation of Civil Wars: Approaches and Strategies—The Sudan Conflict (University of Pittsburgh Press). Working through the United Nations and various NGOs, he is a member of the African Academy of Sciences, Nairobi, and part of the Study Group on “Internal Conflicts, Peace, and Development in Africa.”

Cynthia Cohen, director of the Brandeis Center, first met Dr. Assefa at the State of the World Forum held in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in May of 1999. “He stood out among the hundreds of scholars and practitioners there because of the strength and calmness of his presence and his very focused intelligence on questions of reconciliation.” Determined to contribute to dialogue in the United States, Cohen arranged a residency for Dr. Assefa through the Brandeis Initiative in Intercultural Coexistence for the week-long series of seminars.

Beginning on Monday, November 15th, Dr. Assefa discussed the current state of affairs on the African continent. He asserted that present conditions can reasonably be regarded as the effects of a history marked by invasion and violence. The three major underlying influences on Africa have been: slavery, colonialism, and aspects of modernization within a global context. He noted that we cannot fully understand the sources of today’s conflicts without understanding Africa’s history of greed, trauma, and political disruption.

This history can lead social theorists and those interested in solving the current problems besieging Africa to some pessimistic conclusions. However, Assefa urges people to seek out the positive and powerful aspects of traditional institutions in Africa—that is, those not created by northern hemisphere or colonialist nations—as well as the power of modern education as resources for change and growth. Assefa continues to believe in the power and process of African peacebuilding and sees religious and spiritual considerations as central to the reconciliation processes. Some of the current models and methods of peace negotiations today, however, fail to take spiritual elements into sufficient consideration and ultimately try to impose peace on communities.

On Tuesday, November 16th, Dr. Assefa discussed what he referred to as “an antidote” to some of the more distressing aspects of relations between African nations and also between Africa and her previous colonizers in northern hemisphere nations. Currently, Assefa notes, “When we talk about conflict and peace in Africa we can see four patterns: 1) a group of countries in crisis, 2) sustainable victory over conflict, 3) “Recidivism”—that is, nations slipping back into patterns of conflict and 4) the internationalization of civil wars. Professor Assefa referred to two peacebuilding paradigms, top-down and ground-up, with the first involving state and non-state political actors and the latter involving community members and institutions. Focusing on his success using the latter approach in resolving conflict in Ghana, Dr. Assefa stated that this second methodology expands and deepens engagement so that it “captures the imagination of the community.”

The Brandeis resident scholar suggested that, over time, the traditional institutions were changed by the experience of peacebuilding and the dialogue that it entails. He considers this to be an enormous benefit to the communities affected by the conflict and shared that peacebuilders working from the ground-up should “work with what is positive about the culture and traditional institutions and amend what is weak.”

Reconciliation, the peacemaker emphasized, must be a vital part of the peace process. Through dialogue, parties engaged in the peace process can transcend political divisions, find common ground, and negotiate matters with compassion. In Ghana, for example, “An environment was created where people could transcend religious labels and recognize what is spiritual in each other. There was something happening within the individuals that influenced the outside reconciliation process. Focusing on reconciliation challenged people to think of their larger identity, to see ________continued on page 19
IN EARLY DECEMBER, NOTED AUTHOR-EDUCATORS SAYRE SHELDON AND CYNTHIA ENLOE WERE THE FEATURED PRESENTERS AT A WOMEN'S ACTION FOR NEW DIRECTIONS (WAND)-SPONSORED FORUM, "WOMEN & WAR: NEW VIEWS FOR A NEW CENTURY," AT THE BOSTON RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. THE FOCUS FOR THE EVENING WAS THE IMPACT OF MILITARISM ON WOMEN.

Sayre Sheldon—WAND president emerita, NGO representative, and professor of courses on war and peace at Boston University—addressed some of the issues she highlighted in her new anthology of women's writings on war, *Her War Story: Twentieth-Century Women Write about War*. How, she asked, has war changed women and how have women changed war?

She pointed to the extraordinary reversal that has occurred between the First and Second World War. In the so-called Great War, 10 percent of the casualties were citizens whereas, in the Second World War, 90 percent of the casualties were citizens. Today the trend which marks citizens as targets continues.

As a consequence of war, Dr. Sheldon explained, women developed new skills and responsibilities. Between the two wars, women worked very hard to prevent another war. By the Second World War, when air attacks made citizens much more vulnerable, women began to confront honors that were once set aside as "unthinkable." Today, in the aftermath of the Cold War, the founder of WAND continued, we see increasing numbers of armed populations, civilian victims, massive use of rape as a weapon of war, and whole countries reduced to the status of refugees. We see mutilation used as a weapon of war and we see biological warfare.

Within the book are descriptions of the Argentine Mothers of the Disappeared who demonstrated in the plaza every Thursday until, at last, their tenacity wore down government denials and changed what governments could get away with doing to their citizens. Such efforts had a major impact on the definition of war crimes and the international will to punish such crimes. There is hope, Dr. Sheldon suggested, in the new processes and thinking that have evolved about people's basic entitlement to security and human rights.

Cynthia Enloe, Fulbright scholar, professor at Clark University, and author of *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics, The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*, and the new *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives*, began her remarks with a simple proposition, "I've been thinking about how women get militarized. Militarization depends on the militarization of women. Women have quite a powerful lever because they have something to withhold."

Dr. Enloe used an episode that occurred in peacetime Okinawa in September of 1995 as the centerpiece around which she positioned her arguments for countering militarism. Three young American servicemen kidnapped and sexually assaulted a 12-year-old Japanese school girl. Because of the specifications of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in effect at the time, the Japanese authority pointed out that Senators Boxer and Feinstein, in particular, led a protest against such attitudes, one of the consequences of their highly visible protest being to force Admiral Macke into early retirement.

In addition, the author of *Maneuvers* asserted that a dichotomy was being established in the way that the press was treating the assault, implying that it is not all right to prey upon the young and innocent but that there is a class of women, namely prostitutes, upon whom one may prey because they are not "good women." There was an implication that prostitutes serve the military as a kind of line of defense for the protection of respectable women and that it is

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Buddhist-Christian Dialogue: Alternatives to Consumerism

When the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies (SBCS) held its annual meeting in Boston in November, the backdrop of holiday lights and lavish window displays in the city as well as the impending WTO meeting in the Pacific Northwest underscored the relevance of the society's discussion topic, the reign of consumerism.

Cutting across all denominational and religious belief systems, the growth of consumerist attitudes and the increasing consumption of resources is a trend with alarming consequences, including: environmental destruction; diminished self-identity; distorted views of what is significant; and erosion of spiritual worldviews. Presenting from the Buddhist perspective, environmental scholar Stephanie Kaza suggested in her remarks that “it will not be enough to focus on individual lifestyle changes; only with serious structural change can the rapacious tide of environment-gobbling consumerism be restrained.” Policy-makers, economists, and activists must all concern themselves with the impact of global consumerism.

While in the past, population control received the heaviest attention as a contributor to environmental crises, the impact of affluence, of consumption, and resource wastefulness now cry out for heightened response. Referring to the reports of the Worldwatch Institute, educator Kaza cited some of the more alarming statistics: Americans consume their average body weight every day in materials extracted and processed from farms, mines, rangelands, and forests; since 1950 the per capita consumption of energy, meat, and lumber has doubled; use of plastic has increased five times; use of aluminum seven times; and average airplane miles per person has soared 33-fold.

In practical terms, there are all sorts of consequences we would see if we were serious about curtailing advertising and the promotion of acquisitiveness. As one set of examples, Stephanie Kaza observed that “if the fueling of greed and desire were considered out of place in schools, advertising would not be allowed on classroom televisions or at school sports events. If people valued conversation with each other over the speech of the television, the social courtesy would be to turn the TV off when eating together.”

When it comes to concrete suggestions, the following appealed to the speaker and to discussion participants: education to unlearn consumerism; active resistance to consumerism with such activities as “Buy Nothing Day”; the changing of structural policies; and the building of new kinds of communities and culture.

Among the options available, discussants suggested, is choosing to reduce self-identification with products by recognizing that product marketing is synonymous with creating and marketing illusion. We can all refuse to buy into what is patently illusional.

There is something more significant we should acknowledge, Christopher Queen suggested, and that is that “greed is the religion of our civilization.” We are, the authority on Engaged Buddhism continued, quite confused about which is more important, spiritual or material contributions to society.

Audience members discussed what might be called the “sickness” of consumerism, concurring that social responsibility can be brought to the fore to alter the influence of even the most powerful kinds of social entities, transnational corporations. Socially responsible investing and lobbying opportunities can create greater corporate accountability.

Alluding to the fact that “consumerism stimulates a craving that is never satisfied,” SCBS member Virginia Strauss suggested that the order we want to see re-established is that of economic systems serving humans and nature, rather than humans and nature serving economic systems. She suggested that the principles in the Earth Charter offer important forms of resistance to consumerism.

Responding to audience input, Stephanie Kaza asserted, “Our culture has become a culture without discipline, especially the discipline of restraint.” She recommended the works of Sulak Sivaraksa and Alan Durning — particularly How Much Is Enough? The resonant theme at the meeting was: Each person has to find an avenue to be effective.

In the remarks he presented reflecting a Christian perspective, Professor Jay McDaniel of Hendrix College suggested that consumerism, which is a set of attitudes and values that leads to an overconsuming lifestyle, can be viewed as a corporate-sponsored kind of world religion. This religion continually confronts individuals with temptations to buy. It can, however, be rejected by a three-level Christian response. Intellectually, we can choose to perceive God as Open Space “whose breathings we feel as an indwelling lure toward healing and wholeness.” Practically, we can follow Jesus in His way of simplicity. Spiritually, we can learn from the various contemplative traditions.

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Buddhist-Christian Dialogue
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Dr. McDaniel suggested that we can turn aside from consumerism by engaging in daily prayer, meditation, and worship that is combined with action and reflection in service to the community. He recommended the following ten healing alternatives to the ten temptations of consumerism: To believe and feel that:

- The true purpose of our lives is not to be attractive, rich, and powerful, but rather to be wise, compassionate, and free.
- Healthy living requires not only creativity and action and good work, but also rest and relaxation so that our work can be productive rather than compulsive.
- It is much more important to be a good parent and be a good neighbor than to have a successful career.
- Truly good work consists in serving others, quite apart from questions of reward and recognition.
- We have made it not when we enjoy prosperity in the suburbs but when we give our time, energy, and money in service to people in need.
- Compulsive shopping is a symptom of a disease, not a cure for depression.
- Small can be beautiful; enough is enough; we don't need it all.
- Sometimes it is much more important for a community to be compassionate than to be efficient.
- The universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects.
- We are not on our own, because the universe is enfolded within an ultimate mercy which renders questions of success and failure irrelevant.

Now a dozen years old, the SBCS was chartered to create opportunities for study, reflection, interchange, and practice arising out of Buddhist-Christian encounter. The Society holds an international conference every four years; the next gathering, on "Buddhism, Christianity, and Global Healing," will take place this August in Tacoma, Washington. (For information on the next SBCS international conference, e-mail: SBCS2000@aol.com)

Women and War
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legitimate for the military to expect to be serviced by these women. Dr. Enloe suggested that the impact of a significant presence of military bases on women has yet to be adequately analyzed. She praised the women of the American Friends Service Committee for their ongoing work in countering the impact of militarism.

In the discussion segment of the program, emphasis was placed on the fact that, particularly in war-torn Mozambique and Somalia, women have enabled communities to survive. They have often assumed power to stabilize their communities and help to bring peace. There was criticism tendered against the United Nations because it has failed to address issues like child prostitution and a warning was offered that the emergence of the Junior ROTC program in this country, which is not funded by the Defense Department and siphons money away from other curriculum needs, is an alarming phenomenon.

Ambivalence was expressed about the kind of difference women can make as they participate in the military. Will they have an impact on a different kind of soldiering, say, peacemaking? The issue of sexual assault as a weapon of war was again addressed in the question and answer forum. In Kosovo, one member of the audience explained, some 20,000 women were sexually abused as a means of destroying their identity and their place in their society. There are 1,000 children who have been born as a result of these assaults. What will happen to them?

Susan Shaer, president of WAND, suggested that all of us need to address federal spending priorities as part of our resistance to militarism and we must elect more women like Feinstein and Boxer to the Senate to raise these issues which we wish to see addressed.
Cultures of Peace Conference to be Held at BRC

The Coalition for a Strong United Nations is planning a June 2000 conference in collaboration with the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century to commemorate the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

Titled, *Peace is in Our Hands*, this conference signals a call to action for all people to stop the violence which surrounds us and to start building a culture of nonviolence and peace. Workshops at the conference will offer opportunities for continuing action, dialogue, skill building, and education well beyond the day itself. A Friday evening event will feature a celebration of the publication of renowned sociologist Elise Boulding’s new book, *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History*. A book-signing will follow the reception and program.

For information, call the Coalition at (617) 739-4750.

Peace Journalism

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approach to journalism. As *The Peace Journalism Option* puts it, “Peace journalism humanizes all sides of the conflict and is prepared to document deceit and suffering as well as peace initiatives from all parties.”

(You can find out more about Conflict and Peace Forums and their peace journalism publications at: www.poesis.org; e-mail: conflict.peace@poesis.org)

Where We’ve Been

**Dialogue on Hague Peace Conference: Results & Next Steps**
Organized by Coalition for a Strong United Nations
May 22, 1999
Boston Research Center, Cambridge, MA
(Boston Research Center was a cosponsor)

**National Earth Charter Training Conference**
June 20-21, 1999
Center for Respect of Life and Environment, Alexandria, VA

**National Summit on Africa—New England Regional Meeting**
July 16-17, 1999
Boston, MA

**News for a New Century**
Conflict and Peace Forum’s summer Peace Journalism course
September 2-5, 1999
Taplow Court, Buckinghamshire, UK

**Luncheon Seminar on Local Peace Studies Programs with Professor David Little**
September 14, 1999
Boston Research Center, Cambridge, MA

(BRC executive director Virginia Strass was a panelist)

**The New Jerusalem: Can We Live Together?**
Symposium sponsored by the Center for the Study of Values in Public Life
September 29, 1999
Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA
(BRC executive director Virginia Strass was a panelist)

**Doing Justice and Loving Mercy: Human Rights in the Context of Reconciliation**
Brandeis University’s International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life
November 15-19, 1999
Brandeis University, Waltham, MA
(Boston Research Center was a cosponsor of public lectures by Dr. Hizkiya Asefa on November 15 and 16)

**American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting**
November 19-23, 1999
Boston, MA
(BRC hosted a publications booth and a reception to introduce “Buddhist Peacework”)

Where We’re Going

**Women and War: New Views for a New Century**
WAND Education Fund’s 8th Annual Speaker Event
December 8, 1999
Boston Research Center, Cambridge, MA

**Dialogue Among Civilizations: A New Peace Agenda for a New Millennium**
Sponsored by the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research
February 11-14, 2000, Okinawa, Japan
(Boston Research Center is a cosponsor)

**Bridging Borders**
Concurrent annual conference of the Peace Studies Association and the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development
March 30-April 2, 2000
University of Texas at Austin
(Boston Research Center is a cosponsor of a plenary session on “Religious Building a Culture of Peace”)

**Creating Connections 2000: Peace with Self, Sister, and Society**
A women’s leadership forum cosponsored with 15 Boston-area women’s and youth groups
Friday evening, April 28 and Saturday, April 29, 2000
Boston Research Center, Cambridge, MA
(see box on page 17)

**Working to Build a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence: Peace Is in Our Hands**
Conference cosponsored with the Coalition for a Strong United Nations
June, 2000 — watch for flyer
Boston Research Center, Cambridge, MA
(see article on this page)

**Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History**
As part of the June, 2000 conference at the BRC (see above), renowned sociologist Elise Boulding will discuss highlights of her study of civil society over the past 50 years. Book-signing follows the presentation.
Peacebuilding in Africa
continued from page 15

themselves and others as part of a larger community.” The role of the peace mediator is one of “thinking on your feet,” Assefa noted. “It is very creative.”

Applying the concepts under discussion to conditions in the United States, Dr. Cohen suggested that “there is much reconciliation for us to do in relation to the legacy of slavery and the genocide of native peoples, and also we need to come to terms with our role in the international community today. The hidden issue in the United States is economic class and also the materialistic greed instilled by the dominant culture. Hizkias’s approaches could help us address these issues.”

—Edith Shillue

Peace Scholar Welcomed
continued from page 4

do a better job of linking issues of restorative justice and peace studies.

As the luncheon seminar moved toward its conclusion, participants underscored for Dr. Little the importance that local action is given: “In this area, we like to address local to global and back to local again.” The warmth of the dialogue and the camaraderie evident among the local peace studies community members underscored the value that each individual places on this process of coming together for the purposes of both professional exchange and the opportunity to see good friends.

—Helen Marie Casey

The Mission Statement of the Boston Research Center

The Boston Research Center for the 21st Century is an international peace institute founded in 1993 by Daisaku Ikeda, a Buddhist peace activist and President of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a religious association with members in 128 countries. The Center fosters dialogue among scholars and activists on common values across cultures and religions, seeking in this way to support an evolving global ethic for a peaceful twenty-first century. Human rights, nonviolence, ecological harmony, economic justice, and women’s leadership for peace are focal points of the Center’s work.

The Center collaborates with universities and citizen groups to sponsor symposia, conferences, lectures, and other dialogues that bring attention to constructive ideas for the development of civil society and peace cultures worldwide. An annual Global Citizen Award is given by the Center to scholar-activists who make outstanding contributions to the cultivation of civil society nationally and internationally.

Be in Touch

We welcome your advice, contacts, and comments, as well as requests for publications or more information.

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Visit our website at: www.brc21.org

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Amy Morgante, Publications Manager
Karen Nardella, Program Manager
Beth Zimmerman, Events Coordinator

BRC staff are grateful for the talents, energy, and enthusiasm of two work-study students, Katie Donahue and Michael Kane. We bid goodbye to Mike, who returns to classwork, and welcome our new team member, Megan Boreman.

Newsletter

Contributors: Helen Marie Casey, Jake Lynch, Amy Morgante, Edith Shillue
Desktop Publishing: Carol Dirga
Photography: John Hancock, p. 6
Marilyn Humphries, p. 7 & p. 15
Jonathan Wilson, p. 3

Earth Charter Update

The campaign to create a people’s Earth Charter continues. Earth Charter Benchmark Draft II and a more recent, unofficial Working Draft are available for your review and comment.

To learn the latest news about the Earth Charter process and find out about activities unfolding across the country, visit the Earth Charter-USA National Committee’s website at: www.earthcharterusa.org
BRC PUBLICATIONS ORDER FORM

You can order the Center's books by sending in this form with a check, or contact us by phone, fax, or e-mail and we'll be happy to send your order with an invoice. Visit our website — www.brc21.org — for a complete listing of BRC publications and ordering information.

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