

# H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXII-19

**Petra Goedde.** *The Politics of Peace: A Global Cold War History.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN: 9780195370836 (hardback).

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 INTRODUCTION BY PENNY VON ESCHEN, THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
 

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Petra Goedde's *The Politics of Peace: A Global Cold War History* is a remarkable and path-breaking work of transnational scholarship that moves across U.S. and European contexts and their intersections with non-aligned and third world liberation movements, as well as across political, intellectual, and cultural history. Lucidly written, the book effectively flips the lens of the early Cold War from that of conflict to the subtleties and contradictions of the struggle over peace. This yields a number of fresh accounts of often-told stories, as in Goedde's rendering of how President John F. Kennedy and other principals grappled with the concept of peace during the Berlin crisis and Cuban Missile Crisis. Most centrally for Goedde, a focus on peace upends the binaries of the Cold War, from the East-West binary to binaries between political realism and idealism, the rational and the absurd, nationalism and internationalism, and violence and non-violence.

Centering this study on contests over the meaning and political utility of peace on both side of the Iron Curtain, Goedde employs a transnational approach in a sustained analysis of differences both within and between political, religious, and women's organizations. As a cultural history, *The Politics of Peace* is attuned to fissures and contradictions within the movement and among policy-makers, emphasizing processes of communication and miscommunication between governmental and non-governmental actors both within and across national boundaries. The concept of peace divided as well as united, in the thinking of the New Left for example, it emerged in part as a reaction to the Old Left's duplicitous use of the concept. A key argument of the book is that activists and cultural producers drew on philosophical notions of the absurd to ultimately show the absurdity of the arms race and the Cold War as a whole.

The 1960s, Goedde argues, represented the breakdown of the liberal as well as the peace consensus. Central to this was decolonization's challenge to the global discourse of peace. Goedde argues that grappling with the violence embedded in colonialism challenged many people's conceptions of war, peace, and activism. The peace movement fractured and fragmented in its response to anti-colonial liberation, as many activists confronted the fact that the colonial violence faced by these movements could not be met through their earlier pacifist assumptions. While this exposed the limitations of the peace movement and led to its fragmentation, for Goedde, the peace movement achieved a brief triumph in the early 1970s when activists who had been marginalized in grassroots movements gained the ear of policymakers, pushing them toward the policy of détente.

In appreciative and lively reviews, historians Walter Hixson, Talbot Imlay, and Judy Tzu-Chun Wu find much to admire in *The Politics of Peace*, and also find that its range and ambition open up questions on method, periodization, and Goedde's choice of focus regarding historical actors. All appreciate, in the words of Hixson, the book's "transnational focus encompassing the United States, the Soviet Union, East and West Germany, France, Britain, and Japan" and the range and scope analyzing "the efforts of scientists, journalists, publishers, feminists, religious leaders, and intellectuals to break through the Cold War barriers to further a discourse of peace activism." As Hixson succinctly puts it, "While the Soviet Union and the United States waged a disingenuous and often hackneyed peace propaganda, even as they feverishly pursued the weaponry of total destruction, activists at the grassroots level took peace seriously and began to construct a transnational movement."

For Imlay, the book raises important questions about how to integrate the state-centered and the activist-centered worlds of international relations. With Goedde's decision to structure the book so that the three dynamic agents of the book – Cold War policymakers, peace activists, and anti-colonial liberationists – are for the most part analyzed in different chapters, Imlay argues that "What is largely missing from this story is a political process by which a gathering sense of absurdity, together with the clamor of peace activists, affected politics." For Imlay, "the state-centered approach deserves more treatment than it receives." For Goedde, this is a misreading of the relationship between culture and politics; cultural sources reveal the public's progressive disenchantment with deterrence; cultural discourse changed political discourse by caricaturing the absurd foundations of the policy.

Like Imlay, Wu raises questions about the book's periodization and Goedde's decision to end the book with détente and President Richard Nixon's employment of the language of peace. Wu points out that Nixon's policy of Vietnamization may have brought U.S. soldiers home, but it did not end the violence in South East Asia. One could push this point on periodization further with reminders of the 1973 overthrow of the Chilean President Salvador Allende in Chile and Henry Kissinger's (Secretary of State (1973-1977) plunge into southern Africa. Both indicate that détente between the superpowers brought no peace in the conflicts that lay at the intersection of the Cold War and anti-imperialist movements. While Goedde contends that the peace movement foundered precisely because its framing assumptions could not account for these dynamics, a more explicit discussion of periodization may have made the implications for the post 1973 period more clear.

Imlay further questions Goedde's omission of the late 1970s escalation of weapons, including NATO's decision to install Intermediate Nuclear Forces in Western Europe to counter similar Soviet weapons systems. For Imlay these events "re-energized and re-focused the peace movement in Europe" and should be included in a study of Cold War peace politics. Here, Goedde's argument that peace activists provided a model of international cooperation is relevant and might have been strengthened by an assessment of how earlier debates about peace affected the late 1970 and 1980s anti-nuclear and human rights movements.

Finally, as the reviewers collectively, if sometime implicitly, ask, what does it mean to write a global history? For Wu, the book is effective in transnationalizing the Cold War, but remains western-centric, marginalizing third world actors. Imlay questions the use of the term global for a book he views as being focused mainly on U.S. and Western European actors. Both critiques prompt lively and illuminating responses from Goedde, outlining the global imprint of the peace movement and offering methodological insights in terms of framing a global history.

Despite these quibbles, all of the reviewers agree that *The Politics of Peace* is a significant accomplishment, offering unique and enriching perspectives on the peace movement while transforming our sense of the politics and culture of the early Cold War.

### Participants:

**Petra Goedde** is Associate Professor of History at Temple University and co-editor of *Diplomatic History*. Among her other publications are *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender, and Foreign Relations, 1945-1949* (Yale University Press, 2003), *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 2013), *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford University Press, 2012), and numerous articles and book chapters on gender, foreign relations, and cultural globalization.

**Penny Von Eschen** is William R. Kennan Jr. Professor of American Studies and Professor of History and at the University of Virginia. She is author of the forthcoming *Paradoxes of Nostalgia: Cold War Triumphalism, and Global Disorder Since 1989* (Duke University Press, 2021). Other books include *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Harvard University Press, 2004); *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Cornell University Press, 1997); and the co-edited collections: *Contested Democracy: Freedom, Race, and Power in American History*, with Manisha Sinha (Columbia University Press, 2007) and *American Studies: An Anthology*, with Janice Radway, Kevin Gaines, and Barry Shank (Blackwell, 2009).

**Walter L. Hixson** is the author of several books and articles primarily focused on American foreign relations. His books include *Israel's Armor: The Israel Lobby and the First Generation of the Palestine Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 2019); *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and US Foreign Policy* (Yale University Press, 2008); *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (St. Martin's Press, 1997); *Witness to Disintegration: Provincial Life in the Last Year of the USSR* (University Press of New England, 1993); *George F. Kennan: Cold War Iconoclast* (Columbia University Press, 1989); and the textbook

*American Foreign Relations: A New Diplomatic History* (Routledge, 2016). Hixson is distinguished professor at the University of Akron and contributing editor of the magazine *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*.

**Talbot Imlay** teaches in the history department at the Université Laval in Québec (Canada). His most recent book is *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism: European Socialists and International Politics, 1914-1960* (Oxford University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a book project on Clarence Streit and Atlanticist political currents in the United States during and after the Second World War.

**Judy Tzu-Chun Wu** is a professor of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Irvine and director of the Humanities Center. She authored *Dr. Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards: the Life of a Wartime Celebrity* (University of California Press, 2005) and *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Cornell University Press, 2013). Her current book project, a collaboration with political scientist Gwendolyn Mink, explores the political career of Patsy Takemoto Mink, the first woman of color U.S. congressional representative and the namesake for Title IX.

REVIEW BY WALTER HIXSON, UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

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“I like to believe that people in the long run are going to do more to promote peace than our governments,” President Dwight D. Eisenhower declared during a trip to London in August 1959 for negotiations aimed at achieving a nuclear test ban treaty. “Indeed,” he noted, “I think that people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of their way and let them have it.” (189).

As Petra Goedde argues in this pathbreaking transnational history, people had indeed been demanding peace and were by the time that Eisenhower made his comments having an impact as the darker days of the Cold War confrontation receded, albeit at a glacial pace. Focusing on the period from the end of World War Two to the early 1970s, Goedde presents an impressively researched grassroots history of effective peace activism.

Taking peace seriously has not been something Cold War historians have been very good at doing, as they have overwhelmingly mirrored the realist worldview by focusing on armies, treaties, confrontations, and the documents and worldviews of officialdom.<sup>1</sup> By not integrating peace activists into the global history of the Cold War, scholars have reinforced the official marginalization of these people and groups as naïve and unrealistic. As Goedde argues convincingly here, however, the first generation of Cold War peace activists had an impact as they spurred nuclear arms control, détente, and laid the groundwork as well for the modern environmental movement. As a result of their activism, by the early 1970s the discourse of peace had become mainstream to the point that even President Richard Nixon embraced it.

The strength of this book is its transnational focus encompassing the United States, the Soviet Union, East and West Germany, France, Britain, and Japan. Goedde analyzes the efforts of scientists, journalists, publishers, feminists, religious leaders, and intellectuals to break through the Cold War barriers to further a discourse of peace activism. While the Soviet Union and the United States waged a disingenuous and often hackneyed peace propaganda, even as they feverishly pursued the weaponry of total destruction, activists at the grassroots level took peace seriously and began to construct a transnational movement. One of Goedde’s understated arguments here is that peace activists were in this respect more “realistic” than the officials who forged and perpetuated the dead-end politics of war and the arms race.

Unlike conventional Cold War historians, Goedde takes non-state actors seriously as she offers impressive research on neglected individuals ranging from journalist Norman Cousins to revolutionary theorist Frantz Fanon, as well as a wide variety of activist groups including the Communist World Peace Council, the American Friends Services Committee, Women’s Strike for Peace, and the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, among others.

The image of the mushroom cloud, of course, hung over the early history of the Cold War and fired peace activism like no other issue. Goedde recounts how the *Lucky Dragon* incident, in which the Japanese tuna trawler was soaked in radioactive fallout from a Pacific test blast in 1954, underscored the dangers of atomic testing and fueled the politics of peace. As activists pursued the ultimately successful drive for an above-ground nuclear test-ban, they simultaneously laid the groundwork for the nascent global environmental movement.

Given her previous pathbreaking work on gender in a foreign relations context,<sup>2</sup> it is no surprise that Goedde effectively analyzes the gendered aspects of the politics of peace. She shows how groups such as And Another Mother for Peace and Women’s Strike for Peace effectively used their traditional gender roles as mothers and nurturers to promote peace activism

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the three volume-history by Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender and Foreign Relations, 1945-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

while at the same resisting through that very activism the gendered efforts to marginalize women and peace activists as emotional, idealistic, and feckless. Again, as with the takeoff of the environmental movement in the next generation, women peace activists helped to propel the second wave of the feminist movement.

Peace activism shared goals with the decolonization and national liberation movements of the 1960s, even though those movements, following the lead of Fanon, encompassed the use of violence to achieve their ends. Since Colonial repression was violent in its own right, the goal of national liberation and domestic resistance movements was ultimately about the achievement of peace.

Grassroots peace activism played an important part in forging the Limited Test-Ban Treaty (1963), stirring opposition to the Vietnam War, and the emergence of Ostpolitik and détente. As Goedde points out, “Scholarly treatments of the history of détente in the late 1960s and early 1970s have largely ignored the vital contributions of transnational peace advocates to the global discourse on peace.” (223)

Goedde notes that “the theme of the absurd undergirds much of the argument of the book” (11) but she does not pursue this theme as persistently as she might have. The few pages in the final chapter where she homes in on the classic popular cultural representations of the absurd essence of Cold War “realism” and the arms race—discussion of classics such as Joseph Heller’s novel *Catch-22*<sup>3</sup> and the film “Dr. Strangelove”—leave the reader wishing there had been more. That said, popular culture opens up a vast new and quite distinct realm of discourse that could not have been seamlessly weaved into the analysis.

This minor criticism notwithstanding, the strength of this work is that it takes peace activism seriously and shows, through a well-rendered, multi-lingual and multi-archival grassroots transitional history, that it deserves to be analyzed rather than marginalized.

The book is well-organized, clearly written, interspersed with a few well-chosen photographs and typically handsomely produced by Oxford University Press. This study would make for an excellent supplemental reading in foreign relations or Cold War history surveys.

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Heller, *Catch-22* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961).

In writing a global history of the politics of peace during the Cold War, Petra Goedde has set herself an ambitious task. And overall she succeeds with aplomb. Part synthesis and part monograph, the book is likely to become the standard work in the field and to figure prominently on undergraduate and graduate reading lists.

In the introduction, Goedde explains that she seeks to bridge the divide between two disparate scholarly approaches and historiographies: one that is focused on the relations between states, particularly the superpowers but also second tier powers such as Britain, France and the two Germanies, examining the politics of peace through the prism of hard-headed calculations of state interests, the omnipresent suspicions of other states, and the often protracted course of international negotiations on arms controls (reductions and limits); and the other centered on the activities of various peace activists in different countries as well as their transnational interactions.<sup>1</sup> This binary structure brings to mind the model of Akira Iriye, who appears in the acknowledgements, which envisages international relations as operating in two “different worlds”. One world is the familiar one of great-power relations and the other is comprised of “individuals and groups of people from different lands who have sought to develop an alternative community of nations and peoples based on their cultural interchanges...”<sup>2</sup> Writing in the late 1990s, Iriye remarked that these two worlds sometimes overlapped and sometimes did not. Nevertheless, he concentrated exclusively on the second world, whose combined activities he labeled “cultural internationalism,” because it had been relatively neglected by scholars. Goedde, by comparison, proposes to integrate the two.<sup>3</sup> “The diplomatic history of the Cold War and the sociopolitical history of domestic and international peace activism,” she argues, “are inextricably entangled.” (6) Goedde’s approach to integrating the two worlds is to devote separate chapters to each one before examining their interactions in a final chapter that discusses the politics of peace during the 1970s, highlighting the Nixon administration’s pursuit of détente and the Brandt government’s *Ostpolitik*.

The first chapter explores the politics of peace principally through the prism of Cold War, superpower relations. As the chapter title suggests, for Goedde the adage “if you want peace, prepare for war” best encapsulates American and Soviet policy. Basically, the two superpowers both judged that the surest way to ensure peace was through military strength and even superiority in order to deter the aggressive intentions of their rival. In the American case, and Goedde dedicates considerably more attention to American than to Soviet policy, this emphasis on military strength was accompanied by the promotion of freedom as an overriding good (and thus the defeat of Communism became a pre-condition for peace) and by attacks on peace activists who were accused of doing Moscow’s bidding. In this fusion of power politics and the politics of peace, two interrelated elements of Goedde’s presentation are worth underscoring. The first is the widening gap between citizen demands for peace “on both sides of the Iron Curtain” and the posturing of governments, which publicly praised peace while preparing for war. “Political leaders,” she writes in this sense, “masked militant actions with profuse pronouncements of peace advocacy, while at the same time condemning nongovernmental peace advocates as threats to the peace.” (24) One might question the reality of such gap, and not only because what constituted the public in the Soviet

<sup>1</sup> For examples of the first approach, see Campbell Craig and Sergey Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); and Raymond Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 1994 edn.). For the second approach, see Holger Nehring, *Politics of Security: British and West German Protest Movements and the Early Cold War, 1945-1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Lawrence S. Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement through 1963* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); and Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 2-3; also see Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*.

Union presumably differed from that in the United States. Even for the United States, how the public political space was constituted during the Cold War is a vast and tricky subject that complicates stark dichotomies between public and government. The second and related element concerns the concept of the absurd, famously captured by the acronym MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction). In pursuing peace through ever greater military capabilities, which in a nuclear age risked the very survival of human civilization, Goedde forcefully argues that Cold Warriors in the United States and the Soviet Union created an “absurd scenario” devoid of any realism or rationalism. No less importantly, for Goedde this absurdity constituted a structural flaw in the edifice of Cold War politics, one that peace activists would successfully exploit.

The next five chapters of the book explore the politics of peace through the prism of peace activists, adopting multiple perspectives: left political; environmental; religious; gendered; and decolonization. The disproportionate treatment of Iriye’s two worlds of international relations, while perhaps regrettable, does allow for an extensive and probing study of peace activism that constitutes the core of the book. In each chapter, Goedde expertly takes the reader through the Cold War evolution of activism, showing how a priority on peace energized by the existential menace of nuclear weapons gave way to more diffuse positions, whether it was new Leftists who viewed peace as a result rather than a precondition of larger political-structural change; environmentalists, who broadened their concerns well beyond the danger of radiation from weapons testing; the religiously motivated who questioned the pertinence of just war theory or the priority of Judeo-Christian values in the face of nuclear annihilation; second wave feminists, who rejected their predecessor’s understanding of femininity which not only associated motherhood with peace but seemingly ignored other and more pressing issues for women such as workplace equality and reproductive rights; or political activists, who rejected the virtues of peaceful protest and embraced violence, whether in the context of anti-colonial movements in the decolonizing world or radicalized youth movements in Europe and the United States. Goedde persuasively identifies a general dynamic characterized by the fragmentation and dissipation of the post-war peace movement as peace became merely one aspect of larger and variegated programs for political change at home and abroad. Together, fragmentation and dissipation contributed to weakening the peace movement’s political influence, as did the spectacular radicalization of some activists during the 1960s and 1970s.

If the five chapters on peace activists form the core of the book, the final chapter is arguably the most ambitious, for it is here that Goedde seeks to integrate the worlds of power politics and peace activism. She does so by presenting two arguments. One is that the radicalization of elements of the peace movement during the 1960s and into the 1970s helped to boost of credibility of more centrist advocates, particularly within the political establishments of the major Western countries. The second and related argument concerns absurdity. In an intriguing section on “exposing the absurd,” Goedde recounts how popular culture (movies, fiction, published research spoofs) emphasized the absurdity of the Cold War and its confusion of war (or war preparations) with peace, fostering a “rhetoric of peace” that “percolated upwards from the grassroots level of the early 1960s into the halls of government.” (199-209; 190) For evidence of this grassroots upswell, as already mentioned, Goedde points to the policies of *détente* and *Ostpolitik*. In the American case, she highlights the role of peace in John F. Kennedy’s presidential campaign and even more so in Lyndon Johnson’s campaign against Barry Goldwater, which helped to lay the groundwork for Nixon’s embrace of a peace policy. Although Goedde notes the domestic political motives influencing Nixon, the latter’s support for *détente*, however opportunist it might have been, confirms the popularity of peace politics among Americans – a popularity that had much to do with the history of peace activism after 1945.

It is impossible to do justice to the richness of Goedde’s book in a review. But as with all first-rate scholarship, the *Politics of Peace* raises questions. Perhaps the most important one is how to integrate Iriye’s two worlds of international relations: the state-centered and the activist-centered ones? In Goedde’s answer to this question the idea of absurdity is made to do some heavy lifting. Most obviously, it is used to encapsulate the peace policies of the two superpowers and the other nuclear armed powers such as France and Britain. Arguably, the state-centered approach deserves more treatment than it receives. MAD might have been mad but it did have some deterrent effect on Washington and Moscow which, in turn, fostered a certain stability without which *Détente* becomes difficult to imagine. In any case, state-centered peace politics were never solely about a full-out thermonuclear war: there was the issue of battle-field nuclear weapons with limited, if admittedly still horrific, consequences; there was the issue of conventional weapons, which get little mention but whose “effectiveness” was increasing (not to mention their use in the Cold War’s many hot wars outside of Europe); and there were also the variety of



proposals discussed within and between governments aimed at reducing Cold War divides, for example schemes for a demilitarized and denuclearized zone in Central and Eastern Europe that would include a reunited Germany

More importantly for the question of how to integrate the two worlds of international relations is the second way in which Goedde uses the idea of absurdity: as a framework for understanding the stakes of the Cold War whose valence swelled up from the grassroots to reach the corridors of power. What is largely missing from this story is a political process by which a gathering sense of absurdity, together with the clamor of peace activists, affected politics. It is no doubt true that books such as Rachel Carson's *The Silent Spring*, which documented the dangers from nuclear fallout, contributed to "paving the way" for the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963.<sup>4</sup> [91] But there is still a need to show how such ambient factors were translated into national policy and international agreements. The same can be said of Goedde's treatment of U.S. presidential campaigns, especially that of 1964 in which the Democrats cast Barry Goldwater as a menace to peace. To make the argument about the influence of peace activists on politics (national and international), peace politics need to be more firmly rooted in the making of policy within as well as between nations. In the American case, this involves attention to both the executive and legislative branches, as well as to the interaction between the two, and in the French and West German cases, attention to parliaments and party politics. The Soviet Union, of course, poses different challenges to Goedde's model of grassroots pressure.

Another and related question concerns the definition of peace politics. At times, Goedde's analysis seems to drift from a focus on peace, and not simply because, as she persuasively argues, the peace movement's agenda became more diffuse during the 1960s and 1970s. While Goedde offers interesting discussions of radical politics in Western countries during these decades and of anti-colonial liberation movements in the decolonizing world, their pertinence to the politics of peace is not always evident. The same might be said of *Ostpolitik*. The latter was at least as much about German politics (and ultimately about reunification) as it was about peace. True, the two issues were linked: uniting the two Germanies required overcoming Cold War divisions, which in turn involved subduing the military standoff in Europe as East Germany and West Germany were vital members of rival alliances. At the same time, it is not clear that popular clamor for peace in West Germany was what principally motivated Brandt to embark on such a bold and also politically contested course. In addition to identifying a possible path towards German reunification, Brandt arguably sought to change the Cold-War fueled dynamics of the Federal Republic's internal politics that had helped to assure the Christian Democratic Union's dominance since 1949.

Still another question concerns Goedde's focus on the Cold War. In many ways this makes perfect sense given the stakes of peace politics in a world of nuclear weapons. But it might have been worth saying a bit more about the pre-1945 period, and especially about the international disarmament efforts after 1919 that culminated in the failed world disarmament conference in Geneva that ran from 1932 to 1934. To give one example, Soviet proposals in Geneva were rightly viewed by other powers as a propaganda stunt, exacerbating existing suspicions of Soviet motives. More generally, the experience of the conference soured many officials on the feasibility of international agreements on arms limitations, let alone full disarmament, a legacy that carried over into the post-1945 period. Similarly, Goedde might have ended her story later. Despite the book's title, Goedde's analysis closes not with the end of the Cold War but with *détente*, leaving out the recrudescence of Cold War tensions beginning in the late 1970s, one aspect of which was NATO's decision to install Intermediate Nuclear Forces in Western Europe to counter similar Soviet weapons systems – a decision that re-energized and re-focused the peace movement in Europe. It seems odd not to include this period in a study of Cold War peace politics.

A final question concerns Goedde's aim to write a global history given that the book is, in many ways, Western-centric. Much of the analysis focuses on peace activists within the United States and Western European countries. The Soviet Union, by comparison, receives little treatment. Even the decolonized world is largely approached through the eyes of Western actors. Although there is no consensus on what constitutes global history, Sebastian Conrad has helpfully pointed

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<sup>4</sup> Rachel Carson, *The Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962).

to several possibilities.<sup>5</sup> One possibility, a good example of which is Kiran Klaus Patel's study of the New Deal, is to explore examples of a similar phenomenon across multiple countries and regions.<sup>6</sup> For Goedde this would require more attention to the politics of peace in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and the global South. Another possibility, and one which Conrad appears to favor, is to concentrate on global structures – political, economic or other. The Cold War certainly consisted of such a structure (or perhaps structures), but by itself this cannot be enough as it would mean that histories of the Cold War are by definition global histories. Something more is needed, which brings us to Conrad's third possibility: a focus on exchanges, transfers, and borrowings across national and regional boundaries. This appears to be Goedde's approach, as when she discusses the influence of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* on Western audiences or the efforts of American Quakers to act as intermediaries between East German and West German officials. But the book discusses few such cases of interaction across national and other boundaries.<sup>7</sup>

None of these questions and comments detract from what is a very impressive study. Any book as ambitious and accomplished as *The Politics of Peace* leaves the reader wanting more. It is to Goedde's credit that she has written what will not only become the standard work in the field, but that will also stimulate further research.

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<sup>5</sup> Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Kiran Klaus Patel, *The New Deal: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).

REVIEW BY JUDY TZU-CHUN WU, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

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Petra Goedde's book, *The Politics of Peace*, is an important intervention in the study of the early Cold War era. She directs our attention to the significant and complex work of waging peace during an era characterized by heightened and sustained global conflict that threatened world-wide destruction. As the title phrase "politics of peace" suggests, the book analyzes how various individuals (government officials, cultural and religious leaders, as well as grassroots activists) defined peace and proposed diverse strategies for achieving peace. The book offers a rich analysis of the international and transnational debates, particularly within and between the western nations of the U.S., Germany, France, and the U.K. as well as the Soviet Union and Eastern Germany, that illuminate "how a politics of peace evolved" over the course of the 1950s and 1960s (2).

In this well-structured book, Goedde offers thematic chapters that chart change overtime, as she explores how the politics of peace were debated and shaped by various historical actors. She begins by illuminating how national leaders across the Cold War divide weaponized the call for peace while also increasing their own national capacity for war making. The book then turns to non-governmental actors, as they reconceptualized peace in relation to the formation of a new left, the environmental movement, religiously inspired pacifism, and women activists. These efforts to promote peace, however, subsequently came under suspicion as a new generation of activists, inspired by decolonization and Third World liberation, embraced armed struggle and revolution. The book concludes with a return to official state actors, as they selectively adopted/co-opted the language, concepts, and international networks of peace activists to promote détente.

As Goedde points out, her work challenges assumed binaries. Peace, as the study reveals, was not just a goal articulated by idealists. Instead, the desire to prevent world-wide mutual destruction and the mechanisms to achieve peace reflected pragmatic concerns and approaches to politics. Goedde's story also transnationalizes the Cold War, noting both the political divides between the East and the West as well as the efforts to create bridges across the Iron Curtain. *The Politics of Peace* also illuminates how state and non-state actors, women as well as men, cultural producers/intellectuals as well as politicians, conversed, disagreed with, and influenced one another. Overall, the book reveals the complex and contradictory (even absurdist) politics of peace that nevertheless left a rich historical legacy that includes the establishment of international organizations, the creation of novel ideas and cultural texts, as well as the formulation of diplomatic/political solutions.

There is much to admire in this work, which should be assigned and read, especially given the persistent state of war that currently exists in our society. However, some of Goedde's intellectual choices also reveal some limitations to this study. The focus on preventing nuclear war and on deterring Western-Soviet tensions results in less attention given to the Korean and Vietnam Wars as well as to the People's Republic of China. While these "hot wars" and Third World socialist nations are mentioned throughout the book, they tend to be of secondary interest to the main protagonists and political debates that Goedde traces. For example, the "Third World" and most notably Vietnam tend to serve as political foils to the peace activists that are the subject of the book's main body chapters. In fact, the turn towards revolutionary violence, which crystallized through the opposition to the Viet Nam War, challenged the political leadership of peace activists.<sup>1</sup> The marginalization of the Third World also is apparent in the discussion of U.S. President Richard Nixon. The book foregrounds his political platform to bring peace to Viet Nam and his efforts to promote détente. Yet the decision to end the war was forced upon Nixon. Instead, he expanded the bombing in Southeast Asia as well as attempted to provide the military aid to continue the war under the guise of "Vietnamization." As some critiques of this policy pointed out, this might

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<sup>1</sup> Goedde's argument mirrors in some ways the "good 60s/bad 60s" dichotomization between the earlier non-violent forms of protest versus the more radical forms of liberationist and anti-war movements of the late 1960s. Examples include Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1987) and James Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Touchstone, 1987).

have brought U.S. soldiers back home, but it did not stop the violence in Southeast Asia.<sup>2</sup> It is surprising that Goedde did not discuss how Nixon's turn towards détente reflected the doublethink and politics of the absurd that was discussed earlier in the same chapter. The overall impact of the book tends to center whiteness in the historical narrative.

Similarly, *The Politics of Peace* tends to normalize male-centered history. The book features a chapter on gendered peace activism and emphasizes that women actively participated in all realms of the peace movement. However, the other chapters, which are not focused on women and gender, tend to almost exclusively foreground male voices and male agency. Furthermore, these chapters offer minimal analysis of how these individuals understood their gender identity in relation to their peace activism. There seems to be ample opportunity and material to do so, as various countries and movements jockeyed for position to advocate for 'peace' from a position of 'strength' rather than 'weakness.'<sup>3</sup> These perceptions and negotiations of power reflect gendered as well as national forms of anxiety.

Despite these critiques, *The Politics of Peace* is an important work that will speak to multiple audiences. Scholars and students of diplomatic history, the Cold War, peace studies, transnational activism, and women's history will discover a well-written and complex study of how various historical actors understood and marshalled peace as a political practice.

Goedde's book reminds us of the importance of taking peace seriously in a world in which we often take global conflict and militarism as a given. To paraphrase John Lennon, *The Politics of Peace* reminds us all to give peace a chance.

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<sup>2</sup> Yen Le Espiritu, *Body Counts: The Vietnam War and Militarized Refuge(es)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014) and Daryl Joji Maeda, *Rethinking the Asian American Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

## RESPONSE BY PETRA GOEDDE, TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

I would like to thank Walter Hixson, Talbot Imlay, and Judy Tzu-Chun Wu for taking the time to read and assess *The Politics of Peace* and for their thoughtful comments. And I want to thank H-Diplo for staging this roundtable review and giving me the opportunity to engage with the reviewers in what I hope is just the beginning of a broader discourse on how to rethink some of the key concepts that have guided our approach to the study of the Cold War.

As the reviewers noted, the chief aim of the book is to overcome assumed Cold War binaries (realism/idealism, state/non-state, peace/violence, rational/absurd); to integrate non-state and state level politics into a single narrative; to integrate peace advocacy into cold war militarism; and to integrate cultural and political conceptualizations of the cold war era. Hixson's appreciation of a greater emphasis on peace as a serious subject of Cold War history reminded me why I chose the subject in the first place and helped me think through the reviewers' questions about methodology, structure, and scope of the study. I want to address the most important ones here.

First is the question of how to best integrate state and non-state actors into a single narrative. Both Wu and Imlay note the greater focus on state actors in the first and last chapters. I made an editorial decision to set the political stage in the immediate postwar period and illustrate the transformation of that discourse by returning to it in the last chapter about the end of the 1960s and early 1970s. The greater emphasis on the state in these two chapters does not mean that they exclude non-state actors. Even in these chapters I explore the major nodes of intersection between those inside and outside of government, applying a broader conception of international relations history. This approach aligns with Akira Iriye's (invoked by Imlay).<sup>1</sup> Iriye did not conceive of these spheres as 'two worlds' but called for their integration in historical scholarship. The intervening chapters map out the challenges to the political cold war consensus that existed on both sides of the Cold War divide, a consensus encapsulated in the adage 'If you want peace, prepare for war.' Political leftists, environmentalists, religious peace activists, and women's groups constantly engaged with policymakers and reacted to foreign policy, among them the Test Ban Treaty (Chapter 3), the Berlin Wall Crisis (Chapter 4), the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee (Chapter 5), and the Vietnam War (Ch.6). We should not conceive of state and non-state agency as separate worlds. And we should not conceive of culture and politics as separate arenas, either. Rather, they condition each other, with political decisions unfolding within a broader cultural environment that gradually shifted over the course of the 1950s and 1960s. Pressure from non-state actors and changes in the popular discourse transformed the popular and political response to Cold War tensions. While non-state actors and the general public in the liberal-capitalist West were able to express their views more openly and freely than their socialist-Communist counterparts, we know similar sentiments existed in Eastern bloc countries, to which policymakers reacted.<sup>2</sup>

Second is the question of the global scope of the book. Both Imlay and Wu point to omissions. Wu wonders about the lack of attention to the Korean War, to China, and to Vietnam. These omissions are reflections of the global discourse on peace. The Korean War registered in the debates within the World Peace Council at the time, but was met with relative silence elsewhere, something I could have made more explicit. I address the Chinese position in the context of the 1955 Bandung conference, and later in the context of national liberation movements in the Third World. Imlay, in turn, is under the mistaken impression that "much" of the analysis focuses on the United States and Western European countries. We can quibble over the meaning of "much" here, but Soviet and Eastern European peace advocates figure prominently in the book,

<sup>1</sup> Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), and Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> See for instance Timothy Johnston, "Peace or Pacifism?" in *Slavonic and East European Review* 86:2 (April 2008): 259-282. Pia Koivunen, "The World Youth Festival as an Arena of Cultural Olympics," in *Competition in Socialist Society*, ed. Katalin Miklóssy and Melanie Ilic (London: Routledge, 2014). Rüdiger Schlaga, *Die Kommunisten in der Friedensbewegung—Erfolglos?* (Münster: Lit. Verlag, 1991).

including the efforts of peace advocates on both sides of the iron curtain to engage with one another. More broadly, there is an entire chapter about the challenges of decolonization for the global discourse on peace. One of the key points of the book is that the western concept of peace (referring here to the Euro-American perspective, not capitalist perspective of the Cold War era) gets upended when decolonization and national liberation movements are taken into account. Likewise, the book's engagement with Third World liberation movements does not signal a drifting away from a focus on peace, as Imlay assumes, but rather a recognition that national liberation forced pacifists to re-examine their principled adherence to non-violence. The concept of peace continuously defines and redefines itself in relation to war; pacifism continuously reconstitutes itself in relation to violence. Only through the constant engagement with its opposite can we delineate the boundaries and the limits of such concepts as peace and pacifism. The Third World perspective forced peace activists to reckon with and redefine the global meaning of peace.

I appreciate Imlay's reference to Sebastian Conrad's possibilities for writing global history, though most global histories fit into more than one of these categories. So does mine. I apply two of them: first, the exploration of the changing conceptualization of peace across multiple countries and regions; and second, my focus on transnational exchanges of people and ideas. I have argued elsewhere that writing global history does not necessarily mean that one covers every corner of the globe in equal measure. Rather, global history ought to focus on "transformations that transcend local and national boundaries to leave a global imprint."<sup>3</sup> The concept of peace is certainly a transnational concept that left a global imprint. I followed its path wherever it took me, by tracing the building of a politics of peace and the challenges to it. That path led me to all the places Imlay wants me to go: the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the Global South.

Third is the relationship between culture and politics, which is unproblematic for Wu and Hixson. But Imlay asks for more traditional sources, for more attention to legislative processes, presidential campaigns, and, above all, for a *smoking gun* that shows how culture and non-governmental impulses "were translated into national policy and international agreements." But this is not how cultural analysis functions, and it is not how culture informs politics and power. I draw on popular culture, not because I want to show that culture *caused* détente, but to examine the broader cultural context in which this policy change unfolded. I draw on cultural sources in order to show the gradual deterioration of the popular faith in deterrence. This change in the cultural discourse changed the political discourse by revealing--in fact caricaturing--the absurd foundations of the policy. Rather than engaging with this argument Imlay simply retorts that "MAD might have been mad but it did have some deterrent effect on Washington and Moscow which, in turn, fostered a certain stability without which Détente becomes difficult to imagine." Imlay repeats here an unfounded assumption about the effectiveness of deterrence, one that has assumed the status of a truism, even though many contemporaries questioned it, as I document in my book. Scholars have actually yet to produce definitive positive evidence that deterrence worked. Whatever evidence is mustered is circumstantial or negative. Scholars usually point to the fact that the Soviet Union and the United States refrained from going to war against each other as proof that deterrence worked. It is an inverted version of the fallacy *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*: because something *didn't* happen (nuclear war), it must be because of what came before it (deterrence). As historians of the Cold War we need to do better than that. The most tangible and measurable effect of deterrence is that nations stockpiled nuclear weapons; that the arms race caused several crises bringing the two superpowers to the brink of war; and that it created universal fear of a nuclear Armageddon. All of this did not lead to security or stability. Just the opposite; it led to insecurity, instability, fear, and paranoia.

Imlay misinterprets another key part of my argument when he writes that "fragmentation and dissipation contributed to weakening the peace movement's political influence." I argue precisely the opposite, namely that over the course of the 1950s and 60s, peace advocacy evolved into a "politics of peace," which strengthened the influence of key activists as they bridged the gap between non-state and state action and contributed to the development of détente. I went to great length in the book to make clear the distinction between the antiwar movements of the 1960s and the peace advocates of an earlier

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<sup>3</sup> Petra Goedde, "Global Cultures," in Akira Iriye, ed. *Global Interdependence: The World After 1945* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 540.

generation. Those earlier peace activists were increasingly marginalized in the grassroots movements but gained the ear of those in the political establishment who began to echo their arguments on the international stage.

Wu's observation that my focus is less on the Vietnam war itself, and more on how it resonated within the global discourse on peace is correct. The proliferation of national liberal movements in the Global South forced peace advocates to reckon with the limits of their conceptualization of peace. She also correctly points out that "the 'Third World' and most notably Vietnam tend to serve as political foils" for these activists. I found that to be the case particularly among grassroots radicals who thought that bringing the war home by applying urban guerilla tactics in Chicago, Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo would be the most effective form of antiwar activism.

I am also acutely aware of the marginalization of women's voices in the peace movements and sought to make it an important aspect of my book. My decision to concentrate them in one chapter was both an acknowledgement of their marginalization and an effort to give them a strong voice in the book. I address women's marginalization in other chapters as well, for instance in the work of the St. Louis Committee for Nuclear Information (CNI). During CNI's campaign to collect baby teeth from children across the country, women did the work of reaching out to parents, sending in baby teeth, and cataloguing the teeth. Yet credit went to Barry Commoner, who had become the public voice of CNI (84). Wu wanted to see more gender analysis throughout the book, particularly the gendered connotations attached to peace and pacifism in general. In many places I alluded to but did not make explicit the gendered subtext of such phrases as "peace through strength." That does not mean that the book centers whiteness in the historical narrative and normalizes male-centered history, as Wu asserts. This book is about the international discourse on peace. That discourse was dominated by white men in the early postwar period yet was challenged and consequently transformed by women and non-whites. Because women were marginalized in peace organizations, they felt the need to create their own. Political activists in the Global South challenged the western faith in non-violence and peace advocacy, and their challenge transformed the global discourse on peace. To write this history any other way would have meant distorting the historical record.

The reviews challenge me to rethink some of the editorial and structural decisions I made in writing this book. They force me to clarify once more in my head what I want readers to learn from it. They point to opportunities for greater depth, broader scope, and more attention to nuances and local difference. Above all, they demonstrate that there is a lot more work to be done on the subject of peace in global context before, during, and after the Cold War and I hope that more scholars will take up *peace* as a worthy Cold War subject.