

Preface

The discipline we now know of as “peace studies” began shortly after the Second World War. However, the idea of using education to create a culture of peace was only introduced in 1986 (by Filipe MacGregor) and not seriously considered until UNESCO’s International Congress in 1989. The congress led Elise Boulding to write *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of Human History* and to the work within UNESCO and the UN (by David Adams, Federico Mayor, Ambassador Chowdhury, and others) that resulted in the endorsement of a General Assembly resolution to create a culture of peace. Since that time hundreds of organizations and millions of people have become involved. Although UNESCO and the UN are currently only devoting minimum resources to promoting a culture of peace, the Foundation for a Culture of Peace and other organizations in civil society continue to press for its development. The concept has two particularly important merits.

First, the concept has the potential for providing a positive goal that unifies the different social movements of our times—the movements for democracy, gender equality, human rights, peace, tolerance, and sustainable development. It helps to unify these movements because it shows the interconnections between them and reveals how they can be parts of a whole.

Second, since culture involves popular attitudes and norms as well as the norms and values that affect state behavior, the concept can be used to reveal the connection between citizen action and the behavior of governments. Indeed, the UN resolution calls for both citizen and state action, and the idea of building a culture provides a roadmap for how individuals can affect their society.

Both these merits suggest that the concept of a culture of peace should be an important component, perhaps even the central component, for peace studies programs. Certainly, it is important for any program that attempts to relate the behavior of individuals to the peacefulness of the society in which they live.

The concept of a culture of peace is complex. It has many aspects and may be viewed from a number of perspectives. This handbook attempts to cover the full extent of this complexity. It aims to contribute both to the development of the concept and to the development of the cultures suggested by the concept.

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cultures might be assessed and promoted. I want to thank my colleagues at Clark and all those scholars and practitioners who so generously contributed the chapters for this handbook. Royalties will support the University's Peace Studies Program.

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