

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-83914-3 - Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction

Herbert H. Blumberg, A. Paul Hare and Anna Costin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Part I

Introduction

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-83914-3 - Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction

Herbert H. Blumberg, A. Paul Hare and Anna Costin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

1 Trends in peace psychology*

Herbert H. Blumberg

One important cause to which several thousand psychological publications have been devoted is the pursuit of worldwide peace. For the period up to the end of the Cold War, particularly in the 1980s, Blumberg and French (1992) documented about 1,500 publications in this and closely related areas; and – if one uses a rather wide definition of peace psychology – Kramer and Moyer (1991) and Müller-Brettel (1993a), between them, documented a further like amount.

The present discussion is intended, first, to give a broad picture of the field – rather like a town plan that puts locations in perspective but may show little about the architecture of the buildings and the feelings of the people living there. This ‘broad picture’ includes delineation of the contents and growth of the area, and consideration of taxonomic schemes for the relevant research. Following that, however, is an indication of some of the major developments and themes included in the research.

Readers who would like to ‘zoom in’ slightly on the ‘town plan’ should refer to the earlier section ‘The scope, structure and content of this book’, to learn how this book’s topics are clustered. Those wanting information on a fairly specific topic might, of course, also consult the index.

Arguably the two events occurring between 1980 and 2005 that have had the greatest (direct or indirect) impact on Western foreign policy – and possibly on psychological aspects of peace and international conflict resolution – have been the end of the Cold War (and of the Soviet Union)

* This chapter is based in part on: Herbert H. Blumberg (2005, June), Peace psychology before and after September 2001. Presented at the Ninth International Symposium on the Contributions of Psychology to Peace, under the auspices of the International Union of Psychological Science, Portland, OR, USA. The Portland paper was itself developed in part from: Herb Blumberg (2005, February), Overviews of peace psychology. Presented at a Symposium on the Psychology of Peace and Conflict, Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-83914-3 - Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction

Herbert H. Blumberg, A. Paul Hare and Anna Costin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

4 Introduction

and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (as regards the latter, see Roy, 2002).

The range of topics covered in relevant psychological research appears to have remained reasonably constant, but the distribution across topics seems to have shifted. Blumberg (1998) concluded that in the two years after the end of the Cold War – compared with preceding years – peace psychology research showed a significantly different distribution across topics, with the difference due to a number of relatively small changes (between 5 and 10 per cent relative increase or decrease in each of half a dozen areas). For instance, research on attitudes, on conflict resolution and on the interface between psychology and international relations tended to increase.

One main concern, here, is to extend this comparison (using three different bibliographic databases) so as to include both an entire decade following the end of the Cold War and also, separately, the years immediately following 11 September 2001.

Research growth

With modern bibliographic databases one can step back from the details of the subject matter at hand in order to examine the ebb and flow, as it were, of virtually all published research – and to infer whether the growth (or decline) of a field is a function of broad, general trends or of discipline-specific or topic-specific ones.

Table 1.1 displays, for each year band used in the present analysis, the overall number of records in the PsycINFO database and the number of articles retrieved by several types of search.

The number of articles added to the PsycINFO database each year has generally grown over the entire period, a matter that must be taken into account when considering the temporal progression of any particular topic. In general the figures show a substantial progressive increase in the number of records added to the database. The lower figure for 2004, as sampled on 1 January 2005, simply reflects a time lag between a work's publication year and its accession to the database. (Table 1.1 is not broken down by document type; but in the case of books and chapters, which currently comprise over 10 per cent of the records, the figures are also lower for 2003, due to longer time lag for accession, and for years prior to the 1990s, due to database coverage.)

The column headed 'peace-psych.' tracks the frequency of peace psychology publications as defined by the main search strategy described and used by Blumberg and French (1992) and carried forward as a main foundation for the present volume. This included, for example, relevant

Table 1.1. *PsycINFO records showing selected words in title or abstract*

PY	N	peace-psych.	psycholog*	peace	terroris*
1970s	270,247	382 (0.141)	24,504 (9.1)	155 (0.057)	23 (0.009)
1980s	427,259	1348 (0.315)	44,629 (10.4)	398 (0.093)	143 (0.033)
1990s	551,731	1728 (0.313)	63,899 (11.6)	520 (0.094)	165 (0.030)
2000	66,329	247 (0.372)	8,681 (13.1)	100 (0.151)	23 (0.035)
2001	72,165	285 (0.395)	8,654 (12.0)	115 (0.159)	53 (0.073)
2002	79,665	363 (0.456)	9,790 (12.2)	123 (0.154)	309 (0.388)
2003	86,001	387 (0.450)	10,854 (12.6)	136 (0.158)	265 (0.308)
2004	46,696	176 (0.377)	5,618 (12.0)	80 (0.171)	215 (0.460)

Tabulations were done on 1 January 2005 and include accession numbers ending with the second week of December 2004.
PY = Publication year of the work abstracted. ‘peace-psych.’ refers to the search strategy used by Blumberg and French (1992). A star (*) indicates truncation; for example, psychol* includes psychology, psychologists and other words starting with ‘psychol’. Figures in brackets are percentages of the row N.

works on peace and disarmament (about half of the retrievals) plus research on international conflict resolution and also some works concerned with nuclear warfare. There is a large, significant increase between the 1970s and the 1980s and a further significant but smaller increase after the 1990s. These increases are not only in absolute terms but also as a proportion of the (growing) number of records added to the database.

Conceivably such increase might be due simply to PsycINFO broadening its coverage beyond psychology’s ‘usual’ boundaries. However, the column tracking instances of words starting ‘psycholog’ itself in titles and abstracts shows a small progressive significant increase across decades (aggregating 2000–2004 as a prorated ‘decade’). This makes it unlikely that the overall temporal increase in total records, and arguably in those concerned with peace research, would simply reflect a broadening of the databases’ coverage – except possibly insofar as other disciplines (e.g. political science) include more research on their interface with psychology.

As a cruder but possibly more ‘objective’ (or ‘time fair’) index than the composite peace-psych. one, records simply including the word *peace* show a broadly similar temporal increase. That is, for tabulation purposes, use of a composite index that seeks terms such as ‘nuclear war’ might be more comprehensive but also may show more artificial unevenness over time than a search for just the word ‘peace’.

Table 1.2. *Number of SSCI records showing selected words in one or more of: title, keywords or abstract*

Year	N	psycholog*	peace	terroris*
1980s	1,104,518	20,690 (1.87)	2,464 (0.22)	820 (0.074)
1990s	1,347,255	47,127 (3.50)	3,570 (0.27)	720 (0.053)
2000	145,251	6,059 (4.17)	561 (0.39)	89 (0.061)
2001	149,881	6,738 (4.50)	541 (0.36)	145 (0.097)
2002	135,814	6,041 (4.45)	410 (0.30)	465 (0.342)
2003	152,795	6,831 (4.47)	448 (0.29)	482 (0.315)
2004	132,591	5,980 (4.51)	425 (0.32)	623 (0.470)

Notes:
Figures in brackets are percentages of the row N.

Finally, the terrorist threat and, particularly, responses to it represent an important contemporary topic for psychologists concerned with peace and conflict resolution. Table 1.1 indicates that, not surprisingly, work in this area shows a quantum leap starting with 2002. Given typical publication lags for scientific publications, the fact that the increase emerges full-blown in 2002 is itself almost surprising. (The small *drop* from 2002 to 2003 is not statistically significant when one considers only peer-reviewed journal articles – given that books and chapters, which otherwise represent about one-sixth of the psychological works on terrorism, were not yet fully accessed for 2003 in the database.)

Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI): to consider a wider disciplinary base, one can examine progressions in Thomson ISI’s SSCI database of source records. Across decades (counting 2000–2004 pro rata as a ‘decade’) there is a highly significant increase in the total number of records added (‘N’), as displayed in table 1.2.

Records including ‘peace’ not only reflect this increase but – as with PsycINFO – show an increasing proportion of the total records. (This is notwithstanding that SSCI not surprisingly covers fewer psychology journals than PsycINFO and, in particular, has not covered *Peace and Conflict*, the most important journal of peace psychology.) In principle this could reflect some combination of: increased number of journals concerned with peace studies, increased coverage of such journals and increased interdisciplinary interest in relevant phenomena.

Likewise, words starting ‘psycholog’ also show, across decades, an increasing proportion of total records – with potential rationales similar to those for peace.

Table 1.3. Number of WorldCat book records showing selected words

Year	N [‡]	psycholog*	peace	terroris*
1970s	1,212,490	27,786 (2.29%)	4948 (0.41%)	868 (0.07%)
1980s	1,719,615	33,939 (1.97%)	7126 (0.41%)	2303 (0.13%)
1990s	1,875,677	48,619 (2.59%)	9532 (0.51%)	3316 (0.18%)
2000	189,335	5,740 (3.03%)	1106 (0.58%)	542 (0.29%)
2001	171,426	5,378 (3.14%)	1115 (0.65%)	1053 (0.61%)
2002	156,060	5,110 (3.27%)	1172 (0.75%)	2111 (1.35%)
2003	126,005	4,847 (3.85%)	1098 (0.87%)	1703 (1.35%)
2004	75,517	3,650 (4.83%)	746 (0.99%)	1131 (1.50%)

Notes:
Search limited to books known to be held in at least five libraries. A record is included if the given word is among the key words of a record, including title, author, subject and source phrase.
Figures in brackets are percentages of row ‘N’ entry.
N[‡] Shows Library of Congress book records added for the publication year span. This index is broadly comparable to the ‘kinds’ of records of current concern and are tabled rather than acquisitions for the entire database (which includes, for example, more dissertations) or for a major academic university library (such as the University of Michigan, which has a smaller sample size) but with both of which it is nevertheless very highly correlated.

Records concerned with terrorism show the familiar large increase starting with 2002 and this is foreshadowed by a relatively small but significant increase between 2000 and 2001 – i.e. in manuscripts *predating* 11 September 2001.

WorldCat: OCLC FirstSearch’s WorldCat database (which holds over 50 million catalogue records) was used in order to track similar progression of books, including works that are not necessarily academic. As shown in table 1.3, clearly both ‘psycholog’ and peace show the now-familiar progressive increase over the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Books on terrorism, too, show a progressive increase that is especially marked between the 1970s and the 1980s and, of course, more recently reaching a peak (or plateau) in 2002.

Peace psychology taxonomy

The distribution of retrieved records across various categories within peace psychology (as retrieved mainly from PsycINFO) is displayed in table 1.4. The taxonomy used for the categorization and the assignment of records to the various categories have previously been shown to be reasonably valid and reliable insofar as, respectively, (a) there is good

Table 1.4. *Peace psychology: relative frequencies of publications*

Category	Pre-1990	1990s	2002–2004
Introductory			
General	5.3%	2.6%*	3.2%
Interdisciplinary practice			
Government	13.5%	6.4%*	5.5%
Education	4.1%	2.5%*	6.8%*
Primary psychological topics			
Children & adolescents	11.3%	8.0%*	3.9%*
Psychodynamics; mental health	12.0%	4.5%*	5.8%
Attitudes	13.2%	3.8%*	1.9%
Cognition and images	4.6%	6.5%	1.3%*
Peace & environmental studies			
Conflict resolution	7.6%	22.9%*	16.1%*
Peace movements, etc.	5.1%	3.3%*	2.3%
Peacemaking, history	6.0%	7.0%	13.2%*
Middle East	–	5.0%	5.5%
Other specific places	–	9.7%	14.8%*
Sustainable development	–	4.5%	1.6%*
Additional			
Miscellaneous	4.3%	0.2%*	2.3%
Other ^a	12.2%	13.0%	15.8%
Sample size ^b	1591	1080	310

Notes:
For these tabulations, post-1990 records and the bulk of pre-1990 records (from Blumberg and French, 1992) are from PsycINFO.
– indicates ‘not tabulated separately’.
The years 2000 and 2001 are not included in the post-1990s column, and hence omitted from the table, so that the final column reflects only works published after 11 September 2001.
Terrorism is the subject of a separate search strategy as delineated in previous tables.
^a Due to small frequencies, several (nevertheless important) categories from Blumberg and French (1992) are here collapsed among ‘other’. These (with specific frequencies for pre-1990, 1990s and 2002–3, respectively, shown in brackets and with ‘–’ indicating topics not separately delineated) are as follows:

- a. Introductory: Bibliographic (14, –, –);
- b. Interdisciplinary practice: Feminist (16, 21, 9), Philosophy and religion (44, 19, 8) and Anthropology (–, 10, 2);
- c. Primary psychological topics: Aggression (20, 21, 7) and Media and language (–, 17, 6);
- d. Peace studies: Effects of conflict and war (41, 10, 6), Emergency decision-making and Risk assessment (54, 17, 5), Genocide (6, 25, 6) and Sustainable development (–, 49, 5).

Note that most of these categories have large, general literatures in their own right.
^b Approximately 10% of the entries in each column refer to additional categories for multi-coded records. The actual numbers of unique records for each of the columns are 1472, 979 and 274 respectively.
* $p < .01$ for shift from immediately previous column. The decrease for Government and for Peace Movements in the 1990s, however, would not be statistically significant if one adjusts the figures for records ‘moved’ to the three categories newly used in the 1990s.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-83914-3 - Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction

Herbert H. Blumberg, A. Paul Hare and Anna Costin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

concordance between the present system and another one independently developed by other researchers and (b) the records classified into each category have been shown (using computer-generated comparisons) to use discriminable lexicons (Blumberg, 1993).

What changes have been taking place in the field? The sheer number of publications is greatest in the areas related to peace and environmental studies. Work related to conflict resolution continues to provide the largest amount of research, though this has diminished of late partly due to the relative decrease in laboratory studies in 'well-mined' research areas of coalitions, bargaining and interdependence games. Peacemaking, and research related thereto, have burgeoned in the new millennium with (for example) increased instances of United Nations interventions in intercultural – often intranational – disputes. There has been a concomitant rise in peace-psychological research focused on particular, often crisis-ridden locations.

In describing changing patterns of research, it would probably be a mistake to dwell on the smaller shifts over time, even though some of these are statistically significant. Some of the changes, however, seem clearly to merit at least brief comment, as follows: (a) the increasing current recognition of the importance of peace education (which showed a dip following the widespread perceived diminution of nuclear threat); (b) the progressive decrease in research concerned specifically with children and adolescents, largely through the apparent disappearance of widespread concern about how to address children's fears of nuclear annihilation, which continued to some extent into the 1990s – similar considerations are associated with the relative fall, in the 1990s, of concern with government, with psychodynamics and with attitudes (see e.g. Schatz and Fiske, 1992); and (c) the more puzzling recent near-disappearance of relevant explicit research on cognitions and images, which had already previously seemed to be an 'under-researched' area. Of course cognitive processes are combinatorially involved in much of the research in all areas of peace psychology; and a substantial portion of the work that formerly dealt explicitly with cognition and images was concerned with apocalyptic impressions of the aftermath of nuclear war.

Christie, Wagner and Winter's 2 × 2 classification

We have chosen a near-disciplinary taxonomy to organize the present volume because, empirically, it seems to provide the most convenient way of organizing the large volume of research being introduced.

Probably conceptually superior, though, is Christie, Wagner and Winter's (2001) classification, described briefly in the introductory

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-83914-3 - Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction

Herbert H. Blumberg, A. Paul Hare and Anna Costin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

10 Introduction

section on the scope of this book. Their 2×2 scheme distinguishes between direct and structural/institutional violence and, for each, examines psychological aspects not only of the violence itself but also ways of addressing that violence.

Although there is a spectrum rather than a sharp line between them, structural differs from direct violence in that it tends to kill people indirectly (through the effects of poverty and discrimination, for instance), kills slowly, inflicts somatic deprivation rather than injury, and is commonplace, impersonal, chronic, continuous, often difficult to observe and ‘unintentional’ (Christie, Wagner and Winter, 2001: 9).

Likewise, peacebuilding (addressing structural violence) differs from peacekeeping and peacemaking (addressing direct violence) in that it emphasizes social justice, tends to be proactive and ubiquitous, and typically represents a ‘threat’ to the status quo (Christie, Wagner and Winter, 2001: 11).

This scheme cuts across the one used in the present volume largely as follows. Developmental, psychodynamic and mental-health research covers all of the categories but is concentrated on delineations of direct violence. Included are studies of child soldiers (and prevention and rehabilitation), of the impact of war on children, and of children’s attitudes towards hostilities – also, as concerns adults, the ubiquity of conflict, how it can be ameliorated, and studies of people in (or from) war-torn and conflict-ridden areas. The bulk of the papers focusing on the Middle East and other specific places emphasize conflict and crises, but many are also concerned with the three other Christie–Wagner–Winter categories: ameliorating conflict and, going beyond that, depicting and addressing structural violence.

Some of our categories fall rather squarely within the two quadrants for addressing, respectively, direct and indirect violence. The psychological research on government, for instance, could in principle cover any of the quadrants but in fact much of it is concerned with the prevention or diminution of conflict. Work concerned with peace movements and peacemaking, and the majority of papers on conflict resolution, also focus on addressing direct conflict.

The bulk of research on peace education, attitudes, cognition and sustainable development relates to addressing structural violence, that is, to peacebuilding.

Some general considerations

Some of the work in peace psychology seems too ‘general’ to fall within specific chapters of the present volume but does introduce the ‘flavour’

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-83914-3 - Peace Psychology: A Comprehensive Introduction

Herbert H. Blumberg, A. Paul Hare and Anna Costin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

of contemporary research classified into the chapters that follow. Some relatively broad-spectrum work considered in the sections below relates to: the *Transcend* method of conflict resolution, a panoply of contributions, an interdisciplinary note, cognition and government, violence and nonviolent problem-solving, and various other behavioural science contributions.

Conflict resolution

Several approaches have, to a relatively great extent, transcended the categories described above. One of these, appropriately called the *Transcend* method, scans and analyses conflict solutions in order to favour those that provide creative, workable, expeditious solution packages that do more than ‘tidy up’ after a conflict and that moreover are consonant with environmental sustainability (Galtung, 2004: 180). (Galtung ‘founded’ the distinctions between direct and indirect violence.)

Panoply of contributions

In a remarkably concise but thorough (and well-referenced) presentation of psychology’s contributions to peace and nonviolent conflict resolution, Wessells (2000) considers war, violence and conflict mitigation and resolution. Although war between nations has traditionally emphasized power struggles, resource scarcity and environmental degradation amplify social pressures that lead to ethnopolitical wars. Particularly with the ‘splintering of states’ in the post-Cold War era, damaged intergroup relationships foster a host of negative psychological dynamics, with objective elements (such as oppression) and subjective ones (such as Serbs and Croats each selectively perpetuating cultural memories of being victimized). Perceptual biases and manipulated public opinion (such as the fomenting of enemy images) exacerbate situations.

Psychological processes also underpin an array of violence, from interpersonal to intercultural, some of it following from the structural violence of deprivations and of cults of sexism and militarism.

Legal systems, according to Wessells, provide a limited but useful means of mitigating conflict at all levels from interpersonal to international. Beyond law are a variety of situation-dependent tools such as diplomacy, negotiation, mediation and arbitration, interactive problem-solving, cooperation on superordinate goals, and graduated unilateral initiatives. (These are described elsewhere in the present volume.) Although formal agreements may ‘manage’ a dispute, conflict resolution usually requires changed relationships (such as may be achieved by interactive problem-solving workshops – see below). ‘Psychology also