

An emotions agenda for peace: Connections beyond feelings, power beyond violence

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Abstract

While the ‘emotion turn’ has emerged as an influential analytical lens in International Relations (IR), there is not yet a well-developed understanding of the role that emotions play in facilitating or inhibiting peace. This special issue of *Cooperation and Conflict* engages with the analytical potential of emotions and the promise this perspective holds for innovative analyses of peace processes and peacebuilding. To demonstrate the political significance of emotions to peace, the contributors explore how emotions shape the bounds and boundaries of actors and alliances committed to fostering peaceful societies. This introductory article offers possible avenues to leverage the analytical potential of IR’s emotions agenda to engage with peace and peacebuilding. First, we discuss how the emotions agenda contributes to the conversation about what peace is and should look like. Second, we argue that emotions can help us to articulate peace as an embodied knowledge of complex socio-political relations and power dynamics. To visualize ‘peace’ without the permanent contrast of violence, we mobilize this perspective to illuminate actors’ practices and the constraints they face in the pursuit of a peaceful political order. Third, we discuss what an emotions agenda for peace might entail for critical and constructive peacebuilding studies.

Keywords

critical peace, feminism, International Relations, peacebuilding

While the ‘emotion turn’ has emerged as an influential analytical lens in International Relations (IR), there is not yet a well-developed understanding of the role that emotions play in facilitating or inhibiting peace. Building on the theoretical advancements offered by the ongoing intellectual engagement with emotions in IR, this special issue hopes to contribute to the conversation about how the emotion turn can inform analyses of peace.

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Its contributors are united by a belief that emotions fundamentally shape how peace is imagined and enacted. To recover the political significance of emotions to peace, the contributors explore how emotions shape the bounds and boundaries of actors and alliances committed to fostering peaceful societies.

In this introductory article, we first discuss the broader ‘emotions turn’ in IR with a particular focus on the theoretical and methodological innovations developed by the interpretivist community. Some of the key scholars who launched the most influential conversations in the field are included in this special issue (Roland Bleiker, Emma Hutchison, Renée Jeffery and Simon Koschut). In the second section, we offer a few possible avenues to leverage the analytical potential of the IR’s emotions agenda to engage with peace and peacebuilding studies. We argue that emotions can contribute to ongoing and unresolved debates over what peace is and should look like. The second research avenue we collectively explore is how emotions can contribute to articulate peace as an embodied knowledge of complex socio-political relations and power dynamics. To visualize ‘peace’ without the permanent contrast of violence we aim to illuminate actors’ practices and the constraints they face as they try to collectively envision and enact a peaceful political order. Finally, we consider the possible contribution for a critical agenda of peacebuilding. We argue that the theoretical perspectives developed in the context of the broader ‘emotions turn’ in IR can support and inspire scholars keen on exploring how to constructively engage the concepts of peace and peacebuilding at a time that communities worldwide try to redefine global relations and renegotiate international political priorities.

The emotions turn in IR

In 2000 Neta Crawford published ‘The Passion of World Politics’. She did so with the understanding that her proposition to regard emotions and emotional relationships as pertinent analytical concepts would be met with intense scepticism by the realist and rationalist thinkers in her field. Although foreign policy analysis and political psychology scholars had long discussed the influence of perceptions and beliefs on decision-making (Jervis, 1976; Jervis et al., 1989), Crawford’s (2000) article suggested a much more radical perspective. She did not merely propose to broaden IR’s research agenda. Rather, she declared that its core theories and perspectives on world politics were likely skewed due to the field’s neglectful treatment of the role that assumptions about emotions played in conceptualizing actors’ purportedly ‘rational’ behaviour. Following Crawford’s decisive conceptual ‘bush clearing’ the research agenda centred on emotions has moved (first slowly then increasingly decisively) through three distinct stages: scholars first established their relevance for the analyses of world politics. Then, they worked on refining their theoretical and methodological perspectives. Finally, they applied them to empirically investigate increasingly diverse topics.

The possibility for such a broad embrace of the field rests on the conceptual groundwork undertaken by several key thinkers, who took on the challenge to reconcile the emotions agenda with IR scholars’ varying ontological and epistemological commitments. McDermott (2004) and Mercer (2005, 2006, 2010), for example, revisited the neuroscientific and psychological roots of rational choice theory and convincingly questioned the presumed primacy of cognition. Their work opened the space for scholars to

engage with desires, belief formation and information appraisal from a new perspective. Scholars committed to positivist models of social scientific inquiry did evidently not abandon the parsimony of rational choice theory. However, new insights into the interplay of emotion as comprising of ‘cognition, evaluation, motivation, and feeling’ (Ben-Ze’ev, 2000: 48) allowed them to leverage emotion research in psychology and complexify the model’s core elements. Studies on the dynamics behind diplomatic engagements, negotiations, and strategic interactions have all significantly benefitted from adopting an extra-disciplinary approach. New, emotionally refined concepts of how actors seek and evaluate information allowed scholars to revisit and reconsider problems and puzzles that were left unanswered by more traditional realist or rationalist analysis (Mercer, 2013; Petersen, 2011; Wong, 2016, 2020).

Constructivists and other interpretivist leaning scholars were less apprehensive of a ‘fuzzy’ and ‘ephemeral’ concept-like emotions (Bleiker and Hutchison, 2008; Saurette, 2006). Still, integrating the perspective emotions offer into these research agendas has not been without its own ontological challenges. To further debates over the discursive and ideological foundations of global ideas and their power to shape actors and identities, constructivist scholars grappled in particular with how to capture the social nature of emotions (Ross, 2006, 2013). Early research tapped into the same neuroscientific advancements that had allowed rationalist scholars to test the boundaries of their theoretical models to overcome the restrictive compartmentalization of thinking and feeling (Jeffery, 2014a, 2014b; Ross, 2006). Simultaneously, seminal work in sociology (Goffman, 1959; Hochschild, 1979) or philosophy (Austin, 1975) provided emotions scholars with the core concepts necessary to assess the normative and performative power of emotions in world politics (Fierke, 2012; Hall, 2015; Koschut, 2014). Over the past two decades, the emotions agenda in IR has been patiently and successfully advanced. With calls to supplement ‘social scientific approaches with modes of analysis stemming from the humanities’ (Bleiker and Hutchison, 2008: 117), suggestions on how to theorize ‘the concrete processes through which seemingly individual emotions either become or are at once public, social, collective, and political’ (Hutchison and Bleiker, 2014: 496–497; Ross, 2013), and ongoing efforts to refine the criteria for the study of emotions through discourse analysis (Koschut, 2018a, 2020; Koschut et al., 2017), key thinkers like Bleiker, Hutchison, Koschut and Ross have offered a broad range of theoretical and methodological innovations to researchers keen on exploring the emotional dimensions of world politics (Hutchison, 2016). As a result, emotions are no longer a niche topic. Instead, IR scholars have broadly and enthusiastically embraced this analytical mode of inquiry. Ontological and theoretical challenges evidently remain. The perhaps most crucial question among them: how should we integrate bodies – the living and the dead – into the theories of International Relations and capture the political relevance of the emotions that move them and the ones they evoke (Himadeep, 2012: 5; Hutchison, 2019; Hutchison and Bleiker, 2014: 503–505; McDermott, 2014; Mercer, 2014: 520)? Yet rather than dividing the field, diverging views on this and other matters have only served to animate creative and constructive intra- and interdisciplinary dialogues. As a result, debates over the analytical perspective offered by emotions will continue to transcend and transform the boundaries of the discipline and inspire scholars to empirically investigate the power of world politics with nuanced and multifaceted case studies.

Emotions and peace/building

Peace beyond feeling?

The contributions in this special issue leverage the analytical potential of IR's emotions agenda to engage with the concept of peace. To scholars aware of the many heated debates that have been waged over the analytical depth and utility of 'peace', this proposition might sound like a tautological if not reductive task. After all, there are few (if any) agreed upon definitions of peace beyond common assertions of the idea's emotionally evocative quality. To grasp the problems and pitfalls that are inherent in this perspective on peace, Galtung's (1969) early attempt to reconceptualize the idea remains instructive. While he wrote it with the goal to provide more analytical quality and cohesion to the otherwise amorphous renderings of 'peace' as a harmonious or tranquil state of being, his seminal article remains expressive of the discipline's deep-seated scepticisms vis-à-vis the idea. In the opening paragraphs, Galtung (1969) first proclaims his dismay about the frequently murky and manipulative political uses of 'peace'. He briefly concedes that such evocations 'may in itself be peace-productive, producing a common basis, a feeling of communality in purpose that may pave the ground for deeper ties later on' (p. 167). For more definitory substance, however, he then quickly turns to a discussion of violence.

Decades later, an anniversary issue celebrating the *Journal of Peace Research* that Galtung co-founded concluded that there had since been few innovations in the discipline's historic struggle over the idea's substance (Gleditsch et al., 2014). Academic debates may no longer be overtly animated by the attempt to shield serious, scientific engagement with the realities of international cooperation from the meddling of dreamy idealists who see 'the world through rose-colored glasses' (Walter Isard quoted in: Gleditsch et al., 2014: 148). Yet, in direct comparison with conflict or violence, the concept of peace is still perceived as providing an intellectually inferior take on world politics. Continued demands for 'hard-nosed peace research' (Bruce Russett and Marguerite Kramer quoted in: Gleditsch et al., 2014: 146) and scientifically rigorous investigations into the origins of conflict and conditions of peace suggest that the positivist dominance of the field is largely to blame for this bias. However, we hold that the gendered and affective underpinnings of the concept are much more crucial determinants of the analytical depth and value that scholars assign to 'peace'.

This stance is shared by several other recent research projects that aim to recover and legitimize alternative and new visions of peaceful orders. Scholars from the Varieties of Peace programme, for example, have proposed a relational understanding that focuses on peace 'in terms of *relationships* between actors, which can be actors of different types and at different levels' (Söderström et al., 2021: 485). This understanding recognizes that peaceful relationships are 'made up of subjective beliefs, emotions and attitudes about the other, as well as an understanding of the relationship itself' (Söderström et al., 2021: 493). Focusing on peaceful relationships necessitates moving 'the study of peace away from battles, armed actors and elite negotiations, instead pointing to the everyday as the site where peace is made, lived, and breached' (Söderström and Olivius, 2022: 413). While arguing that peace scholars 'need to start taking seriously' the roles of emotion and affect, scholars from the programme acknowledge that 'studying emotions and affects is

difficult', given that the 'phenomenon of concern exists at a subjective, corporeal and often non-linguistic level' (Bramsen and Austin, 2022: 463), and therefore, several unanswered questions remain (Söderström and Olivius, 2022: 430).

Many of these observations are in line with feminist efforts to reject the dominant 'state-centric, neoliberal, neo-colonial and patriarchal concept of peace' (Smith and Yoshida, 2022: 1). As a body of scholarship that has long noted the necessity to take emotions into account (Sylvester, 2011: 687), this work provides insights into the tactics of oppression and marginalization that inhibit the necessary diversification of cultures and languages of peace. Importantly, this scholarship shows the extent to which alternative models of peaceful orders rely on the explicit recognition and appreciation of feminist contributions to the theory and practice of peace (Lyytikäinen et al., 2021; Wibben, 2021).

Our special issue agrees with these scholars. We argue that the intimate association of peace with emotion plays a significant role in fixing its somewhat maligned status as an impossibly vague analytical concept. Indeed, the often-dismissive portrayal of peace as a seductive, yet ultimately vapid idea draws its assertive character from the same biased presumptions that relegated thinking and feeling to separate and distinctly gendered spheres.

Peace as an emotional practice

It is beyond the scope of this Special Issue to engage with the genealogy of peace from an emotional point of view. Leveraging the epistemological and ontological advancements from International Relations research on the political power of emotion, however, can still help us to embrace the emotionality of peace for the purpose of finding its substance. To move beyond the thinking/feeling divide and assess the complexities of political decision-making without the constraints imposed by the rational actor model, IRs scholars have accepted emotions as relational and socially embedded phenomena. As emotions are triggered by changes and alert us to changes that are relevant to us, emotions are intimately and actively involved in shaping human connection. The 'capacity to have feeling' as the neuroscientist Ledoux (1963: 125) famously observed 'is directly tied to the capacity to be consciously aware of one's self and the relations of oneself to the rest of the world'. Rather than being of an inferior or less precise nature, IR scholars have shown that emotions can relate a truth and an embodied knowledge of complex power dynamics that is otherwise difficult to grasp and even more difficult to communicate.

As such, this special issue shares the conviction that it is necessary to consider the generation, expression, and perception of emotions in their social context to describe and engage with their impact on political and social dynamics – something that is at the centre of the argumentative proposition of many contributions to this special issue. Emma Hutchison, Roland Bleiker, Josephine Bourne and Young-ju Hoang highlight the importance of attending to culturally embedded knowledge and practices to build a sustainable peace. Their call to 'decolonise emotions' is motivated by the recognition that alternative traditions and understanding of peace-making tend to be marginalized and delegitimized by conceptions of peace that are largely Western and colonial in nature.

Katrin Travouillon draws attention to the ‘emotional environment’ of international interventions. Through an engagement with the transitional justice literature, she shows how the politicization and socialization of negative emotions in the context of guided transitions support the perpetuation of liberal rationalities and approaches to peacebuilding.

Joanne Wallis attends to the political nature of emotions, shaping identities and practices of interventions. She shows how micro-scale approaches help us understand how emotions of individual interveners are experienced and practised; in turn challenging and (re)constituting social structures around them. Catherine Goetze similarly turns to the micro-level to understand how the use of family metaphors helps people to visualize and communicate the emotional dimension of conflict and peace, thus evoking imaginaries associated with specific political or social visions.

Simon Koschut analyses how rituals, and ritual failures more precisely, generates a sense of community (‘we-feeling’) among NATO members, thus offering another unique contribution on how security communities are built and sustained by collective feelings (see: Koschut, 2018b). Chris Agius demonstrates how perceptions of the political value of neutrality for peace are informed by discourses fraught with biased assumptions about gender and emotionality. Renée Jeffery discusses specifically the collective form of trauma in the context of peacebuilding practices, and how arts can assist societies to recover from the trauma of violence and contribute to the establishment of a sustainable peace.

Insisting that we cannot reduce human behaviour and interactions to their instrumentality is of crucial importance to visualize ‘peace’ without the contrast of violence. Along with other feminist scholars, Campbell (1994: 148) had rightly called into question ‘whether the language of rationality, applied to the emotions, is not at least an impoverished, at most a politically loaded, level of normative assessment’. This observation provides pertinent guidance for peace researchers. Relegating the active struggles of peaceful communities to remain ‘nonviolent’ solely to the domain of ‘conflict prevention’, for example, misses the emotional tonality and colour that gives shape and meaning to these interactions as a practice of love and care (Hartnett, 2022; Hutchings, 2000; Krause, 2021; Krystalli and Schulz, 2022; Richmond, 2009: 574–575; Vaitinen et al., 2019). Understanding emotionality as an active stance of social observation and embeddedness can also help us to move beyond the seemingly bland universality of peace. Just as distinct actors and their specific interests, histories and forms of interaction give rise to conflict and violence, so do stable social networks rely on the ethics and commitment of knowledgeable people who constantly weave and adjust the threads of human connection that help maintain this equilibrium that we call peace.

The contributors to this special issue draw on new theoretical perspectives and case studies to demonstrate how the particularities of (political) communities influence defensible and desirable forms of peace. Hutchison, Bleiker, Bourne and Hoang present novel conceptual and empirical work on the links between affect and colonization. Their discussion of collective, transformative approaches to conflict and suffering in Korea and the Malulungal Nation of the Torres Strait demonstrates the possibilities inherent in recognizing and pushing the boundaries of the emotional cultures that define how peace can be visualized and experienced. Nicole Wegner, for her part, shows how nostalgic

connections of non-Indigenous Canadians to their military's activities inform their vision of a peace that may, paradoxically, rely on the sustenance of violence. Her article does therefore highlight the importance of scrutinizing the affective dimension of such shared normative commitments, to make the agendas promoted under the banner of peace more transparent.

Wallis examines how interveners feel (both emotionally and bodily) when performing peacebuilding, thus revealing subject positions and approaches to the practice at hand, including a general distancing from the local community. Travouillon similarly scrutinizes how peacebuilders collaboratively contribute to the reproduction of their preferred order (mostly liberal in nature) through the concept of uptake, borrowed from feminist scholarship and applied to understand the limitations in how actors engage with emotions on the ground. Travouillon discusses the intersections of emotions and power in liberal interventions to generate a sensitivity for the consequences of these entanglements in efforts to create valid alternatives to the liberal peace. Agius revisits the gendered history of the concept of neutrality, underlining what gendered and emotional framings of 'being neutral' entail in the context of war and peace. Her article demonstrates why the emergence and viability of alternative models of peaceful worlds also rely on challenging the central role accorded to masculinist perspectives on global politics.

Goetze develops an analysis of the family metaphors in acceptance speeches by Nobel Peace prize laureates, arguing that this enables us to situate the imaginary of the peace the interlocutor tries to convey, without having to get into the more disputed nature of the peace itself. This becomes apparent through the adoption of a gender lens to apprehend these discourses, thereby dissolving the ambiguities of family metaphors. If Jeffery offers a unique contribution on the power of arts-based approaches to overcome conflict-related trauma, she also questions in her own terms the romanticization of these approaches, which often lead to hyperbolic accounts of how arts-based approaches can magically transform societies.

The peace we can glean through this lens is neither as passively complacent nor as obliviously detached from the 'real world' as the idea's caricaturist illustration as something akin to a 'Paradise' suggest ('a nice place – but it's not obvious what you do there except float around in white garments').¹ Instead, peace emerges as an active desire for and an appreciation of change that finds its form and substance in a simultaneity of imagination and enactment. As a global, embodied and deeply emotional practice, peace is full of struggles that intimately bind individuals to political processes and projects of national and international significance.

Where now for the emotional peace?

Suggesting such an emotionally committed conceptualization of peace is decidedly not without its risks. To chart the nature of these risks (and search for mitigation strategies), it is useful to turn to the research agenda of critical peacebuilding scholars. In her early call for an emotional turn in IRs, Crawford (2000: 116) provided them with an intriguing prompt when she observed that it is 'no wonder that postconflict peacebuilding efforts too frequently fail and wars reerupt because peace settlements and peacebuilding

policies play with emotional fire that practitioners scarcely understand but nevertheless seek to manipulate'. Yet, among the groups of academics so prominently addressed by her agenda-setting article, peacebuilding scholars were the only ones to never respond. We propose to read the reluctance of critical peacebuilding scholarship to engage more explicitly with emotions stemming from an informed scepticism rather than an intellectual oversight. Indeed, a closer look at the core issues that the discipline engages with, provides us with two important clues as to why peacebuilding research is currently trailing instead of leading the broader trend in IRs scholarship (Travouillon, 2021).

First, it is important to recognize that critical peacebuilding scholars have set themselves the preeminent goal of challenging 'Western rationality, with its diktats of universality and modernisation' (Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013: 763). To live up to this task, much of the community's intellectual groundwork has been dedicated to developing theoretical and analytical perspectives that can capture the complexities of interactions and practices in transnational intervention spaces. To encourage the assessment of positions and perspectives that transcend rather than fix simplistic binaries (international/local, micro/macro, liberal universalism/cultural relativism), its scholars have early on embraced innovative empirical and methodological approaches. As such, one might say, critical peacebuilding scholars are *already* doing the analytical work that the emotions agenda facilitated for International Relations at large. Second, critical peacebuilding scholarship has found its early footing in International Relations by challenging Western presumptions of superiority and the standardized, top-down intervention policies they informed. In this context, much of the criticism was targeted at the one-dimensional, stereotypical roles assigned to the actors involved in making or breaking a liberal peace. Here, the perceived 'emotionality' of people in so-called post-conflict societies emerged as a common theme that scholars had to grapple with to insist on the value of developing more inclusive, localized and representative approaches to peacemaking.

To counter dominant (orientalist) views of post-conflict societies as comprised of 'hapless individual[s]', incapable of self-government without Western governments and international organizations stepping in as 'trustee[s] and guardian[s]' (Helman and Ratner, 1992), for instance, peacebuilding scholars insisted that debates over suitable intervention policies must instead depart from an emphatic acknowledgement of people's agency and resilience (Chandler, 2015; Lemay-Hébert, 2011; Richmond, 2012; Richmond and Mitchell, 2012). By persistently drawing interveners' attention away from the 'dysfunctional attitudes' of the people and their leaders to the complex structural, economic and political causes of conflicts, peacebuilding scholars contributed to eroding the self-evidence of prevalent, legitimizing beliefs about the problematic 'nature' of people in societies affected by violence (Hughes and Pupavac, 2005; Pupavac, 2002, 2004). When it became obvious that liberal interventionism had overwhelmingly failed to deliver on its promises, peacebuilding scholars rejected simplistic patterns of explanation that tried to tie these outcomes to the ill-will of self-interested 'spoilers' set on patiently undermining interveners' more compassionate and democratic vision and agenda. Instead, the results of decades of empirical research on diverse perspectives and practices on the micro-level have now paved the way for a discussion that revolves around the necessity for alternative models of peace and peacebuilding to emerge (Bargués et al., 2023; Wallis, 2017; Wallis and Richmond, 2017).

Most of this critical work is committed to feminist, (neo)Marxist, Foucauldian or post-colonialist viewpoints on power. With few exceptions (Mitchell, 2011), peacebuilding scholars did not draw explicitly on the emotion literature to develop their arguments. Yet, from their chosen perspective it is arguably impossible to overlook the extent to which essentializing assumptions about emotions like greed, fear or anger partook in creating stereotypical distinctions between ‘locals’ and ‘internationals’ and their respective potentials. Emotions made these roles and social categories easy to think, easy to communicate and act upon with authority.² If anything, their critical observations of intervention dynamics did therefore teach peacebuilding scholars to approach ‘emotion’ with caution, rather than draw them more intimately into their own agendas.

Our own call for an emotional perspective on the politics of peace is conscious of this legacy. Indeed, we think that a careful scepticism of all knowledge claims related to emotions should remain central to it. In this regard, Bleiker and Hutchison provide us with an important reminder. They asserted that ‘[representations are] in some sense, all we have when it comes to understanding emotions [as] one person can never really know how another person feels’ (Hutchison and Bleiker, 2014: 505). This statement alerts us to the stakes involved in reading, interpreting, and politicizing the emotions of ‘others’. Intervention contexts are transient spaces, marked by uneven hierarchies, and multiple overlapping practices of translation. To capture how actors situate themselves vis-à-vis a situation that is itself in flux, it is important to draw on theories and methodologies that can make this fluid and uncertain context from which knowledge claims originate transparent. It means to remain sensitive to the fact that ‘meanings resulting from emotional connotations are often sociocultural constructs and may thus resonate differently from culture to culture’ (Koschut et al., 2017: 484) and that public qualifications of people as angry or fearful are never ‘innocent descriptors but products of often intensely political processes of framing, projection, and propagation’ (Hall and Ross, 2019: 1357). Rather than simply turning our gaze outwards, peace practitioners and scholars should therefore remain committed to the question of how emotions enter our own research and policy agendas (what they do for ‘us’) and how they consequently shape the practices of cooperation we engage in and advocate for.

Conclusion: an emotions agenda for peace

Over the past decade, scholars have repeatedly and with increasing urgency raised the question of how to respond to the challenges posed by the failures of the liberal peace intervention model. This critique is fully aware of the fact that any suggestion for alternatives risks becoming prescriptive, reductive, or ‘yet another “hegemonic agenda”’ (Hunt, 2023; Richmond, 2009: 573; Richmond and Mac Ginty, 2015). The contributions in this Special Issue show that there is potential for the development of an emotions agenda for peace. Our proposition is first and foremost a call to engage critically and productively with the active and embedded emotionality of peace. Indeed, to imagine and to communicate the remaking of International Relations in pursuit of more grounded and inclusive forms of human connection, we do not have to venture outwards to try and find the substance of peace in an abstract or idealized world ‘beyond violence’. Instead, we can

engage more systematically and honestly with the emotionality of our own visions for change and scrutinize how they move us to engage with others. Another possibility is to revisit key topics of concern in the critical peacebuilding literature that tentatively gestured towards the role of emotions, yet ultimately chose to theorize power relations through other concepts. We do, for instance, see potential in substantiating the implications of emotions in shaping the social relations that were under consideration in defining ownership as a form of attachment (Lemay-Hébert and Kappler, 2016), resilience and agency as tied to complex, adaptive life forms that can develop “natural”, ‘innate’ or ‘intuitive approaches’ to governance (Chandler, 2014: 115), or an emancipatory peace (Richmond, 2009) as intimately intertwined with questions of care and empathy – not, as Hutchings (2000: 115) put it so brilliantly, as a mere matter of expressing that one “‘feels for’ another’s pain”, but by truly ‘assuming an attitude of responsibility for it and *therefore* trying to do something about it’.³

The contributions demonstrated that a paternalistic liberal peace derives much of its complacency from deeply held assumptions about emotions. An explicit engagement with emotions as politically, socially and historically embedded phenomena, we hope, may therefore support the development of a transformative intellectual and practical approach to peace, grounded in and truly committed to an ethics of curiosity, humility and care.

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Notes

1. Gleditsch et al. (2014: 149) related that this was a joke circulating among peace researchers in the 1960s.
2. This observation borrows from Stoler (2007: 272) who stated that those studying colonial archives observed ‘the practices that privileged certain social categories and made them “easy to think”’.
3. Emphasis ours.

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