

PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND  
SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP  
IN THE 21ST CENTURY

*In all my years as a public servant, I have always looked for guideposts to help me better understand a fractured world. This outstanding interdisciplinary volume provides an excellent roadmap to piece together the mosaic of peace, reconciliation, and social justice not just from a leader's perspective, but from the voices and actions of followers. This book forms an essential praxis through the lens of gender, diversity, spirituality, inclusiveness to better deal with global restoration of a more beloved community.*

Ambassador Eric M. Bost (Ret), Former US Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, Deputy Director of the Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture and Development at Texas A&M University

*In this ambitious interdisciplinary volume, the authors seek to understand the concept of peace and reconciliation through leadership and followership theories and practice from the current generation's perspective in the midst of today's turbulent and unsettling times. The immediate need for this global analysis of peace and reconciliation from a trans-disciplinary lens is crucial. The authors of this volume provide a solution through the concept of decolonization by first giving a voice to those most impacted by conflict and then by listening to those voices in order to bring about social justice.*

Raida Gatten, Associate VP of Academic Affairs,  
Woodbury University

*At a time when the global order founded by liberal democracies is in retreat, beset by authoritarian rivals on one side and failing states on the other, academia might be ready for the tonic of a "peace and conflict studies" approach to the study of leadership – leading to an understanding of the moral, spiritual, and political roles of leaders in healing a divided society. This book lays the groundwork.*

Michael Woo, Dean, College of Environmental Design,  
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

*Social oppression, civil war, and state genocide are often a direct product of leadership failures, but recovery from them can be facilitated by other leaders and even followers who appreciate and exercise the powers of truth telling, community reconciliation, and national rebuilding. H. Eric Schockman, Vanessa Alexandra Hernández Soto, and Aldo Boitano de Moras have gathered a host of penetrating and informative accounts of just that in Peace, Reconciliation, and Social Justice in the 21st Century, which serves as both an inspiration and a roadmap for those whose wish to apply their own leadership to recovering and coming back from human calamities.*

Michael Useem, Professor of Management, Wharton School,  
University of Pennsylvania, and the author of  
*Leadership Dispatches: Chile's Extraordinary  
Comeback from Disaster.*

*An excellent view of the study of leadership and a just world order, the book provides a trans-disciplinary approach to issues of equity, inclusion, and trust. The building of sustainable peace is basic to the text as each chapter examines the themes of reconciliation, community building, international law, and social justice. This book is important and I give it my highest recommendation.*

Dr June Schmieder-Ramirez, Chair, PhD in  
“Global Leadership and Change Chair of  
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# PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THE ROLE OF LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

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Emerald Publishing Limited  
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2019

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**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83867-196-9 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-83867-193-8 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-83867-195-2 (EPub)

ISSN: 2058-8801 (Series)



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*We dedicate this volume to the peacebuilders, social justice activists and survivors of mass atrocities around the world. Your courage and inspiration give us hope for the future.*

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This endeavor has been a labor-of-love from the start and we were blessed by the amazing synergies of efforts of many individuals who provided unconditional support.

The editors owe a huge debt of eternal gratitude to Debra DeRuyver, Communications Director of the International Leadership Association (ILA). Debra is really the backbone for ILA/Emerald publications and she was with us every step of the way – offering advice and critique and overall was the consummate professional cheerleader for the editorial team. We also wish to thank the staff at ILA for their unflinching support and faith in our work. Megan Scribner also worked closely with us and kept us on task. Kudos go out in particular to Cynthia Cherry, CEO; Shelly Wisley, COO; and Bridget Chisholm, Director of Conferences. They and the rest of the ILA staff, interns, and volunteers were the cementing blocks and foundation that enabled us to construct the architecture of this book. An additional shout-out goes to Charlotte (Charlie) Wilson of Emerald Publishing for all her support and encouragement.

The editors wish to thank our readers who are leading every day by example in fighting discrimination, inequality, and hatred in their respective multiple arenas. We want you to know you are not alone. We also wish to recognize and relish the diligent efforts from those authors who have contributed chapters to this volume. We have collectively learned much from each author and it was a sheer joy to work together to produce this endeavor. We thank the authors for their openness, pushing the inter-disciplinary boundaries to pursue intellectual rigor and truth-telling. Taken together, we hope that in our small way that we have moved the ‘arch of moral justice’ bending it toward some categorical imperative when justice, brotherhood, and sisterhood will deliver us to the promised land of peace.

Additionally, Vanessa would like to thank her grandparents whose sacrifices, courage, and unconditional love inspired her to become an advocate

for justice and human rights. Vanessa is also deeply grateful for the support of her colleagues and friends for their generous insights and wisdom. Aldo would like to thank his colleagues and co-editors for their incredible hard work and thank ILA for their support for allowing him to be part of this second book volume of *Building Leadership Bridges*. Aldo especially wants to thank his family for giving him time for this important project and in particular his wife Claudia and his son Matteo. Eric would like to thank his co-editors Vanessa and Aldo for providing the intellectual comradeship that bonded them forever. Eric would also like to thank his distinguished colleagues: Will McConnell, Douglas Cremer, Randy Stauffer, Richard Matzen, Reuben Ellis, Raida Gatten, Matthew Bridgewater, Ofelia Huidor, Elizabeth “Lisa” Cooper, Seta Javor, Matthew Cahn, Henrik Palasani-Minassians, Mylon Winn, June Schmieder, Seta Khajarian, Farzin Madjidi, Kerri Crissna-Heath, Christie Dailo, Scott Beckett, Cody Thompson, Eric Bost, Frederick D. Barton, Satinder Dhiman, Michael K. Woo, Linda Daly, Scott Sveslovsky, Leslie Thurman, Edwina Pio, Jason Miklian, Rebecca Marsh, and finally Eric’s family and loved ones: Marlene Noonan, Steven Henry Crithfield, Michael Brett Mason, Deborah Lamberton, Valerie Crithfield, James Pinnick, and his chocolate lab Brixton, who served as his comfort writing partner always at his side.

# CONTENTS

<i>Dedications</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>About the Contributors</i>	xv
<i>Foreword</i>	xxiii
<i>Ambassador Rick Barton</i>	
 Introduction: On Peace, Reconciliation, and Social Justice	
<i>H. Eric Schockman, Vanessa Alexandra Hernández Soto and</i>	1
<i>Aldo Boitano de Moras</i>	

## PART I: RECONCILIATION

1. Leading and Following for Transformation in a Racialized Society	
<i>Ira Chaleff</i>	11
2. The Role of Work with Psychological Traumatization and Self-help in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation	
<i>Charles David Tauber and Sandra Marić</i>	23
3. Mercy, Justice, and Reconciliation: Pope Francis, Inclusive Leadership, and the Roman Catholic Church	
<i>Douglas Cremer</i>	37
4. Uses of a Holding Environment as Container for Stepping Up and Stepping Back in the Context of Truth and Reconciliation	
<i>Sarah Chace</i>	49

**PART II: COMMUNITY BUILDING: TO MAKE, BUILD,  
AND MAINTAIN PEACE**

5. Second-generation Perspectives on Reconciliation after Genocide:  
A Case Study of Rwanda  
*Chantal Marie Ingabire and Annemiek Richters* 67
6. Research Leader–Follower Development for Peacebuilding and  
Social Justice: The Africa Young Graduate Scholars  
Development Program  
*Sylvester B. Maphosa and Alphonse Keasley* 81
7. Women Can Make a Difference in Economic Marginalization and  
Women’s Right to Equality in Post-conflict Context of Sri Lanka:  
Revival of Challenges and a Perspective beyond the UNRSC 1325  
*Ziyana Mohamed Nazeemudeen* 99
8. Economically Empowering Women as Sustainable Conflict  
Resolution: A Case Study on Building Peace in Uganda through  
Social Enterprise  
*Lisa Liberatore Maracine* 117
- Interlude: The Geneva Leadership Alliance: Learning to Lead (and  
Follow) in Peacebuilding and Social Justice  
*Patrick Sweet* 131

**PART III: INTERNATIONAL LAW AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

9. Women’s Postwar Activism in Bosnia-Herzegovina: A Human Rights  
Approach to Peacebuilding and Reconciliation through Liminal Space  
*Edin Ibrahimfendic and Randal Joy Thompson* 143
10. Climate Justice: Building Opportunities for Women’s Participation and  
Leadership in the Climate Change Regime  
*Douglas de Castro* 161

11.	Toxic to Transformational Leadership: Peace, Reconciliation, and Social Justice as the Paradigm <i>Lorraine Stefani</i>	177
12.	Bosnia and Herzegovina: Upstanders and Moral Obedience <i>Bruce C. Pascoe</i>	193
13.	The Leadership of the Vicariate of Solidarity during the Dictatorship in Chile (1973–1990) <i>Fátima Esther Martínez Mejía and Nelson Andrés Ortiz Villalobos</i>	207
<b>PART IV: PEACEBUILDING</b>		
14.	Peace Leadership for Sustainable Change: Lessons from Women PeaceMakers <i>Whitney McIntyre Miller and Miznah Omair Alomair</i>	227
15.	Beyond <i>Ubuntu</i> : What the World Can Learn about Building Community from Africa <i>Lyndon Rego, Katleho Mohono and Gavin Michael Peter</i>	245
16.	Engaging Survivors of Conflict-related Sexual Violence in Social Movements: The Case for Reparations <i>Malini Laxminarayan and Benjamin Dürr</i>	263
17.	Conflict Management in Extractive Industries in Indonesia: Leaders—Followers Dynamic to Achieve Perceived Social Justice in Communities <i>Josephine R. Marieta, Bagus Takwin and Corina D. Riantoputra</i>	279
	Epilogue: Democratizing Leadership: Pre-conflict Preventative Peacebuilding <i>Mike Klein</i>	295
	<i>Index</i>	305

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## FOREWORD

Setting out to make the world more peaceful is ambitious. The work is hard. When neighbors start to kill neighbors, the fabric of a society is shredded. War mongers, spoilers, historic, and perverted arguments hover everywhere – resisting change, insisting on familiar and destructive paths. Oftentimes, the institutions that might help are misaligned. Success is rare.

When I started working on Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Angola in the 1990s, a wise boss cautioned that we should approach these places as “venture capitalists.” Lacking experience in both peacebuilding and high-level investment, I took that to mean several things: high risk; open to new ideas; early and catalytic funding; unconventional partnerships; and accepting of the occasional positive results with a big payoff. That mindset allowed us to accept long odds and minimize the feeling of failure.

A favorite phrase became a staple: “If it works, it is a precedent; if not, it was an experiment.” In over 40 war-torn places in the next 25 years, working for the United States, the United Nations, and as a scholar/practitioner, I felt that we had the license to find the local people, listen to their stories and voices, encourage them to pursue their own creative paths, and promote hope and trust. With that attitude, we pursued fresh approaches and built original offices, bureaus, and strategic relationships. We began to address the “gap” between humanitarian response and development assistance, always keeping “people first.”

Taking on the big ideas of global peace expansion in a book is also ambitious. As a practitioner and a student, I am delighted that the editors have seized upon: leadership and followership; reconciliation; international law and social justice; and peacebuilding. As a reader, I welcome the mix of high principles and practical examples. As a recent author, I appreciate the rigor and persistence required.

From the outset, this volume establishes several fundamental truths. There is a broad recognition that complex crises and effective peacebuilding

require inclusive and interdisciplinary approaches; that a first rule of leadership is to have followers – for more than just a minute; and that colonization and paternalism scar societies for decades.

Modern antidotes are offered. Building trust, advocating, and speaking out, and embracing others are the grounding. “Democratic and inclusive” leadership is defined as “based on a leader’s behavior and performance” and not limited by tradition or history. “Followership is a new means to decolonizing leadership.” Women, youth, and the gender oppressed are seen as promising innovators and change agents.

Throughout the book there is a disruptive tone but with a vision, a plan, and a follow-thru – not for the sake of an ideology but with a broader ambition: to make us more effective in the growth of peace. Anchoring those practical thoughts is the wisdom of prior leaders and followers.

“Transformational leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality”, is the foundational thought of James MacGregor Burns.

Ira Chalaff’s concept of *courageous followership* is cited: “assuming responsibility while also serving others, challenging leadership while also participating in transformation, and taking moral action while also speaking directly to the hierarchy.”

Leadership is described “as a fluid process of ‘stepping up and stepping back’ [...] which implicitly calls for a holding environment, speaks to the question of how to encourage people to access their innate power, as distinct from ‘empowering’ them” from without.

Addressing genocide, mass suffering, and structural bigotry, we are told to “look the beast in the eye.” Without that necessary step:

*it is reasonable to speculate that racism will continue to erupt in episodes of both micro and macro-aggression. The boundaries of an intentional holding environment such as a sanctioned arena for truth-telling may be the only way out of this dilemma.*

From the Geneva Leadership Alliance (GLA), we learn that there is a traditional over emphasis on “individual leader-centered competencies, values, behaviors to the neglect of common, collective practices required to address tensions between groups, tribes, regimes.” In the search for “common self-evident humanity [...] there is a growing recognition of diversity (often

compensating for traditional, core- or unicultural dominance).” The authors refer to

*the paradox of commonality that emerges from diversity [...]. When family, security, stability, community bonding, justice, equity, religious freedom, etc., become aspirational due to existential threat, we also know these common human values provide the core of community re-building, reconciliation, and rejuvenation [...].*

From their years of leadership training, GLA recognizes:

*People and communities under stress lose sight of these; yet, bringing them back into focus, provides social cohesion to reconstruct shared humanity. Desire for self- and interpersonal respect is universal. Everyone, in every collective, generation, tribe or culture values respect — we just define and express it in different ways. Trust is essential. By and large, trust is valued at every level. Polarization is powerful. The destructive power of polarization is easily negatively leveraged under stress, while leveraging polarity as a positive collaborative tactic is virtually absent.*

“Leadership’s ontology is mainly person-centered. Leading as a set of learned ‘practices’ is rarely separated from the concept of leader,” the GLA concludes.

*Leaders are often seen as special and a scarce resource. Collective capability to lead is intuitively understood, but rarely developed. Integrity is desired to be a pre-requisite for power. Corruption becomes prevalent the more that power is separated from integrity, and the loss of integrity in leaders and institutions undermines the realization of most all of the points above.*

This book invites “us to pay greater attention to the roles of those who with little or no formal authority initiate, give momentum and deeply influence critical changes in their communities.”

When success appears in peacebuilding, it is most often due to “bottom up, community led” efforts. This book suggests that we all have a broader responsibility to play a role. It also makes clear that “history matters.” Humility is indispensable.

These pages brim with a greater wisdom applied to real life cases, from Rwanda, South Africa, and Bosnia to Sri Lanka, Uganda, and beyond. The authors of each chapter are expansive in their thinking and methods, using film and art, or whatever is available to empower women and others as they address their grim post-war realities, the threat of climate change, or the dagger of oppression.

A survey conducted in 2008 by the Pew Research Center, “A Paradox in Public Attitudes Men or Women: Who’s the Better Leader?” is cited as we seek to improve our performance in global climate negotiations. Of eight important leadership traits in the public arena:

*women ranked higher than men in honesty, intelligence, compassion, creativity, and outgoingness. Thus, the concepts that are lacking in the international climate regime are exactly the ones present in the leadership traits of the women in both government and civil society dimensions.*

The book offers numerous revelations and insights as it seeks to transform perspectives, definitions, rulemaking, and long-held attitudes with inclusive, expansive, and democratic thoughts. My own experience confirms this necessity.

Ambassador Rick Barton was the first Assistant Secretary of State for Conflict and Stabilization Operations, a former U.S. Ambassador, a past UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, a Senior Advisor and Co-Director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the founding Director of USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives. He is a Lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School and Co-Director of Princeton University’s Scholars in the Nation’s Service Initiative. His book, *Peace Works – America’s Unifying Role in a Turbulent World* (Rowman & Littlefield 2018) is in its third printing.

By Ambassador Rick Barton (ret.)