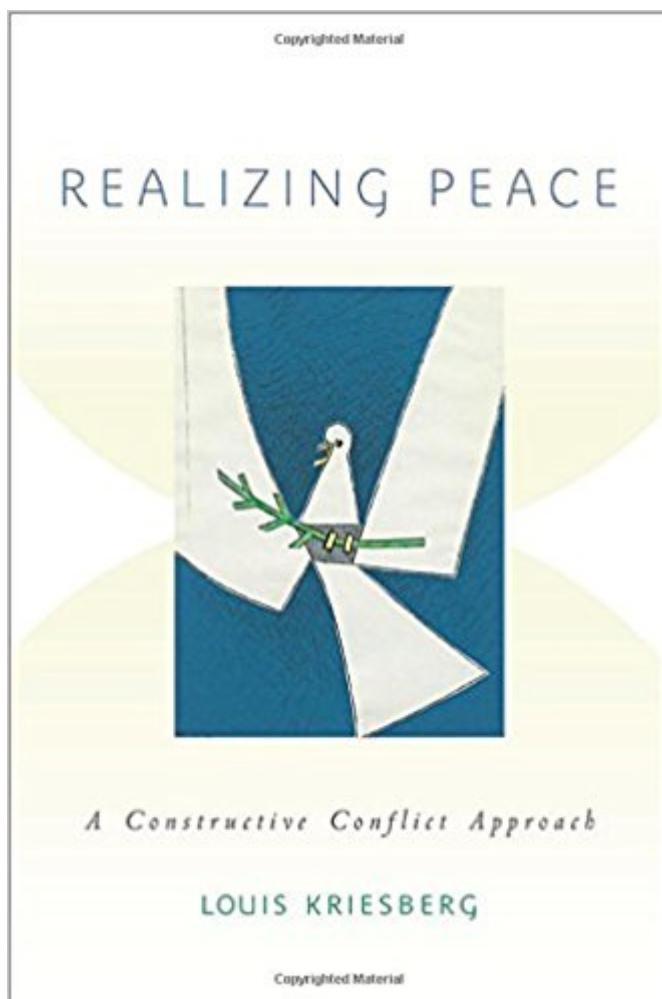


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Realizing Peace: A Constructive Conflict Approach



Synopsis

Early work in conflict resolution and peace research focused on why wars broke out, why they persisted, and why peace agreements failed to endure. Later research has focused on what actions and circumstances have actually averted destructive escalations, stopped the perpetuation of destructive conduct, produced a relatively good conflict transformation, or resulted in an enduring and relatively equitable relationship among former adversaries. This later research, which began in the 1950s, recognizes that conflict is inevitable and is often waged in the name of rectifying injustice. Additionally, it argues that damages can be minimized and gains maximized for various stakeholders in waging and settling conflicts. This theory, which is known as the constructive conflict approach, looks at how conflicts can be waged and resolved so they are broadly beneficial rather than mutually destructive. In this book, Louis Kriesberg, one of the major figures in the school of constructive conflict, looks at major foreign conflict episodes in which the United States has been involved since the onset of the Cold War to analyze when American involvement in foreign conflicts has been relatively effective and beneficial and when it has not. In doing so he analyzes whether the US took constructive approaches to conflict and whether the approach yielded better consequences than more traditional coercive approaches. *Realizing Peace* helps readers interested in engaging or learning about foreign policy to better understand what has happened in past American involvement in foreign conflicts, to think freshly about better alternatives, and to act in support of more constructive strategies in the future.

Book Information

Paperback: 416 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (March 30, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0190228679

ISBN-13: 978-0190228675

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 1.3 x 6.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #754,173 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #84 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Treaties #585 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > War & Peace #1877 in Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Political Science > International Relations

Customer Reviews

"The author succeeds admirably in the task of describing and analyzing the impact of US foreign policy over a tumultuous seventy years. The book is highly recommended to any student of international relations and peace studies." -- *Peace Research* "In essence, *Realizing Peace* presents a very different way of examining conflicts than the norm, repeatedly seeking to examine alternative paths. This is where Kriesberg's great strength lies the sheer extent of his knowledge and experience, demonstrated throughout this major work and by close to a thousand source notes." -- *Political Studies Review* "[This] book is a lovely distillation of peace research truth and practice and should be required reading for all new recruits into the State Department or any other national diplomatic service. It is important because Kriesberg reminds us of the necessity for a positive vision of peacebuilding and provides us with a series of detailed and practical steps for getting there." -- *Peace & Change* "I found *Realizing Peace* an extremely informative, encouraging volume. It captures the history of 70 years of global tension in which a wide variety of strategies were invoked to settle conflicts-ranging from outright coercion to various versions of negotiation to third-party intervention, with outcomes that ranged from disaster to the reinstatement of peaceful relations between former adversaries. There is much that was learned - both from successes and failures. The vital question that Kriesberg and other peace theorists and practitioners leave us with is have we learned how to capitalize on the successes and avoid the mistakes that led to disaster." -- *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* "A brilliant rendering of wisdom, *Realizing Peace* offers a concrete and unusual gift we could summarize in two short phrases. Dream big about peace. Take practical steps to get there. Louis Kriesberg brings together decades of engaged scholarship in this seminal work to offer specific approaches, based on empirical research, for how constructive transformation of conflict can reduce and prevent violence across the globe and improve the quality of relationships." -- John Paul Lederach, author of *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* "In *Realizing Peace* Louis Kriesberg accomplishes what few peace researchers have dared. He applies peace theory, practice and findings directly to US foreign policy. His constructive conflict approach provides a realistic strategy for enhancing US security and global peace simultaneously. This book is essential reading for 21st century diplomats and citizens alike." -- George A. Lopez, Vice-President, United States Institute of Peace "This book raises important questions about the US role in complex conflicts, the exercise of power in all its forms, and most importantly, the opportunities that exist to align the means we use more closely with the ends we seek to achieve. The book certainly will be valuable to students and practitioners of constructive conflict resolution. But, its real power will be in the hands of interested citizens who, in reading this,

will ask more nuanced questions of ourselves and our elected leaders about what we are trying to achieve, what opportunities exist for constructive conflict resolution, and what choices we can make - as citizens and as a country - that best support those goals." -- Andrea Strimling Yodsampa, CEO of DEPLOY/US Climate Initiative and former Chair of the Board, Alliance for Peacebuilding "This is an important volume by one of the giants in the field of conflict analysis. It deftly summarizes the author's pioneering work in the development of conceptual frameworks for understanding and mitigating armed conflict, providing a treasure trove of the most important sources in the field. Truly encyclopedic in scope." -- David Cortright, author of *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* "Realizing Peace is an essential resource for peace and conflict studies, international relations and modern history. An invaluable learning tool for all teaching and working in the various fields of building knowledge and taking action for peace, it is a unique, hopeful and fundamentally practical work." -- Betty A. Reardon, Founding Director Emeritus, International Institute on Peace Education "Kriesberg has produced a very important book. It is in many ways a litany of U.S interventions since WWII. He offers a compelling argument that if the U.S is going to intervene perhaps it should follow his approach more closely." --Thomas K. Duncan, Radford University "Written in an accessible style despite its considerable erudition, this book should be required reading for diplomats, politicians, students, and all who care about building a better and less violent-prone future." --Patrick G. Coy, Professor and Director, Center for Applied Conflict Management, Kent State University "Realizing Peace carefully navigates the line between American engagement abroad as it was and as it could have been. The book dares you to jump into the void of exploring what history could have looked like, and, more importantly, it reminds you that America always has a choice in how it chooses to engage the world." --Foreign Policy in Focus

Louis Kriesberg is Maxwell Professor Emeritus of Social Conflict Studies and Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Syracuse University.

Louis Kriesberg's illustrious academic career includes the founding of the Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts at Syracuse University nearly 30 years ago. His prolific record also includes a spate of well-deserved awards, scores of cutting-edge journal articles, and a series of significant books. Kriesberg is best known for his well-developed social conflicts analytical framework that distinguishes the complicated dynamics of constructive conflicts from those associated with more adversarial and destructive conflict approaches in his influential "Constructive Conflicts" book (now in its fourth edition). In this new book he patiently applies that same framework

to the many international crises and conflicts of the United States over the past 70 years. This is a tall and far-reaching enterprise— one likely beyond the reach of most scholars. But Kriesberg deftly traverses the decades and the literatures on foreign affairs, peace and conflict studies, international relations, sociology and diplomatic history that each address in their own way these various crises. In so doing he uncovers, assesses, and then evaluates the destructive and the constructive approaches taken by various US administrations and its conflict partners in specific situations. One of the most compelling dimensions of "Realizing Peace" is that Kriesberg avoids the pitfalls of both broad generalizations and of moralism—two approaches that tend to travel together in what too often passes for analysis. Instead, the specific decisions taken in particular moments of a conflict—,s trajectory are presented and evaluated contextually, and in relation to the constructive conflict approach. The emphasis is on the many opportunities and the decision-making moments present in a crisis more so than on its structural constraints. Therein lies some of the great hope that is woven throughout this work of mature scholarship. Even in the most complicated, the most intractable and the most contentious of conflicts, we still have choices. Thus the focus here is on constructive opportunities recognized and chosen by U.S. decision makers and their conflict partners, as well as on the many missed opportunities and deleterious effects they brought about. After presenting the constructive conflicts approach in the first chapter, each of the next six chapters focus on the conflicts and crises of a specific time period: the first two decades of the Cold War; the transformation of the Cold War in the 1970s and 80s; the direct aftermath of the Cold War; the Clinton years; the so-called war on terrorism and the Bush-Cheney administration; and the Obama administration. Equally important, this valuable volume closes with a significant chapter trained on the obstacles facing the increasing integration of the constructive approach to conflicts in US foreign policy, and ways to mitigate if not yet overcome those obstacles. Written in an accessible style despite its considerable erudition, this book should be required reading for diplomats, politicians, students, and all who care about building a better and less violent-prone future.

—Patrick G. Coy, Professor and Director Center for Applied Conflict Management, Kent State University, USA.

The recent great expansion of constructive conflict approaches raises many contested questions. This innovative and rare book illuminates several of these issues. The constructive conflict approach examines how conflicts can be constructively rather than destructively resolved transforming key relationships in the process. Professor Lou Kriesberg explores U.S. foreign policy post Cold War to analyze whether the constructive rather than coercive approach bore more fruit.

Professor Kriesberg is a prolific scholar and Realizing Peace is a must read for policymakers, students, and academics, and will attract and engage a large audience. Sean Byrne, Director, Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, and Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Manitoba

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