Bringing Science to Bear—on Peace, Not War

Elaborating on Psychology's Potential to Promote Peace

Bernhard Leidner, Linda R. Tropp, and Brian Lickel
University of Massachusetts Amherst

We argue that psychological and contextual factors play important roles in bringing about, facilitating, and escalating violent conflict. Yet rather than conclude that violent conflict is inevitable, we believe psychology's contributions can extend beyond understanding the origins and nature of violent conflict, to promote nonviolence and peace. In this article, we summarize psychological perspectives on the conditions and motivations underlying violent conflict. Drawing on this work, we then discuss psychological and contextual factors that can mitigate violence and war and promote nonviolence and peace.

Keywords: intergroup conflict, intergroup violence, intergroup peace, intergroup processes

Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.

> —Preamble of the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), adopted on November 16, 1945

The writer, philosopher, and historian Will Durant estimated that there have been only 268 years in the 3,421 years of recorded human history during which there was no war being fought anywhere in the world (Durant & Durant, 1968, p. 81). At the same time, commerce and trade have fostered cooperation; overarching entities such as the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the International Court of Justice, and the International Criminal Court have formalized and regulated many aspects of interstate behavior; globalization and cosmopolitanism have widened moral concern beyond group and state boundaries; and human rights movements have emerged and receive increasing support. As a result of these developments and achievements, violence overall has declined steadily throughout human history (Pinker, 2011). Still, when violent episodes do occur, they do so with increasing deadliness. In the 20th century alone, wars and other forms of violence at nation-state, group, and intergroup levels caused more than 200 million human deaths and countless other human injuries (Garfield & Neugut, 1997; Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002; Leitenberg, 2006; Opotow, 2001). These less frequent but more deadly episodes of violence give rise to a bleak view of human civilization which, aided by the pessimistic notion that humans are violent "by nature," leads scholars and laypeople alike to subscribe to the belief that violence and war are inevitable (e.g., Allport, 1950; Putney & Middleton, 1962).

Yet, in line with the preamble to the UNESCO constitution quoted above, others contend that humans have an inherent capacity for *peaceful* as well as violent relations with others. This capacity for peace provides humans with the potential to question and resist war and violence (cf. Visser, 2000). We agree with UNESCO that war and violence have their starting points in the human mind, as the outcome of psychological mechanisms that seek protection and security from real, perceived, or invented external threats. Given that these factors are highly dependent on people's perceptions and social experiences, and the social conditions under which they interact, we further argue that these mechanisms are malleable and can be changed to promote peace, not war. Rather than assuming a simplistic nature–nurture dichotomy, our interactionist view sees the human propensities for peace and war as both hardwired *and* malleable. In other words, "natural" psychological mechanisms are not necessarily immutable, but they can be adaptive to social, cultural, and institutional influences; and these influences can determine whether and how our peaceful or warlike inclinations will manifest themselves in a given situation.

We are mindful of the fact that the view endorsed by UNESCO and us may be seen as naïve. Indeed, we believe it would be unrealistic to envision human civilization without any inclinations toward war or violent conflict. We also recognize that in some cases wars may be worth fighting, for instance, in the form of interventions to halt mass violence such as genocide or ethnic cleansing. Nevertheless, we oppose the view that war is inevitable and argue that understanding the psychological roots of conflict can increase the likelihood of avoiding violence as a means of resolving conflicts with others (see also Cohrs, Christie, White, & Das, 2013, this issue).

We believe that these opposing views of the inevitability of violence and war have important implications for scientific research in general and the discipline of psychology in particular (see also Lewandowsky, Stritzke, Freund, Oberauer, & Krueger, 2013, this issue). Scientists' views can influence the research questions they choose to investigate, the implications and applications of their research, and the decisions funding agencies make regarding the kinds of research they seek to support (see Renner, 1990). Research stemming from the fatalistic view that violence and war are inevitable would be likely to focus primarily on how to mitigate the negative consequences of conflict on the individuals impacted by them, such as the treatment of combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder. While this research is laudable, there is equal value to investigating how nations can avoid unnecessary or unproductive conflict in the first place.

Beyond the consequences for research, beliefs about the inevitability of conflict are important at a broader societal level for nations that may be at risk for violent conflict. Like others (see Winter, Pilisuk, Houck, & Lee, 2001), we contend that endorsing the view that war and violence are inevitable contributes to individuals' and societies' readiness for war. Greater perceived likelihood of war is linked to a stronger preference for increased military power, as opposed to peace talks (e.g., Arian, 1989), as well as to greater pro-war behavior among citizens (Wolf, Gregory, & Stephan, 1986). Readiness for war also increases the likelihood of using escalatory strategies without first exploring all other alternatives to war in order to resolve conflicts nonviolently (see Bennett & Rupert, 2003). In turn, an enhanced readiness for war can inadvertently produce structural violence and adverse outcomes for citizens (see Galtung, 1969), as excessive military spending can limit their access to health and medical care and undermine their well-being (Sivard, 1993).

The psychological readiness for war can also make violence more likely, through affecting how people perceive and interpret intentions of members of other groups. When people distrust members of another group, they become less willing to believe that these others might have positive intentions toward them (Kramer, 2004). They also become more likely to justify their negative intentions and behaviors toward mistrusted others, and to view the acts of violence they commit against others merely as responses to threat and provocation posed by others (Bilali, Tropp, & Dasgupta, 2012). On the nation-state level, this dynamic has been referred to as the "security dilemma"; when a state increases its military strength, even with defensive intent, other states are likely to infer offensive intent and respond aggressively (e.g., Herz, 1950). As such, the belief that war is inevitable and its concomitant readiness for war can create a self-fulfilling cycle by eliciting responses that increase the chances for escalating violence and decrease the chances for lasting peace.

Thus, in this article, we review theory and research to specify the psychological and contextual factors that contribute to the facilitation and escalation of intergroup violence. We then discuss how these factors can exacerbate and perpetuate intergroup violence through the emotional responses and belief systems that are produced during conflict. Finally, in line with the UNESCO preamble, we summarize perspectives that suggest how we might weaken tendencies toward intergroup violence and how psychological "defenses of peace" can be constructed in the human mind (see also Staub, 2013, this issue).

Perceived Intergroup Threat as a Facilitator of Intergroup Conflict and Violence

Perceived intergroup threat is a central topic in both the intergroup conflict and international relations literatures (Rouhana & Fiske, 1995). The threat another group is perceived to pose to one's own group plays a major role in the escalation of "cold" into "hot" intergroup conflict, as members of other groups are generally perceived as more threatening than members of one's own group (Rousseau & Garcia-Retamero, 2007).

Types of Intergroup Threat

Other groups can be seen as threatening in various ways. For example, people may believe that an outgroup threatens the ingroup's material interests, livelihood, and resources, and in the case of conflict, often the ingroup's security and very existence (Rouhana & Fiske, 1995; Sherif, 1966; Walker & Smith, 2002). People may also perceive that the outgroup has a different culture or belief system, as well as different traditions and moral standards, all of which can undermine and therefore threaten the culture of the ingroup. Such perceived threats are typically a major cause of extreme or irrational fear of foreign cultures and ideologies (e.g., contemporary Islamophobia, fear of communism in the Cold War era) and the intergroup tensions and conflicts that arise from these (see Stephan & Stephan, 1996). A threat to group esteem can also occur when highly positive characteristics associated with the outgroup overwhelm group members' ability to maintain a positive image of the ingroup, which can then result in negative attitudes and behavior toward that outgroup (e.g., Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002). Group members may also experience a distinctiveness threat when the uniqueness of the ingroup is threatened by too much similarity to or assimilation of an outgroup, which can also increase intergroup bias and negative intergroup behavior (e.g., Jetten, Spears, & Postmes, 2004).

Consequences of Intergroup Threat

Understanding people's reactions to threat is important, because perceived threat has been shown to have wide-ranging consequences for intergroup conflict. Generally, perceived threat increases levels of ethnocentrism and xenophobia (e.g., Marcus, Sullivan, Theiss-Morse, & Wood, 1995) as well as prejudice (e.g., Levine & Campbell, 1972). More important, in the context of intergroup conflict, perceived threat leads many people—but not all, as we will explain below—to become more politically intolerant (e.g., Marcus et al., 1995), to respond more punitively

toward outgroups (e.g., Herrmann, Tetlock, & Visser, 1999), to use aggression and violence against outgroups (Arian, 1989; Spanovic, Lickel, Denson, & Petrovic, 2010), and to support aggressive retaliatory policies against outgroups (e.g., Gordon & Arian, 2001). In the wake of September 11, 2001 (9/11), for instance, when most Americans were highly fearful of future terrorist attacks (Smith & Rasinski, 2002), perceived threat predicted greater intolerance of Arabs and Muslims and support for aggressive security policies among Americans, both domestically (e.g., limitations on government actions that help Arabs and Muslims, curtailment of civil rights; see Huddy, Khatid, & Capelos, 2002) and internationally (e.g., overseas military action; see Huddy, Feldman, Taber, & Lahav, 2005). Relatedly, studies conducted during the second Palestinian intifada found that Israeli Jews' perceptions of threat by Arabs predicted support for governmental violation of Israeli Arabs' civil rights (e.g., Shamir & Sagiv-Schifter, 2006). Israeli Jews' support for aggressive retaliatory policies against Palestinians has also been explained by the perception that Palestinians pose a threat to Israel (e.g., Maoz & McCauley, 2008). Similar processes, of course, also operate among group members on the other side of these conflicts; with respect to the "war on terror," for instance, Muslims have been reported to feel "culturally under attack" by the West (Weber et al., 2006).

Group Identification and Intergroup Threat

The negative effects of intergroup threat briefly reviewed above are particularly pronounced among people who identify strongly with their groups. People derive part of their self-image—their social identity—from these groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and the more these ingroups are represented as part of the self-concept, the more people will be motivated to protect their group's welfare and maintain both a positive and distinct image of their group (e.g., Tropp & Wright, 2001). As a consequence, people who identify strongly with their groups are more likely to interpret situations as threatening to their groups, and, once this has occurred, to react more strongly to the threat (e.g., Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006). Still, even such threat-induced negativity among those who identify strongly with their groups appears to be malleable. For example, when people were reminded of compassionate religious values, the threat-induced effect of religious fundamentalism on extreme military interventions was shown to be eliminated and even reversed among Americans and Iranian Shiite Muslims in the Middle East (Rothschild, Abdollahi, & Pyszczynski, 2009).

Recent research has found that certain aspects of identification are especially likely to exacerbate threat responses and spur intergroup conflict and violence. Group identification has been differentiated into patriotism and nationalism (e.g., Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989), constructive and blind patriotism (Staub, 1997), and attachment with and glorification of one's ingroup (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, Halevy, & Eidelson, 2008). In one way or another, all these conceptualizations distinguish between a form of identification that refers to a love for and commit-

ment to the ingroup (e.g., patriotism, constructive patriotism, ingroup attachment) and another form of identification that focuses on a belief in the superiority of the ingroup over other groups and on submission to ingroup norms and authorities (e.g., nationalism, blind patriotism, ingroup glorification). Research has shown that it is the latter type of identification that is particularly likely to make people more prone to respond aggressively to intergroup threat and to justify such aggression. For example, nationalism and a sense of ingroup superiority predicted greater support for military action against Iraq (Federico, Golec, & Dial, 2005) and fewer demands for justice in response to torture committed by American and British forces against Iraqis (Leidner, Castano, Zaiser, & Giner-Sorolla, 2010). Overall, it is the ingroup superiority aspect of group identification that leads to heightened perceptions of intergroup threat, increased support and willingness for military engagements, and justification of both anticipated and past violence perpetrated by the ingroup (see also Bandura, 1999).

Discovering that certain aspects of group identification can increase intergroup aggression and violence causes us concern but also gives us cause for optimism. In part, there is room for optimism because people who do not endorse ingroup superiority beliefs are less inclined to become aggressive and may become more willing to criticize ingroup violence (see Jetten & Hornsey, 2011). Furthermore, other aspects of group identification may even promote intergroup harmony and peace. People low in ingroup superiority beliefs not only refrain from condoning ingroup-committed violence (Leidner et al., 2010; Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006) but can even bolster moral principles such as fairness (e.g. Leidner & Castano, 2012) and pacifism and support for nonviolent conflict resolution strategies (Leidner & Kardos, 2013). In a similar vein, attachment and commitment to the ingroup increase ingroup-critical views, such as Israelis' and Europeans' guilt over their ingroups' mistreatment of Palestinians (Roccas et al., 2006) and Rwandan asylum seekers (Leach et al., 2008). It is also possible that, unlike healthy attachment to groups, beliefs in ingroup superiority may not be a basic psychological need and therefore could be discarded without negative psychological consequences (cf. Brewer, 2007; Castano, Leidner, & Slawuta, 2008; Leach et al., 2008).

Uncertainty and Intergroup Threat

Another important factor that can breed and augment perceived threat is uncertainty. Uncertainty often becomes amplified during intergroup conflict and can lead to an aversive psychological state that prompts needs for safety and security and a strong motivation to reduce this state (see, e.g., Arkin, Carroll, & Oleson, 2010; Jonas & Fritsche, 2013, this issue). On the nation-state level, according to defensive realism (Waltz, 1979), states attempt to maximize security and reduce insecurity by increasing their military readiness. On an individual level, people can reduce feelings of uncertainty by aligning themselves with groups (e.g., Hogg, 2007). Yet, this can contribute to increases in attitudinal rigidity and closed-mindedness

(McGregor, Zanna, Holmes, & Spencer, 2001), extreme interpretations of otherwise moderate ideologies (Blagg & Hogg, 2009), support for radical subgroups and behaviors (Hogg, Meehan, & Farquharson, 2010), outgroup derogation (McGregor, Haji, Nash, & Teper, 2008), and intergroup warfare (McGregor, Haji, & Kang, 2008). As such, uncertainty has been shown to relate to many different forms of intergroup violence, including genocide (Staub, 1989) and terrorism (Moghaddam & Marsella, 2004).

Emotions and Moral Beliefs as Perpetuators of Intergroup Conflict and Violence

As we have explained so far, intergroup threat, amplified under certain conditions by uncertainty and heightened ingroup identification, can act as a starting point of violent intergroup conflict in the human mind. In the wake of an intergroup conflict turned violent, people may develop an ethos of conflict (e.g., Bar-Tal, 2007), which comprises beliefs that provide people with a systemic view of the conflict, including beliefs in the justness and victimization of their group (Bar-Tal, 2000). This belief system may help people to cope with the perceived threat that contributed to instigating the conflict, yet it can also lead to perpetuation of the conflict, as has been extensively described (Bar-Tal, 2000, 2007) and demonstrated (Golec & Federico, 2004; Golec de Zavala, Federico, Cislak, & Sigger, 2008) elsewhere for conflicts such as World War II, the Cold War, or the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

We regard the belief that war is inevitable as an integral part of an ethos of conflict. Once a conflict has turned violent, the violence is often perceived as having been inevitable from the start and certainly as inevitable at the time it is already under way. This perception serves to perpetuate the conflict by increasing the acceptance of and perceived need for ongoing violence, thereby hindering peace efforts. Moreover, the belief that war is inevitable, as well as the other beliefs outlined by Bar-Tal (2000, 2007), will also shape emotional responses and moral beliefs surrounding the conflict in ways that can perpetuate the conflict even further. Because we view emotions and moral beliefs as playing particularly important roles in maintaining conflict once it has begun, we discuss these in more detail.

Conflict-Related Emotions

When the spark of violent conflict hits a group, people often feel strong emotions. These conflict-induced emotions are often amplified over time as group members seek to collectively understand what has occurred. Emotions may become amplified as people process the provoking event more thoroughly and as media and group leaders shape public understanding and reactions to the event. As such, the specific emotions the group members experience strongly predict the actions the group will take in response to the event. After the 9/11 attacks in the United States, for instance, public opinion polling indicated that people felt strong emotions, particularly anger and fear, after the at-

tacks (Smith, Rasinski, & Toce, 2001). The strength of these emotions in turn predicted people's support for conflict-related policies. Thus, the angrier people were, the more likely they were to support overseas military action after 9/11 (e.g., Lerner, Gonzalez, Small, & Fischhoff, 2003; Skitka, Bauman, Aramovich, & Morgan, 2006). Besides its confrontational effects, anger has also been shown to often pose obstacles to reconciliation and forgiveness (Brown, Wohl, & Exline, 2008; Tam et al., 2007). Thus, once a conflict has started, anger can play a key role in supporting and escalating violence.

Fear too is a prominent emotion in violent intergroup conflict. Bar-Tal has argued that groups embroiled in conflict can develop a collective fear orientation and that this fear orientation promotes a hostile bias toward the threatening outgroup that must be changed to achieve peace (e.g., Bar-Tal, 2009). Empirical research supports this idea. In research on American's reactions after 9/11, for instance, fear predicted intolerance of Muslims and support for deportation of immigrants (Skitka et al., 2006). Research also shows that fear can sometimes predict support for military aggression, primarily when conflicts such as the one between Serbs and Albanians in Serbia are framed in terms of future threats from the other side in the conflict (e.g., Spanovic, Lickel, & Denson, 2013; see also work on collective angst reviewed in Wohl, Squires, & Caouette, 2012). In Rwanda, extremist Hutu leaders engendered fear among many Hutus of Tutsi plans to rule them as they had in the past, inciting a large part of the population to commit the 1994 genocide (Gourevitch, 1998). At the same time, conflict-related fear predicts less aggression in the context of conflicts that are viewed as having been resolved (Spanovic et al., 2010). Thus, under many but not all circumstances, both anger and fear can increase the propensity for intergroup violence.

Once anger and fear are felt widely in a group, they may contribute to a self-perpetuating cycle of violence (Christie, Wagner, & Winter, 2000). Cycles of retaliatory violence may occur as members of the opposing groups experience anger as a result of violence they suffered at the hands of the other group. This anger generates reciprocal motivation for retaliation and retribution on each side of the conflict, which can create an escalating cycle of tit-for-tat aggression that is very difficult to break (Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson, & Schmader, 2006). Likewise, as shown by Lerner and her colleagues, fear is not only a product of threat but can increase threat perceptions as well (Lerner et al., 2003). As group members develop a sense of fear in response to an intergroup provocation, the fear itself is likely to increase the perceived threat posed by the outgroup and other groups. Thus, the sparks of anger and fear caused by the initiation of conflict often do not dissipate but instead have the capacity to grow and feed the maintenance of the conflict over time.

Furthermore, emotions in conflicts are not static, but are likely to evolve over time. As people individually and collectively ruminate about and seek to understand the nature of their opponent in the conflict, the emotions people initially experienced may change (Lickel, 2012). It is also

important to keep in mind that due to the complexity of human emotions, there is no rigid link between negative emotions such as fear and anger and outcomes such as conflict and violence. Recent research has shown, for example, that under some circumstances fear can be linked to a motivation to compromise with an outgroup (e.g., Spanovic et al., 2010), and sometimes anger can lead to greater efforts to resolve conflicts (Reifen Tagar, Federico, & Halperin, 2011). Constructive conflict resolution methods can also reduce negative emotions and their consequences for conflict and violence. For instance, showing respect or offering help rather than threatening one's negotiating partner or the other side in a conflict can reduce fear and "calm" anger and hatred (for a review, see Lindner, 2006). Moreover, negative emotions do not always intensify and fuel conflicts over time; in certain situations, emotions and public opinion can turn from support for to rejection of conflict, such as when there is a critical mass of opponents to war (e.g., Vietnam, Iraq) or when other concerns take precedence (e.g., the reduced support for the Afghanistan war due to the economic crisis).

Alternatively, one particularly worrisome shift that may occur is that people's anger and fear about the other side can evolve into contempt and hatred. Hatred is characterized by an emotional signature similar to anger; however, it differs crucially from anger by the appraisal of the outgroup as dispositionally and perpetually evil (Ben-Ze'ev, 1992), which further leads to dehumanization of the hated outgroup. Once a conflict develops to the point where both sides have developed hatred for one another, conflict resolution becomes increasingly difficult even when resolving the conflict is in the best interest of both parties. As a consequence of the resulting hardened beliefs about the outgroup as evil and subhuman, people can develop or adopt behavioral intentions of inflicting harm on the hated outgroup, to the point of its extinction (Halperin, 2008, 2011). Feelings of hatred increase rejection of the targeted outgroup in totality without exceptions (Opotow & McClelland, 2007; Sternberg, 2003). Hatred has also been theorized (e.g., Staub, 2005) and recently shown (Halperin, 2011) to lead to opposition to negotiation, in that it decreases support for compromise and reconciliation and increases support for halting negotiations. At the same time, hatred can lead to increased support for military action in response to failed negotiations (Halperin, Canetti-Nisim, & Hirsch-Hoefler, 2009). Thus, preventing the development of hatred, even when fear and anger are unavoidable, is a crucial goal for groups to avoid costly and counterproductive conflict.

Moralization of Intergroup Conflict and Violence

Our review of work on conflict-related emotions indicates that hatred may be particularly important because it is closely linked to beliefs that it is not immoral to commit violence against a hated outgroup. Once a conflict develops or is steered (see what Lewandowsky et al., 2013, call nationalistic-patriotic, conflict-sustaining narratives) to a stage in which people view the ingroup and outgroup in stark terms of good and evil, these moralized beliefs may then sustain the conflict because they color every ingroup and outgroup action. Violent action against outgroup members can be justified with people's sense of morality by *removal of moral concern*, or, even more disturbing, by *positive moralization of violence* (for a more detailed discussion, see Giner-Sorolla, Leidner, & Castano, 2011).

Moral concern for others is not absolute and all-inclusive but rather relative and exclusionary (Opotow, 1990). People treat some with more moral concern than others, and in intergroup conflicts the lives of outgroup members are often devalued compared to the lives of ingroup members—unless ingroup members hold positive beliefs about the outgroup, advocate equality between groups, reject antihumanitarian tactics, or are high on empathy (Pratto & Glasford, 2008). Ingroup favoritism and ingroup identification play important roles here too: The more strongly people identify with their ingroup, the less morally concerned they are about outgroups (Pratto & Glasford, 2008, Study 3 and 4; Reed & Aquino, 2003). The disengagement, or denial, of moral concern toward others can lead people to carry out and/or support intergroup violence without self-sanctions or to make past violence seem appropriate or acceptable in their eyes. Such powerful moral disengagement strategies (e.g., Bandura, 1999) involve processes of perceiving others as subhuman (infrahumanization) or nonhuman (dehumanization). In being denied qualities that are thought of as uniquely human (e.g., intelligence, emotions; Leyens et al., 2000) or as part of human nature (e.g., warmth, agency; Haslam, Bain, Douge, Lee, & Bastian, 2005), outgroup members are likened to animals or objects in the eyes of the perceiver and consequently excluded from moral concern (e.g., Bandura, 1999; Opotow, 1990). Violence against such others therefore becomes more easily condoned (Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006) and supported (Maoz & McCauley, 2008), and willingness to help victims of such violence is reduced (Cuddy, Rock, & Norton, 2007). Seeing outgroup members as sentient beings rather than as sub- or nonhuman creatures, on the other hand, is associated with increasing support for nonviolent rather than violent conflict resolution strategies, as was shown among both Jewish Israelis and Palestinians (Leidner, Castano, & Ginges, 2013). Thus, in an ongoing intergroup conflict, removal of moral concern by employment of moral disengagement strategies protects the perpetrators' and their fellow group members' psychological equanimity. It provides the means to fight a war without questioning the ingroup's morality and silences any calls to put a stop to the violence, thereby perpetuating the conflict.

Going beyond removal of moral concern, strategies of positive moralization of violence not only allow but *support* violence against targeted outgroups. The removal of outgroups from moral concern allows them to be excluded from society and even destroyed if it is in the ingroup's interests. The exclusion and destruction of the outgroup are not necessarily ends in and of themselves but are often a means to an end, such as the gaining of colonial power (e.g., Native American genocide). When violence against a

target outgroup is positively moralized, however, its destruction becomes an end in and of itself, based on a moral mandate (Skitka & Mullen, 2002) for the ingroup to commit violence against the outgroup (see also Christie & Montiel, 2013, this issue). Especially when groups are under threat or in need of proving their morality (Skitka, 2002), moral mandates lead to greater social and physical distance from dissimilar others, greater intolerance toward them, and reduced motivations for nonviolent conflict resolution (Wright, Cullum, & Schwab, 2008).

One process through which violence can be positively moralized is *morality shifting* (Leidner & Castano, 2012). This process de-emphasizes moral principles that condemn violence (e.g., harm, fairness, justice) and instead emphasizes principles that can be used as a scaffolding for moral mandates for violence (e.g., loyalty, authority). Whereas the former kind of moral principles negatively moralize violence, the latter kind of moral principles can positively moralize violence as they put the well-being and benefits of the ingroup over those of outgroups and require submission to ingroup authorities. Although principles such as loyalty can foster prosocial behavior within the ingroup, once the behavioral norms change in the intergroup context, these principles have been found to be related to competitive behavior toward outgroups (Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002) and to the perceived value of ingroup–outgroup conflict and violence (Cohen, Montoya, & Insko, 2006). More direct evidence for the use of morality shifting to moralize outgroup-directed violence is provided by three experiments conducted in the context of past ingroup-committed violence (Leidner & Castano, 2012). Loyalty and authority morals were shown to be more frequently reflected in verbal accounts of past intergroup violence, and to be more cognitively accessible, when the violence was committed by the ingroup rather than an outgroup against a third (victim) group. The reverse was the case for harm and fairness morals. In other words, people, and especially those who strongly glorified the ingroup (Leidner & Castano, 2012, Study 3), shifted their moral concerns from harm and fairness toward loyalty and authority—but only in the case of ingroup- rather than outgroup-committed violence. Such a shift in morality, which is likely to occur as conflicts develop over time, can then allow for mistreatment of outgroup members, to the point of making such mistreatment a moral good. It may also have legal consequences for ingroup members who commit violence, as the actions of prosecuted ingroup perpetrators may be seen as acts in defense of the ingroup, and even the very prosecution of ingroup members could be seen as a violation of the moral codes of loyalty and authority. Such was the case with U.S. Army officer William Calley, whose sentence of life imprisonment for his leading role in the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War was reduced multiple times due to intense public outrage over the sentence, such that Calley ultimately served only 3½ years of house arrest (Belknap, 2002). In this and other situations, morality shifting can result in lower thresholds and limits, and less accountability and responsibility, for ingroup-committed violence, thereby perpetuating conflict.

Nonviolent Approaches to Minimizing Violent Conflict and Promoting Peace

On the basis of the research reviewed, we contend that intergroup conflict and violence persist because they are often functional in providing people with a means of addressing psychological needs for identity, safety, and security (see also Staub, 2003; Wallensteen, 2007), along with other valued outcomes such as power (e.g, Nevin, 2003). Nonviolent approaches can contribute to achieving these same outcomes, and indeed they have been central to major social changes in human history. However, nonviolent approaches to conflict have received far less attention than their violent counterparts by the media and the public, as well as by science (e.g., Ackermann & Duvall, 2000). We therefore propose that "defenses of peace" must be fostered to counteract any prevailing tendencies toward intergroup conflict and violence. This idea is congruent with others on the development of an ethos or culture of peace (see Bar-Tal, 2009; de Rivera, 2009), which holds the potential to deter the development or escalation of conflict (see Golec & Federico, 2004, and Golec de Zavala et al., 2008, for related arguments). Such an ethos consists of the beliefs that empathy, perspective taking, and trust are essential in maintaining and fostering harmonious relationships and that nonviolence is valued over violence, thereby making *non*violence a moral mandate that needs to be acted upon.

In the paragraphs that follow, we describe two broad components that can contribute to psychological defenses of peace. The first component consists of factors that increase empathy and understanding of the outgroup, while the second component consists of factors that increase the capacity for critical evaluation of the ingroup. Before discussing these ingroup- and outgroup-directed components in more detail, we also wish to highlight that such strategies may depend on other factors, such as the extent to which people's immediate psychological needs for identity, safety, and security have been met at a minimal level (e.g., no immediate threat to life). In the absence of such need fulfillment, people are likely to respond to events in defensive and self-protective ways, being driven to act aggressively toward others and to protect the image and interests of their group (see Arkin et al., 2010; Staub, 2003). However, insofar as groups can curtail the threat-generated emotions that people experience in intergroup conflict, they may become more open to exploring alternate points of view and to critically examining the actions and decisions of their group (for a related argument, see Tropp & Molina, 2012).

We also wish to highlight that the two components we describe may be facilitated by the messages and behavior of group leaders. Leaders can shape the societal discourse of a conflict, allay or instrumentalize group members' fears, and foster or hinder ingroup-critical views and empathic concern for outgroup members. For example, in the early aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, George W. Bush's

speeches stressed that the attacks did not represent Islam as a whole and that Americans should look to Muslim Americans as fellow citizens who were not to blame for the attacks and who should not be harmed (Bush, 2001). Later, however, in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, his rhetoric changed to describing groups in more stark terms of good versus evil and placed whole (out-) groups on an "axis of evil." Such high-profile behavior of a leader can set precedence for ingroup behavior and norms as well as inform outgroup members' perceptions of ingroup intentions. Well-informed and balanced rhetoric from leaders that does not demonize outgroups and that stresses the possibility of peace can play a powerful role in promoting positive intergroup relations. Most strikingly, this approach has been effectively used by Nelson Mandela, who offered South Africans an example of how to deal with the legacy of apartheid without resorting to further violence, by making statements such as "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner" (Mandela, 1995).

Promoting Understanding of and Empathy Toward Outgroup Members

Enhancing people's capacity for empathizing with outgroup members and understanding others' perspectives is a key strategy for reducing conflict and shifting the nature of intergroup relationships. Empathy and perspective taking can often be enhanced by making salient people's identification with a common ingroup that includes people on all sides of a conflict (e.g., humans, or Rwandans) rather than their usual identification with a less inclusive ingroup (e.g., Hutu or Tutsi) (see Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; González, Manzi, & Noor, 2011). Indeed, when people think about shared human experiences with members of other groups, they become more able to relate to their suffering (Vollhardt, 2012), less likely to respond negatively to other groups in response to threat, and more willing to entertain the prospect of peacemaking (Motyl et al., 2011).

Empathy and perspective taking can also be facilitated by cross-group contact (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013, this issue; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). Among Colored South African high school students, for instance, initial friendships with White South Africans predicted greater empathy toward White South Africans over time (Swart, Hewstone, Christ, & Voci, 2010). Similar effects have been found in other countries, such that cross-group friendships predict native Italians' empathy toward immigrants (Voci & Hewstone, 2003) and Protestants' and Catholics' empathy toward each other in postconflict Northern Ireland (Vonofakou et al., 2008). On a very practical level, then, cross-group contact can be used to foster perspective taking and empathy through direct contact experiences or indirectly through media that familiarize audiences with new people, cultures, or perspectives (Staub, 2013).

When people take the perspectives of others, they tend to rely less on stereotypes in perceiving outgroup members (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000) and become more likely to develop positive intergroup attitudes (Vescio, Sechrist, & Paolucci, 2003) and to challenge violence by ingroup members against the outgroup (Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008). Similarly, empathizing with outgroup members' concerns increases support of outgroups (e.g., Malhotra & Liyanage, 2005) and improves intergroup attitudes (Batson et al., 1997) by softening the boundaries between ingroup members and outgroup members (Stephan & Finlay, 1999). Empathy has also been identified as a primary pathway through which contact between groups reduces prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008), and even in violent conflicts, empathy elicits positive behavioral tendencies toward outgroup members (Tam et al., 2008). As such, empathy and understanding of the perspectives of outgroup members hold the potential to curb violence even in protracted conflicts. Even in the aftermath of genocide, empathy can be increased, as has been demonstrated by Staub's (2013) field experiments to foster reconciliation in postgenocide Rwanda. Rwandans listening to a radio drama with information about the origins and prevention of genocide as well as about reconciliation interwoven in the story line showed greater subsequent empathy and engagement with other groups during reconciliatory activities than did Rwandans not exposed to the radio drama. Empathy and perspective taking can thus be considered both causes and consequences of reconciliation (see also Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009; Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, & Hagengimana, 2005), and they may also enhance people's willingness to make concessions and accept agreements that involve cooperation (Coke, Batson, & McDavis, 1978).

Such outcomes are likely to depend on the degree to which building intergroup empathy and understanding are effective in shifting people's construals of the intergroup relationship and their emotional responses toward outgroup members. For example, empathy has the potential to increase trust (Kelman, 1999) as a key factor in maintaining harmonious relationships (e.g., Kramer, 1999). Trust not only elicits greater willingness to resolve a conflict through compromise (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) and reconciliation (Nadler & Liviatan, 2006) but also leads to expectations of and beliefs in positive or at least nonharmful intentions of outgroup members (Lewicki & Wiethoff, 2000).

Also growing from intergroup understanding and empathy is forgiveness, a process that is founded on the release of feelings of anger and revenge (Baumeister, Exline, & Sommer, 1998; McCullough, Finchman, & Tsang, 2003). Forgiveness can contribute to the mitigation of conflict in many ways, for instance, by promoting prosocial behavior (Karremans & Van Lange, 2004) and reducing the exclusion of outgroup members from the realm of moral concern (Staub, 2006). Moreover, forgiveness may lessen the tendency for victims of intergroup violence to become victimizers themselves (Noor, Brown, & Prentice, 2008), thereby rendering perpetuation of a conflict less likely. Thus, as perceptions of intergroup relations shift and group members become less driven by threat, efforts should be made to enhance their willingness to empathize and understand the perspectives of outgroup members and to promote greater trust and a greater willingness to forgive in order to prevent further intergroup conflict and violence.

In real-life conflicts, there are many obstacles to enhancing mutual empathy, perspective taking, and forgiveness. Opportunities for cross-group contact between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians, for example, are diminished by Israeli military controls and limitations on the movement of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as well as on the movement of Israelis into these territories (cf. Chaitin, 2008). On a more psychological level, large-scale victimization can instill a deep, and often exclusive, sense of victimhood, which in turn can inhibit empathy toward others in general and toward past and present day "enemies" in particular (Chaitin & Steinberg, 2008). Such negative influences of victim experiences and victimhood can be overcome, however, by means of storytelling and dialogue between members of the conflict groups in "safe spaces" such as "encounter seminars" (e.g., Bar-On, 2000) and by encouraging people to become more inclusive in how they construe suffering and to recognize that others share similar experiences of victimization at the hands of others (e.g., Vollhardt, 2012; Vollhardt & Staub, 2011).

Promoting Critical Evaluations of the Ingroup and Its Behavior

When a conflict has turned violent, however, understanding and empathy of the outgroup are already likely to have fallen as the first psychological casualties of intergroup conflict. Moreover, factors that perpetuate conflict work against the resurfacing of any understanding and empathy of the outgroup. To break the cycle of violence, critical evaluations of the ingroup and its behavior are necessary on all sides of the conflict. Recent work on deviance within groups (see Jetten & Hornsey, 2011) suggests that people are more likely to dissent from their groups when they possess an ability to form alternate perspectives and are willing to publicly express them (Packer, 2008). Those in an ongoing conflict who see outgroup members as sentient, fully fledged human beings are likely able to be more critical of their own group and its actions. In line with this view, perceived outgroup sentience has been shown to lead people on both sides of a conflict to endorse restorative as opposed to retributive notions of justice and to support peace deals and oppose peace-sabotaging violence such as suicide bombing campaigns (Leidner et al., 2013).

People with a strong moral basis for their dissenting attitudes are also less likely to conform to group norms (see Hornsey, Majkut, Terry, & McKimmie, 2003), such that they may become more willing to dissent when they believe prevailing norms are harmful to their group or to the society as a whole (Packer & Chasteen, 2010). While outgroup-directed emotions play a key role in perpetuating violent intergroup conflict, when directed toward the ingroup the same emotions can provide the motivational force for dissent and for confronting ingroup wrongdoing. In particular, ingroup-directed shame, anger, and moral outrage play crucial roles in the critical evaluation of the ingroup when it is embroiled in conflict.

When people come to see the actions of the ingroup as unjust, a predominant emotional response is that of shame. Felt when a core sense of their identity is tarnished (Tang-ney & Fischer, 1995), shame motivates people to distance themselves from the source of shame (Lickel, Schmader, Curtis, Scarnier, & Ames, 2005). In intergroup contexts this distancing can take a number of different forms, including a decrease in ingroup identification and an increase in support for withdrawal from the conflict (e.g., Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007). People may also experience group-based guilt in response to violence committed by their ingroup. Group-based guilt consists of painful feelings of tension and remorse that focus attention on the ingroup's immoral actions toward an outgroup (Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003; Tangney & Dearing, 2002) and the perception that their ingroup illegitimately caused another group to be disadvantaged through exploitation, discrimination, or mistreatment (Branscombe, Doosje, & McGarty, 2002; Iyer et al., 2003; Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002; Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994; Swim & Miller, 1999; Zebel et al., 2007). This perception and the resulting group-based guilt can motivate people to support a range of actions by ingroup leaders and authorities toward the disadvantaged outgroup, including collective apologies (e.g., McGarty et al., 2005), financial compensation (e.g., Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998; Zebel et al., 2007), and personal compensation toward members of the victimized outgroup (e.g., Doosje et al., 1998; McGarty et al., 2005). Group-based guilt can also reduce prejudice (e.g., Pedersen, Beven, Walker, & Griffiths, 2004; Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005) and increase citizen involvement in (Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen, 2000) and support for affirmative action policies for a wronged outgroup (e.g., Iyer et al., 2003; Sears & Citrin, 1982; Swim & Miller, 1999).

Ingroup-directed anger (Iyer et al., 2007; Leach, Iyer, & Pedersen, 2006) and moral outrage (Montada & Schneider, 1989) may be even more potent than shame and guilt in promoting critical reactions to the wrongful acts of the ingroup. Moral outrage is associated with prosocial political action and the restoration of moral standards (e.g., Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009). Moral outrage, elicited by moral arguments against violence, has also been shown to make high glorifiers—those we identified earlier to be most prone to intergroup violence—condemn ingroup-committed violence they otherwise would have condoned (Castano, Leidner, & Kardos, 2013). Furthermore, moral outrage strengthens the moral boundaries against future norm violations, decreasing the chances for future norm violations and increasing the chances for sustained peace. Also, when outgroup members are included in the ingroup and therefore the moral community (Opotow, 2001), moral outrage will prevent outgroup members' removal from moral concern and minimize positive moralization of violence against the outgroup. As such, ingroup-directed shame, anger, and moral outrage, if channeled constructively rather than destructively, can provide motivation to confront the ingroup and prevent the escalation or continuation of destructive conflict.

Concluding Remarks

We have reviewed psychological factors that facilitate and perpetuate conflict and psychological factors that facilitate conflict prevention and resolution. In doing so, we have shown how psychology illuminates the causes of violence and war and how this understanding can be used to promote peace. Research that investigates how to mitigate the negative consequences of war and violence is valuable. We think, however, that psychology would fall short of its full potential and value for society if it stopped at only mitigating the negative consequences of war. Since one of the main causes for psychology's (and society's) focus on violence and war is the mistaken belief that war is inevitable, it needs to be emphasized that the view that war is *not* inevitable and peace *is* possible is not purely based on ideological or idealistic grounds. The view that peace can be promoted is grounded in the realistic insights of the above-reviewed research showing that psychology *can* be applied to promote peace. Further, the view that peace can be promoted has more positive and less negative consequences for humanity than the view that war is inevitable. Therefore, it is our contention that psychology can and *should* be applied to promote peace, not war.

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