

*Putting the "Up" in Bottom-Up Peacebuilding:
Mobilizing Peace Constituencies in Democratizing Societies*

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My dissertation investigates factors facilitating or inhibiting the political engagement of peacebuilding NGOs in Bosnia and Northern Ireland. It uses original data collected through interviews of NGO leaders and observers of civil society in each society, with previous funding from the Center for Citizen Peacebuilding, along with the Department of Political Science, School of Social Sciences, and the Center for the Study of Democracy. My dissertation committee consists of Profs. Russ Dalton (chair), Carole Uhlaner, Pat Morgan and John Graham.

This research is important because it could improve civil society development efforts to prevent democratization from descending into civil war, as it often does (Hegre, et al., 2001; Snyder, 2000). Peacebuilding NGOs seem a particularly relevant form of civil society to keeping democratization peaceful, if they create political pressure for peace. In some societies at advanced stages of democratization, peacebuilding NGOs have developed into a politically engaged national peace movement which helped create a conducive political environment for peace with democratization, including South Africa, Rabin-era Israel and especially Northern Ireland (Anderson and Olson, 2003; Bloomfield, 1997; Fearon, 2000; Fitzduff, 2002; Gidron, et al., 2002; Golan and Kamal, 2000; McCartney, 2000; Saunders, 1999). But such activity has been avoided by peacebuilding NGOs in many less democratic societies suffering ethnic conflict, such as Palestine, Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia/Abkhazia, Moldova-Transdnistria and Kosovo (Garb and Phillips, 2001). International democratization assistance might help, but the experience in Bosnia, which received a decade of unprecedented levels of assistance, is unclear. A pilot study I conducted (with funding from the Citizen Peacebuilding Program) of 33 peacebuilding NGOs in Bosnia in 2003-4 indicates a sustained politically-engaged national peace movement has yet to emerge, though it is developing (Hemmer, et al., 2006).

In order to improve our knowledge of how peacebuilding NGOs might be aided in taking up this task more quickly, my dissertation asks: *What factors make it more likely that peacebuilding NGOs attempt to connect citizens to political leaders to support peace?* In addition to societal factors of democracy and political opportunity structure (McAdam, 1996), I theorize that building organizational legitimacy through previous less sensitive projects (Clark, 2001; McCarthy and Zald, 1997), and developing democratic ideology within the NGO (Dalton, 1994; Eckstein, 1998) through democratic experience or international influences, are key factors. I also theorize that international assistance is best delivered via long-term mentoring (Anderson and Olson, 2003; Carothers, 1999) which nurtures democratic ideology while respecting the need to build legitimacy and expand the peace constituency. These factors should be stronger in the less democratic culture of Bosnia, where the need to develop democratic ideology and legitimacy is greater.

In the past year, I have expanded my dataset to include interviews of 28 peacebuilding NGO leaders and 13 expert observers of civil society in Northern Ireland. A parallel effort to update the Bosnian data with additional questions appropriate to the current project is underway with completion expected by the end of May. (This part of the data collection was delayed by some difficulties with my Bosnian assistant learning how ask the new, more qualitative questions with follow-up probing in the way I would. This prevented completion before a lengthy trip he had planned to the United States. But I managed to meet with him while here and coach him on the new questions, and he is now back in Bosnia collecting the rest of the data.) I have extracted variables from the Northern Ireland interviews, and have begun analysis and drafting of several

empirical chapters, to be completed once the rest of the new Bosnian data is received and processed. I have also drafted large portions of the theory and method chapters.

Over the summer, I plan to add analysis of the Bosnia data, finish drafting the empirical chapters, and draft the introduction and conclusion. I will circulate draft chapters as they are completed, and implement suggested revisions in the early fall. My firm goal is to defend in the fall, reinforced by the knowledge that my eligibility for financial aid expires when that quarter ends. (And I'd like to be done before I turn 40 in October!) Being able to focus 100% on writing, which this funding will allow me to do, is essential to meeting that goal.

But finishing the dissertation is not the end of this project; the ultimate goal is publication! I have already published one related article (Hemmer, et al., 2006) explaining the theory and using the pilot data from Bosnia for an illustration, in cooperation with other Center for Citizen Peacebuilding scholars (John Graham, Paula Garb and Marlett Phillips). I am scheduled to make presentations based on the expanded data at UCI in May and at Syracuse University in September, for the 20th anniversary of their Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflict (PARC). The latter paper will be published as a chapter of a book based on this conference. I have also been invited to coauthor a chapter on civil society and peacebuilding in Bosnia for an edited book comparing how the sociopolitical environment affects how civil society engages in peacebuilding in nine societies. I will be working with an international panel of noted authors on this project, which will include presentations at the International Studies Association meeting next March, with the book targeted for submission to the publisher in summer 2008. Each of these publications will have a somewhat different focus than the dissertation, but will draw upon it. Refining and targeting my writing for these publications will be my main task once the dissertation is finished.

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