

Clarifying the Sociological Meanings of
Peace and War in Pursuit of Peace

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Abstract

Peace and war are social phenomena of great significance to human beings in all times and places. Though these have received considerable attention across the social sciences, the study of their social meanings is as of yet underdeveloped within the discipline of sociology, where studies of peace and war are in their early stages. The oft-repeated questions of whether widespread peace is possible or war is inevitable can only be answered when the meanings and causes of peace and war are understood.

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Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Why The Study of Peace and War?.....	1
Methodological Approach and Considerations.....	4
Chapter Two: Of Duels and Battles, Politics and What Follows.....	11
War as Self-Defense in the Wild.....	12
War as Knowledge of Another’s Unlegitimated Declaration of Intent to Kill or Dominate.....	17
Slavery Understood as a State of War.....	23
War as Fatal Group Conflict For a Thing Called “Ours”.....	33
War as Armies Engaged in Lethal Combat.....	37
War as Self-Defense in the Wild, Revisited: Of Big Bodies of People Joined Under the State.....	41
War as Internal Conflict Within a Sovereign Territory; Civil Rebellion to Contest the Legitimacy of Authority and the Standing Social and Economic Orders.....	48
The Power Politics of Peace Understood as War.....	59
A Lonely Definition of Peace.....	62
Summary: Of Meanings and Causes.....	65
Chapter Three: Of Law, Order, and Security In and Between Groups; The Search For Peace.....	68
Informal Peace Groups.....	69
Peace Groups With Formal Regulatory Codes of Behaviour.....	79
Summary: On the Purported Equivalency of Law-Enforced Security With Peace.....	100
Chapter Four: Conclusions.....	102
On the Questions, Of Widespread Peace? Or, The Inevitability of War?.....	102

Chapter One: Introduction

Why the Study of Peace and War?

The early twenty-first century world is one in which the inhabitants of the globe are inescapably aware of each other. In times past, tales of distant lands travelled by word of mouth over the course of weeks and months and years, and the political doings of distant peoples had little immediate or no known impact on those of others elsewhere. Given the population expansion of human societies during the past several centuries, combined with the spread of capitalism and the technological advances spurred by the industrial revolution, the political landscape has changed irreversibly. In the twenty-first century, it is possible to learn tidings of distant events within moments of their occurrence, and the political doings of any people have immediate consequences for those of others.

It is in this context of global awareness that I wonder if I will be so fortunate as to live out the days of my life without ever having to experience first-hand the horrors of war. I have read historical accounts of wars past, and seen countless films and television programs depicting representations of war; I have heard the personal accounts of survivors of wars, and have witnessed televised and print news reports about contemporary wars throughout my everyday life. And yet, amid so many ghastly tales and images of war, I have never been at war and have never lost a loved one to the causes of war. It is my hope, given what I have learned about war, that as many people as possible can and will be spared from such pain and brutality.

The driving question, then, that led me to conduct this sociological research was, 'is widespread peace possible, or is war inevitable?' I wasn't certain that I would be able

to answer this question, but I faithfully, and perhaps naïvely, believed that there must be a solution to the problem of war. I realized that in order to consider the possibilities, I would first need a clearer understanding of what, precisely, it means to be ‘at peace’ or to be ‘at war.’ Initially these terms seemed fairly straightforward, for any mention of the word ‘peace’ calls to mind ‘peaceful’ imagery, and any mention of the word ‘war’ calls to mind the imagery of the brutalities of ‘war.’

My secondary research questions then, in order to facilitate answering the first, are ‘what is peace?’ and, ‘what is war?’ More accurately, I asked, ‘how are peace and war framed and defined in the relevant literature?’ There are three reasons that I felt the need to ask these questions despite the perhaps seemingly obvious answers. First, it would be inappropriate to advocate either the view that ‘peace’ is possible or that ‘war’ is inevitable without a clear understanding of what states of being these words entail. Second, the subject matter of any theoretical enterprise must be clearly defined in order that any discussion or debate that follows from it may rest on common understanding of the author’s framing of the subject, lest debates be muddled by misunderstandings. Third, it seemed to me initially that peace and war were binary opposites, but I wasn’t entirely sure if this was the case. It wasn’t until my research was underway that I began to appreciate the complexity of these concepts and how broad the connotations of these words really are.

In addition to these preliminary questions concerning definitions of peace and war, I also asked, ‘what does the literature reveal about the human motivations for engaging in either peaceful or warring relations?’ Though some of the answers to this question were obvious from the outset, I wanted to gain a better understanding of the

causes of peace and war in order to better understand how peace is possible in the face of war.

Another question I asked is, 'what are the debates and common themes revealed in the literature that can help us to understand the underlying processes leading to peace and/or war?' I posed this question in the belief that any themes and debates arising in the literature during the course of my research might shed some light on the answer to my primary research question.

Finally, I asked, 'what theoretical insights can be gained for the modern theorist from the texts under analysis?' The reason for posing this question is that the sociology of peace and war is yet in the early stages of development, and I thought that any answers to this question might provide useful starting points for new avenues of research.

There are several reasons why this research is important to conduct, though the questions being posed are by no means new ones. In terms of sociology as a discipline, it is important to conceptualize what peace and war mean with regard to human social behaviour. This is because what people do, and how and why people do what they do is bound up in the social conditions in which people live. As sociologists, it is important to consider how the peace and wars of peoples socialize people to behave, both on a micro level of social analysis pertaining to relations between individuals, and on a macro level of analysis pertaining to relations between groups.

Additionally, how social scientists understand peace and war affects the approaches through which these phenomena are studied and the possible kinds of conclusions that may be reached in conducting research. Since considerations of peace and war in sociological thought are still in their early beginnings, it is prudent to establish

early on what phenomenon falls under the rubric of the subject matter so that when the words 'peace' and 'war' are used, the referents of these words are clear in sociological discourse.

In terms of contemporary global politics, this research is significant for highlighting some of the ways in which peace and war have been conceived historically and for identifying new ways in which they may be conceived. Given that contemporary weapons of war are far more powerful and far-reaching than they were in the fairly recent past, the need is greater than ever to be clear about what it means to be in a state of peace or a state of war. This is so that people are enabled to make informed decisions about the best ways to proceed in managing conflicts as they emerge.

Methodological Approach and Considerations

In the early stages of this research project, I considered a number of ways that I might uncover the answers to my research questions. My first consideration was to consult scholarly literature concerning the subject matter, and this is the method that I chose. Among some of the others were the possibilities of analyzing relevant novels, of which I have read many, newspaper and magazine articles, comic books, films, or video games. I also debated whether I should conduct interviews with people who have lived in peace, as well as those who have witnessed and/or experienced war, and with people who have experienced both. Another possible method that occurred to me was to study both

phenomena directly and to record my observations¹, but this last was too frightening and dangerous, with regard to war, for me to consider very seriously². However, each of the sources of information identified above seemed to me to be rich with interesting material through which I might search for the answers to my questions.

My reasoning for selecting to analyze scholarly literature rather than any of the other potential sources of information was that I thought I would be more likely to find explicit and more detailed answers to my questions in the works of those who had made it their work to study the phenomena in which I was interested³. As regards my consideration to conduct interviews, while I thought that I might also be able to find explicit and detailed answers in the revelations of contemporary men and women, I was concerned that the seriousness of the subject matter might have possible emotional and psychological implications for some interviewees, and counseling for any potential distress was not something that I would be able to provide.

Once I decided to confine my research to scholarly literature, I set out to select relevant reading material. I sought books and articles that dealt explicitly with peace, war, and the issue of violence. Since I knew from previous coursework and from consulting with other academics that peace and war are comparatively under-developed topics of research in sociology, I did not confine my search to materials within the discipline. Instead, I sought to analyze relevant works from a number of disciplines and to consider them from a sociological perspective, in terms of human group behaviour.

¹ I might have joined the military.

² If it can be avoided, I would rather not experience war directly.

³ This is not to say that I did not expect I might find explicit and detailed answers in any of the other sources, but that I assumed the scholarly literature would be likely to provide considerably more. Also, I did informally consult novels, comic books, and films as supplementary material with which to ponder the meaning of what is written in the texts.

The works selected for analysis in this project are situated within a larger body of literature pertaining to war, which is in itself far too vast to be included wholly for analysis. My choices concerning what to include and what to exclude, then, are a reflection of my primary concern with peace in undertaking this research. More specifically, previous research pertaining to social contract theories piqued my interest in further exploring the relationship between social contracts and the potential for widespread peace. The majority of the works consulted were selected on the grounds that they address this relationship in conjunction with, or in the context of, war and violence.

I should point out a bias with which I approached the selection of reading materials. I assumed that most, if not all, of the works I would analyze would contain explicit definitions of both peace and war. The reason for this assumption is that it seemed to me that peace and war go hand in hand, that the presence of one implies the other's absence, and that in discussing one or the other, authors would define both in the process of theorizing about either. As will become clear in due course, this was not the case, and I uncovered considerably more definitions of war than of peace.

Another assumption that influenced my selection of works for analysis was the belief that texts about war would likely shed more light on the causes of war than would works about peace. I thought that in order to understand how to achieve widespread peace, I would need to understand the social processes that lead to war, in order that war's causes might be addressed. This is the explanation for the prevalence of works pertaining to war in the body of texts that I analyzed, despite the fact that peace was my primary interest in conducting this research.

For each work that I analyzed, I highlighted all passages that were relevant to my research questions, coding the passages on a scheme as follows: ‘very relevant – explicitly answers one of the questions,’ ‘relevant – implicitly answers one of the questions,’ and, ‘somewhat relevant – provides useful insight pertaining to one of the questions.’

Once I had completed my reading of the material, I revisited the highlighted passages and set out to record notes thematically according to key themes and concepts. This proved to be rather difficult, as there were many themes and concepts that appeared in some works and not in others, yet most of the themes and concepts could be applied somehow to those other works in which they did not appear. I made a number of preliminary possible essay outlines and I revisited my research questions, pondering the best possible way to organize my notes in order to answer them as clearly and efficiently as possible. I came to the realization that my research questions were too broad in light of the wide number of ways that peace and war were treated in the works I’d read.

At this stage, I decided to narrow my research questions. My focus became to answer my primary and secondary research questions, regarding the seeming inevitability of war and possibilities for widespread peace, and how these are defined. I returned to the passages I had highlighted and resumed recording my notes, with a clearer guideline along which to make decisions about the relevance of particular passages. I soon came to find that in focusing on these primary research questions, I was nonetheless inadvertently recording some of the answers to my other questions.

Having completed my research notes, I again made a number of potential essay outlines and considered which might be the best with which to elucidate my findings.

With an outline decided, I wrote 50 pages, and then returned to the consultation of scholarly sources.

Subsequently, I became dissatisfied with what I had written, and began the process of editing, re-writing, and expanding. What follows is a reconsideration of those first 50 pages. In the second chapter, “Of Duels and Battles, Politics and What Follows,” you will find explanation and discussion of eight explicit definitions of war and one explicit definition of peace which were revealed in the literature. For each definition I address each of the following questions: 1) what is the definition? 2) How have different authors written about this definition of peace or war? 3) What are the reasons, or causes, the definition suggests for engaging in peaceful or warring relations? 4) What concepts are being used to characterize peace and war, and which themes emerge from the definition’s conceptualization? 5) Does the definition describe what the phenomenon is? 6) What is the utility of the definition?

I argue that the majority of the definitions of war uncovered in the course of my research are in fact descriptions of social processes that may lead to war, rather than actual definitions that describe what war is as a phenomenon. I reject definitions in which individual conflicts are understood as war and argue that war is characterized by potentially fatal, armed, violent conflict between groups whose criteria of membership is more-or-less clearly defined, such that at least two distinct groups can be identified as engaged in violent and potentially fatal combat. I also point out that though the majority of the understandings of war uncovered by my research are inadequate as definitions, they are nevertheless very useful for highlighting various potential causes of war. I demonstrate that though there are broad and varied causes of war that emerge from

specific contexts, they can all be subsumed under the following categories: 1) the will to survive; 2) greed; 3) the will to dominate; 4) the will to be free; and 5) sociality.

I also put forth the view that the one explicit definition of peace that emerges from the literature is inadequate as a description of peace, and suggest that an important task in the emerging field of the sociology of peace and war is to clarify precisely what is meant by 'peace,' given that peace is often the declared end of war.

It will be noted that the third chapter, "Of Law, Order, and Security In and Between Groups; The Search for Peace," is qualitatively different from Chapter Two, in which a typology of definitions is presented and discussed. In contrast, Chapter Three is a discussion of socio-juridical issues involved in the framing of peace as arising from the establishment of government and social contracts in the pursuit of security. More specifically, the third chapter addresses how and why groups are formed, the social dynamics of groups, and how informal behavioural expectations come to be codified into law. The qualitative difference between the second and third chapters, then, is due to the fact that the definitions of war that arose from the literature are several and distinct, though inter-related, whereas peace is largely addressed implicitly in terms of the conditions imposed and necessitated both by living in groups, and doing so in the vicinity of other groups.

In the fourth and concluding chapter, I put forth an explicit definition of peace that may be applied in broad terms to encompass a range of subjective definitions of peace. I assert that there is a definitive quality to peace that is more than merely the absence of hostilities or warfare, since peace may be absent in times and places where war, or the threat of war, is absent. I also answer the questions of whether widespread

peace is possible, given my understanding of peace and the causes of war identified in this research project. I argue that it is not possible to achieve widespread peace in all times and places simultaneously given the natural conditions of human existence, but also that this does not mean that war is inevitable. In answer to this latter question, I assert that I cannot answer it adequately due to a recognition that further research would be required into each contextually specific cause of war, which is far beyond the scope and depth of this research project. Finally, I suggest an alternative approach for conducting future research in pursuit of the answers to these questions, an approach that may prove more fruitful for finding methods of increasing the peaceful experience of human beings everywhere.

Chapter Two: Of Duels and Battles, Politics and What Follows

My starting point in conducting this research was to find answers to the questions, ‘what is peace?’ and ‘what is war?’ These are good questions to ask given that perceptions and understandings of peace and war inform peoples’ decisions and actions in the world, whether directly or indirectly. It is important to be clear about what constitutes peace and war in order that decisions about acceptable methods for achieving what is desirable are well informed. It might seem obvious that peace is desirable and war is not; however, world history has repeatedly demonstrated that countless multitudes of men throughout the ages have engaged in warfare as a means of achieving their ends, and so it must not be assumed that one state of affairs is more or less desirable than the other; this will vary according to circumstances and the alternative means available for the achievement of desired ends.

The literature reveals a number of interrelated ways to define war. However, explicit definitions of peace are almost entirely lacking in the works analyzed. As David Riches puts it,

Where analysis is concerned, the employment of terms like peace and war and violence is fraught with difficulty. Peace, for example, is a state of affairs which is objectively almost impossible to define, except as the absence of something (i.e. war, violence). Violence commonsensically refers to the rendering of physical hurt, yet physical force wielded against people by arms of government is often spoken of as social control, or the maintenance of order... evidently, all these terms have strong ideological connotations (Riches 1987:18).

This statement of Riches’ points to a central finding of this research project, that one of the most important challenges to the sociology of peace and war is to clarify what is meant both conceptually and realistically by the terms, ‘peace’ and ‘war.’

Among the ways that war is conceptualized in the literature, two overarching themes concerning war treat it, on the one hand, as a state of relations between individuals, and on the other hand, as a state of relations between groups. According to Robert E. Park, “we have no adequate working conception of what war is” (Park 1941:229), and it may be added that the same may be said about peace. The discussion that follows will demonstrate both the accuracy of his statement, and the need for sociologists to clarify the subject matter.

In this chapter I will begin by discussing the various explicit definitions of war presented in the literature surveyed, and then give an account of the one explicit definition of peace in the literature. I will discuss the implications of these definitions and then turn in the second chapter to a discussion of how peace is defined implicitly in the literature.

War as Self-Defense in the Wild

One account of war is that given by Thomas Hobbes, in which he sees people living without government as being in a state of war with each other, “where every man is enemy to every man,” and there is “worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:107). This, Hobbes explains, is because each person has a right and the freedom to do what he must in order to survive, including taking the life of another (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:109-10). This notion of right is not based in any legal

framework, but in what Hobbes calls the right of nature, the natural right of self-preservation (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:109).

In Hobbes' view, the state of war persists among human beings so long as there is no "common power to keep them all in awe" (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:106-07). This is because, whatever minor differences may exist between individuals in terms of their abilities to do as they will, the differences are not so great that the strongest can ever be certain of escaping danger from the weak or an alliance of others, and the weak can never be certain that that they will be strong enough together to overcome the strongest (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:104-05). In Hobbes' view, then, war is an anarchical relation between relative equals in which individuals serve none other than themselves and answer to no higher authority than their own reason in pursuit of their ends (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:110). In the next chapter it will be shown that Hobbes, along with John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, implicitly define peace in terms of the consensual establishment of government and law among people, the creation of a body large enough and strong enough to halt the war between equal individuals who are born naturally free.

According to Hobbes, "the nature of war consists not in actual fighting but in the known disposition thereto during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is peace" (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:107). This is to say that people living without government may always suppose that the safety and security of their lives are at risk, that others in the vicinity may have reason to wish them harm or take their lives, and without any assurance that they will not do so, must remain ever-vigilant against potential threats. In this view, war does not consist only in fighting, but also in

knowing that it might be necessary to do so in self-defense at any time. That is, war is understood in terms of a lack of personal security. Immanuel Kant supports this view of war and states that, “The state of peace among men living in close proximity is not the natural state (*status naturalis*); instead, the natural state is a one of war, which does not just consist in open hostilities, but also in the constant and enduring threat of them” (Kant [1795] in Humphrey 2003:7).

As Michel Foucault puts it,

The primitive war, the war of every man against every man, is born of equality and takes place in the element of that equality. War is the immediate effect of nondifferences, or at least of insufficient differences (Foucault 1997:90).

He goes on to explain that if there were any great difference of strength among individuals, either a brief war would occur in which the strong defeated the weak immediately and decisively, or no war would occur at all due to the recognition on the part of the weak of their inferior strength (Foucault 1997:91). However, since, as Hobbes points out, differences among the strengths of men are generally not so great as to make conflict unavoidable, “a man who wishes to avoid war can do so on only one condition: he must show that he is ready to wage war, and is not prepared to abandon all thought of war” (Foucault 1997:92).

According to this definition, then, the reasons for engaging in warring relations, the causes of war, are both the will of individuals to survive and the relative equality of strength between them. The notion that relative equality between people contributes to the occurrence of war implies that human sociality is itself a cause of war, given the

assertion that most people who interact are of more or less equal strength and capability in enforcing their will.

Another (more implicit) reason is greed, for though a man might not *need* the resources of another, he might *want* them enough to attempt to gain them if he believes his odds of success to be sufficiently better than the other's. Whether or not such an assumption is correct can only be determined by the results of the war.

While the concept of equality is clearly central to this definition of war, another is 'the natural right of self-preservation' mentioned above. In my view, the use of the term 'right' is inappropriate here, as rights connote a socially constructed legal framework. It is more appropriate, in the absence of any kind of government or organized society, to think of this so-called right to self-defense in terms of the freedom or power⁴ that individuals have to act in their self-defense. In consideration of this definition of war, it is not that people are naturally *entitled* to self-defense that is of importance, but rather that each has a certain level of freedom-power to act in self-defense, and that the levels of freedom-power each has are relatively equal. As Foucault has written about the work of Henri Boullainvilliers, "you can study history as long as you like, and in any way that you like, but you will never discover any natural rights. Natural rights do not exist in any society" (Foucault 1997:156), and with this I concur. Whenever and wherever we find the presence of so-called natural rights, what is actually at hand is the exercise of freedom-power, which is the source of what is meant by the saying, "might is right."

⁴ Henceforth I will refer to freedom and power together as 'freedom-power.' This is because one is only 'free' to do something without restraint if he has the 'power' to accomplish it; and he only has the 'power' to accomplish it if he is 'free' to do it in the first place. Increased freedom entails increased power, and increased power entails increased freedom. In some views, freedom and power may be understood as distinct, but they nevertheless go hand-in-hand.

It is prudent to ask whether or not this definition of war describes what war is. At base, it is a definition that sees war as an anarchical relation between relatively equal individuals competing for survival before the establishment of government, as dangerous, life-threatening conflict in the wild. In my view, this is not an adequate definition of war in sociological terms. Granted, the lives of the individuals in question are uncertain, safety and security are understood to be perpetually at risk, and fatally violent conflicts may arise which jeopardize each individual's ability to survive. However, such conflicts describe what William Graham Sumner calls the competition of life. He states,

War arises from the competition of life...In the struggle for existence a man is wrestling with nature to extort from her the means of subsistence. It is when two men are striving side by side in the struggle for existence to extort from nature the supplies they need that they come into rivalry, and a collision of interest with each other takes place...This collision we call the competition of life (Sumner 1911:209).

When the word 'war' is uttered, the imagery called to mind tends not to be that of two lone, hungry people fighting to the death in a field over a ripe gourd. Rather, it tends to be some variation of imagery in which two *groups* of men are doing so. What the passage from Sumner illustrates is that the competition of life, essentially Hobbes' notion of war, is what causes people to band together into groups which, when they compete as groups, can lead to war. This is to say that the competition of life is not the equivalent of war, but rather, one of its basic causes, tied in with the causes identified above. If individuals never came together into groups unified by common interests, conflicts would remain interspersed as personal relations between individuals and never reach the caliber of violent destruction that is possible today. This view is supported by Margaret Mead who, in discussing the absence of warfare among Eskimos, states, "the idea of warfare, of

one *group* organizing against another *group* to maim and wound and kill them was absent. And, without that idea, passions might rage but there was no war” (Mead 1940:271).

That said, while this conception of war does not define what war is, it is nonetheless useful for helping us to understand social processes that may lead to war. It is plain to see how the insecurities of life experienced in the state of nature that Hobbes has described can cause groups to form on the basis of each individual’s shared desire for increased odds of survival and protection. This process will be described in greater detail in the following chapter. For the time being, there are additional explicit definitions of war that are worthy of consideration.

War as Knowledge of Another’s Unlegitimated Declaration of Intent to Kill or Dominate

In a similar vein to Hobbes’ concerns, it may be added that war is understood to be underway as soon as the intention for war is declared. According to Locke,

Declaring by word or action...settled design upon another man’s life puts him in a state of war with him against whom he has declared such an intention, and so has exposed his life to the other’s power to be taken away by him, or any one that joins with him in his defence, and espouses his quarrel (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:125).

This is to say that the declared *intention* either to kill, harm, or enslave another constitutes the state of war. In the context of which Locke speaks, this is a relation between dominant and subordinate individuals prior to the establishment of government.

Perhaps more accurately, and in light of Hobbes' concern with equality of strength as problematic, in this definition it is the declaration of intent to *prove dominance* that constitutes war.

While Locke begins his discussion in terms of the relations between individuals in the state of nature, he points out that it may also apply to relations between individuals living under government. He states that any person who attempts to enslave another by means of the use of force is in a state of war with he whom he would enslave (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:125) and that “force *without right* upon a man's person makes a state of war both where there is, and is not, a common judge”⁵ (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:127). This statement makes an important qualification concerning what constitutes war, in that the use of force against another is understood to constitute war so long as that force is considered illegitimate. In this view, in the state of affairs in which there is no government, there can be no legitimate or illegitimate use of force, and all declarations of intent and instances of violence against the life, security, and freedom of another constitute war. However, where government has been established, the use of force to overpower another is only understood to constitute war in instances where that force is applied without right or legitimacy according to the laws established by the social contract of the government in question.

In conducting my research, I found no discussions by other authors of this definition of war that rests upon the notion of the declaration of intent. From the outset, it can be argued that this definition is very similar to that of Hobbes' where there is constant uncertainty regarding the possibilities of being attacked. This is undoubtedly also true of conditions in the state of nature for Locke. One of the key differences is that

⁵ My italics

for Locke, war is not necessarily ever-present at all times that men are in fear of potential attack, but when the intent of another to attack becomes known.

The two explicit causes of war suggested by this definition are inter-related. One is survival. However, one of the concerns here is of a different kind than that discussed in terms of the previous definition. Previously, the concern was with the survival of men who are relative equals in competition *for survival* in nature, and this is also arguably the cause of war in Locke's writings about the declaration to kill, harm, or enslave another in the state of nature⁶. However, in consideration of the declaration to do so under government, the concern here is with the survival of individuals who are in competition for survival for the sake of *dominance*. Since the people who are living together under government have agreed to a contract for their mutual protection⁷, and have thereby erected laws to that end, the issue of survival in this instance is not about the competition of life, as the individuals in question are joined together in that competition as members of a group against other groups. The potential reasons for the competition for dominance are as many as we can imagine, and Locke does not elaborate⁸. However, since he makes it clear that the declaration of the intent is only war under government when the use of force is illegitimate, it is plain that the defender's reasons for engaging in war are for survival foremost, and perhaps dominance secondly, but the offender's reasons are for dominance first and for survival only secondly⁹. This difference in causal motivations for engaging in conflict is because in order for the use of force to be deemed illegitimate, the

⁶ Though he doesn't say so explicitly with regard to the issue of equality.

⁷ Purportedly. This will be discussed in greater detail in due course.

⁸ To name a few, we may add greed here as with the Hobbesian definition, desire for something the other rightfully possesses. Perhaps also anger, for some perceived social outrage that is unaddressed by the governing social contract. Perhaps for nothing more than increased status among others.

⁹ For he is confident enough in his winning ability to declare the intent to make war.

defender must not have breached any terms of the formal social contract. Having a declaration of intent against him for no legitimate reason forces him into a defensive stance, which cannot be said for the aggressor who pursues the conflict willfully despite a lack of legally recognized legitimacy.

This discussion of survival for the sake of dominance as a cause of war may arguably be applied to the Hobbesian definition of war as well. The point is that the causes discussed here are made obvious by the construction of this definition, whereas this is not so in the case of the former, where the primary concern is survival for survival's sake as a cause of war.

Clearly, the concepts most salient to this definition of war are the *declaration of intent*, which under this definition constitutes war and is altogether missing in other definitions, and the *illegitimate* application of force in order to dominate by way of harm, enslavement, or death. Concerning the declaration of intent, Locke speaks of it explicitly in terms of a relation between individuals, but it may easily be applied to considerations of the relations between groups. As for the question of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of violence, this will be discussed in greater detail throughout this essay, a recurring theme in the works of many writers.

It is my view that the definition of war presented here does not accurately describe what it means to be at war, what war is as a phenomenon. The declaration of intent to harm, enslave, or kill an individual, whether in the state of nature or illegitimately under government, does not define war. This is because while it puts the threatened individual in a position of insecurity and calls him to fight, it does not threaten the immediate survival of any others in the vicinity (other than the challenger). Again, it

is a personal relation that may lead to war if the individuals involved call upon others for assistance, in which case the lives of all involved are at stake, as opposed to only those of the two initial conflicting individuals. In consideration of this understanding of war, both the affronted individual and the challenger are in danger of harm, enslavement, or death, but it is not war.

If we consider this definition in terms of relations between groups, then the declaration of intent is an aspect of that which may constitute war, of what can cause actual war. For one group to declare war on another puts the lives and safety of all of the individuals in each group at risk, and a bloody confrontation may be expected to ensue in which many more than one or two might die. The declaration itself, however, does not necessarily begin the war or itself constitute a state of war. The war is in the actual lethal conflict and may logically follow the declaration, but then again, it is feasible, if arguably unlikely, that a peaceful act in response can prevent lethal conflict before it begins¹⁰.

It is fair to ask why a potentially fatal, violent conflict between individuals may not be understood to constitute war while a similar conflict between groups may. The reasons are that individuals fighting as such serve private interests alone and the risks and advantages of conflict are entirely personal. Choices and free will regarding the appropriate course of action belong entirely to each individual in a personal conflict. Individuals in groups, on the other hand, must always balance their private interests with those of the group, which do not always coincide, and so individuals can be drawn into life-threatening situations that, in fact, do not serve their best private interests in the least, apart from their membership in a group that is at war. Furthermore, and perhaps this is

¹⁰ I am not putting forth the view that this is a good stratagem when faced with a declaration of war. I am merely pointing out that some such peaceful act, or a non-violent act such as the placing of economic sanctions, *can* hypothetically prevent the outbreak of physical violence between groups.

the influence of contemporary circumstances on my thinking, two individuals seen in potentially lethal conflict are not deemed to be at 'war,'¹¹ be there a government established or not, the violence deemed legitimate or not. The term 'war' calls to mind not a private duel or deadly wrestling match, but groups of bloodied people who fight as part, or on behalf, of a group.

Nevertheless, the definition provided by Locke does provide useful insight into the subject matter. For instance, on the one hand it might seem plain that the declaration of war by one group on another will likely lead to war. I suggested that a peace offering or a non-violent sanction could hypothetically halt war before it begins. On the other hand, we might consider what Foucault wrote about the demonstration of war-preparedness as a tactic for avoiding war. He states that,

Three series of elements are in play from the outset. First, calculated presentations: my presentation of the strength, of the other, my presentation of the other's presentation of my strength...Second, emphatic and pronounced expressions of will: you make it obvious that you want war, you demonstrate that you will not abandon the idea of war. Third, you use mutually intimidatory tactics: I am so afraid of waging war that I will feel safe only if you are at least as afraid of war as I – and, insofar as that is possible, more afraid of it than I (Foucault 1997:92).

What is useful about this passage of Foucault's is that it provides insight into how the declared intent for war might actually serve to halt war rather than provoke it. However, this is only possible if the groups' capabilities are relatively equal and questionable to both groups involved. Otherwise, one group's bluff might be met by the

¹¹ Where it might happen that an outside observer might characterize such a conflict as 'war,' it is a figure of speech meant to describe enmity, but not an actual state of war, which necessarily involves more than two people.

other group's actually superior capabilities, or at least, the other group's willingness to attempt a demonstration of superior capabilities.

An additional insight that can be gleaned from Locke's definition of war is that acts of violence deemed to be 'illegitimate' may sometimes be understood as more harmful and less acceptable than acts of violence that are deemed 'legitimate.' However, as the following discussion will show, this is not always the case, and whether or not violence can ever be truly legitimate is a matter of contention among experts.

Slavery Understood as a State of War

The notion of the condition of slavery as constituting the state of war appears explicitly in the work of Rousseau. He states,

By taking an equivalent of his victim's life the victor shows him no favour; instead of destroying him unprofitably, he destroys him by exploiting him. Hence, far from the victor having acquired some further authority besides that of force over the vanquished, the state of war between them continues; their mutual relation is the effect of war, and the continuation of the rights of war implies that there has been no treaty of peace. An agreement has surely been made, but that agreement, far from ending the state of war, presupposes its continuation (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:57-8).

In contrast to Locke's notion that enslavement constitutes a state of war only where there is no government or where it is illegitimate before the laws established under government, Rousseau understands slavery as a state of war regardless of whether legal legitimacy stands behind it. This is because in breaking any law that might serve to legitimate his enslavement, a person declares himself an enemy to the people who

enacted those laws and thereby challenges the institutions that uphold them. Rousseau insists that such a person must be either banished or put to death (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:79), but that to enslave him continues the state of war. “To attack the social convention [of a sovereign power] and all that is involved in it” (Rousseau [1761] in Vaughan 1917:124) is to make war, and, as Hobbes states, “*rebellion* is but war renewed” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:250). A live captive, then, cannot be understood to be at peace with any who restrict his freedom, whether lawfully or otherwise, and rebellion may reasonably be expected.

Carl von Clausewitz’ definition of war is in keeping with the notion of slavery as a state of war. He states that war is “an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will” (Clausewitz [1832] in Maude 1962:2)¹² and this view is further supported by other thinkers who understand war as “the power of man over man,” (Strausz-Hupé 1956:4) and the ability to “command and to be obeyed” (Jouvenel in Arendt 1970:37). But from where does this ability or freedom-power to compel obedience come? Given the discussions to this point, it might be assumed that it comes from the application of force and superior strength.

In his work, however, Frederick Engels points out that slavery has its basis in the economic order, rather than on political acts of force alone. He states, “subjugation has always been...a ‘means through which food can be secured’...and never and nowhere a

¹² While I did not study the work of Clausewitz directly in conducting this literature review, I understand from what other authors have written that Clausewitz was not necessarily referring specifically to slavery in his understanding of war. However, considered on its own, the statement quoted here is nevertheless an explicit definition of war that supports the notion of slavery as constituting a state of war. Clausewitz’ thinking will be considered further in a subsequent section of this chapter. It should be noted here that there are two reasons I did not study Clausewitz’ work directly: first, his work is too extensive given the scope of this research project and I would not have been able to conduct as in-depth an analysis as it deserves; second, I was able to gather information pertaining to his most significant contributions from citations in the works of other authors.

political grouping established ‘for its own sake’...force is only the means and...the aim is economic advantage” (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:178). He goes on to explain that in order to profit from the work of a slave, the exploiter must first meet two prerequisites: that he already has both the means to support the life of the slave, as well as the materials the slave needs to accomplish his work (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:178). As Hannah Arendt puts it, “the rule of master over slaves, who always outnumbered him, did not rest on superior means of coercion as such, but on a superior organization of power – that is, on the organized solidarity of the masters” (Arendt 1970:50), and we might add here that it is the superior *economic* organization of the masters that is a necessary condition for the existence of slavery.

Engels’ explanation for this phenomenon is twofold. First, he points out that as groups form out of the relations between individuals in the state of nature, some men are given the responsibility of over-seeing it that the common interests of the group are met, and this leads to the beginnings of the social legitimation of authority through increased status of particular members¹³ (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:197-98). Furthermore, as the productive forces of competing groups inevitably increase, he explains, so does the size of groups’ membership. The result is a strong community of interests within each group, both to continue producing, and also to protect itself from competing groups, and so the division of labour is born alongside the development of classes (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:198). Engels does not specify which classes necessarily develop the greatest statuses, be it the producers, the protectors, or those responsible for over-seeing their work in the group’s interest, but it is plain that the accompanying authority, wealth, and freedom-power enable them (and especially the

¹³ In contrast to authority imposed by the dictate of ‘might is right.’

highest-status individuals of each class) to employ the labour of others. Additionally, while this process is underway in successful groups overall, changes are also occurring within the family units of these groups, such that there is a general surplus within the group despite class membership, and families as units within the group can afford to pay for the labour of strangers. Engels explains that the result of these processes is that rather than killing captured prisoners of war who previously would have no logical place in the community, it becomes possible to exploit them for their labour and “slavery was invented” (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:199).

As Park puts it in explaining Gaetano Mosca’s work, the function of conflict,

is not to destroy, but ultimately to assimilate the vanquished. This involves the imposition upon them of the status of a subject people and, incidentally, the assignment to them of a function in the territorial economy within which the victors are dominant (Park 1941:239).

The accuracy of this statement depends on the conditions of life and on the social relations that exist between people. If consideration is given to the circumstances of people living in the state of nature and competing for survival as individuals against one another, it isn’t feasible for people, who are relatively equal in their degrees of freedom-power, to establish stable territories and/or lasting dominance over others. In such a scenario, the function of conflict is to destroy the competition rather than exploit it.

However, if social conditions are developed to the point described by Engels, then the above statement by Park becomes true, or at least partly. On the one hand, the function of violent conflict may at times be to establish dominance and the enslavement of others. Conversely, while it may be possible to do so under some conditions, and potentially profitably, this does not mean that the purpose of conflict is always or

necessarily to enslave, but that sometimes it might be to destroy even if enslavement is possible and potentially profitable. As pointed out previously, Arendt views the superior organization of the 'masters' as essential to the establishment and maintenance of a state of slavery. It is arguably the case that if there are considerable disparities, and/or numerous class divisions within a group that is capable of exploiting the vanquished, the group's continued domination of the enslaved is less certain. This is because the potential for conflict among the conquerors themselves is increased, by means of the potential for identification of lower-status group members with the enslaved. To put it plainly, in some circumstances where a group can exploit those it has defeated, it may be wiser not to do so in order to maintain internal harmony and prevent conflict within the group. As Vladimir Lenin put it,

an oppressed class which does not strive to learn to use arms, to acquire arms, only deserves to be treated like slaves...a bourgeoisie armed against the proletariat is one of the biggest, fundamental and cardinal facts of modern capitalist society (Lenin [1916] in Semmel 1981:172).

If a group already has a relatively underprivileged class then, along with significant disparities between classes, it is altogether dangerous to take on the task of dominion over slaves, as the reasonable expectation is that they may together at some point acquire superior organization amongst themselves than that which exists among the outnumbered masters.

The causes of war in consideration of this definition are several, and they are all expressions of the will to dominate and the will to be free. With regard to the enslavement of a law-breaker within a group, the will to dominate is expressed through the group's assertion that 'might is right,' in the sense that the group holds its laws to be

just and has the collective freedom-power to enforce them, to subjugate the individual to obey the group's commands. The will to be free may then be said to be expressed by further acts of rebellion on the part of the enslaved, who may reasonably be expected to resent his captors for exploiting him. Here it can be argued that the cause of war is the rebellious law-breaking that justifies enslavement, or that the cause of war is the exploitation of the enslaved, which instigates further rebellion.

As regards the exploitation of the enslaved, whether a law-breaker from within the group or a prisoner from without, it is arguably the case that one of the causes of war in consideration of this definition is greed on the part of the conquerors. While it may be argued that the exploitation of the enslaved is for the sake of the survival of the group, and that group survival rather than greed is the cause that may instigate rebellion, this is illusory. As Engels explained, economic processes accompanying group formation and economic productivity lead to surplus, and surplus is a necessary condition of slavery. Therefore, exploitation of the defeated by the conquered is caused by greed rather than the economic survival needs of the group, as the group is already at considerably greater advantage to secure its needs than is any enslaved individual.

The central concepts that characterize this understanding of war can be grouped together thematically and are a) status and the legitimacy of authority, b) the development of classes and the division of labour, c) domination, subjugation and exploitation, and d) freedom-power and rebellion.

This definition reveals that in primitive groups emerging from the state of nature, status plays an important role in determining who holds authority within the group. On the one hand, an individual's authority can be understood as legitimated by

responsibilities associated with the social function he performs. On the other hand, high status within a group can also be achieved and authority legitimated by an individual's actually greater strength and freedom-power to exercise it forcefully. It is tempting to assert that the former is a more legitimate form of authority, and that the latter is not a form of authority at all, let alone legitimate, the one based on the respect and free will of others, and the other based on violence and coercion. Arendt states that, "to remain in authority requires respect for the person or the office...the greatest enemy of authority, therefore, is contempt" (Arendt 1970:45).

It is my view that while the first, on its own, is a more desirable and socially honourable form of legitimate authority, the second form, on its own is equally authoritative, though whether it is equally legitimate is debatable. The validity of the statement that the second form is equally authoritative is on the grounds that where an enforcer's strength and freedom-power to exercise it against others is indeed notably greater than that of other potential challengers, it is a fact that his authority *does* exist on the basis of his ability to enforce his will, whether or not he is respected. Also, it is arguably the case that his very ability to enforce his will is what legitimates his authority, whether anyone likes it or not. For a significantly weaker man to call the authority of a much stronger one 'illegitimate' is arguably disproved by the latter's ability to silence him at will. If legitimate authority, which rests on power, requires wide-spread support and respect, the fact that lies, rumours, and propaganda, for example, can diminish it or cause it to change hands suggests that the authority of the person in question was never authoritative, for the people can be swayed from respect in their leader. However, the authority of the strongest cannot be diminished by such means, even if respect for him

can be. It is my view that the best form of authority is one that is based on a combination of the two, on respect for the person, and on respect for the fact that he is the strongest¹⁴. It may even be the case that whether or not authority is deemed 'legitimate' is really beside the point; what is most important is that it exists, in one form or another, and the reasons that it does in whatever form it takes¹⁵.

Following these considerations of authority, additional concepts used to characterize this definition of war are the development of classes and the division of labour that Engels spoke of as emerging in the early stages of group formation and expansion. Since these concepts will be explored in greater detail at various points throughout this essay, here suffice to say that in light of Engels' explanation, it is clear that these concepts are not only central to the development of capitalism, as is often repeated in much sociological literature, but also to the dynamics of human social group life at all stages of development since groups begin to form. It is difficult to comprehend in realistic terms any group that is relatively stable and long-lasting in which some form of the division of labour does not occur, and where class distinctions do not emerge as a result of members' status¹⁶.

¹⁴ That is, an ideal ruler is one that is both respectable *and* the strongest in terms of freedom-power. This is because his greater freedom-power enables him to enforce his will on behalf of the group, and also because his respectability prevents or discourages others from attempting to usurp his authority in the first place.

¹⁵ Since the question of whether or not force legitimates authority is hotly contested, I would like to provide a micro-social example that illustrates that it does indeed. We have only to consider the relationship between a parent and a child. If a child misbehaves according to his parents' rules, his parents have the authority to punish him. Does this authority spring from the respect that a child has for his parents, or from the parent's greater strength and freedom-power to enforce a sanction? If we consider an instance where a child believes he is right and utterly disagrees with his parents and chooses to rebel, then it may be argued that he does not respect his parents. However, the absence of respect for his parents does not take away their authority, for his parents can nevertheless enforce their will. It is only when degrees of freedom-power are relatively equal, then, that authority's basis is in respect. So long as they are significantly unequal, authority is determined by the will of the strongest.

¹⁶ At the most micro-social level of analysis, we have only to think of a family unit with two parents and one child, in any time or place. I cannot think of even one historical, mythological, or even satirical tale that I have ever encountered in which the division of all forms of labour was equal (that is, all capable members

Domination, subjugation, and exploitation are also central concepts to this definition of war, and probably not surprisingly, they will continue to recur as themes in the considerations of peace and war. In the previous discussion of Locke's definition of war, it was pointed out that the declared intent to kill, harm, or enslave another living under the same government, and contrary to the law, was an indication in that instance of the will to dominate not for survival's sake, but for the sake of domination. In this discussion of slavery as war, domination and subjugation are not for survival's sake, nor for the sake of domination, but driven by exploitation and greed.

Finally, freedom-power¹⁷ and rebellion are also among the central concepts that emerge from this consideration of slavery as a state of war. In the words of John Stuart Mill, "the first lesson of civilization [is] that of obedience" (Mill [1861] 1904:71), and "there are two states of the inclinations...one is, the desire to exercise power over others;

performed a share of all required tasks equally). The reality is that the division of labour is not born from capitalism, but that it is as old as humanity itself, and though statuses assigned to the roles of both genders have varied across time and space, it too has never been equal and constant to my knowledge. My point is not about gender-differentiation of the assignment of role performances and statuses, only that from the fact that they have existed throughout recorded history, I assert that the division of labour and the emergence of classes do not emerge from capitalism, but from the realities of human sociality. Perhaps humanity simply started to take greater notice of such differences in light of the greater exploitation of these divisions of labour and class that capitalism entails.

¹⁷ In the discussion to this point, I have written concerning freedom-power in several instances, and it is prudent that I should further clarify what I mean by the concept, since it is a recurring theme in considerations of peace and war. 'Freedom' means simply the ability to act freely without constraint, the capacity to perform an act one wills to perform and to see it through to its completion. By 'power,' I refer to energy, that which is inherent in all things. Power therefore takes many forms, and the ways in which it can move or be expressed will depend on the degrees to which it is free to do so in any given direction. When I speak of 'freedom-power' in the sociological sense, then, I am referring to both the capabilities of individuals and groups of individuals, as well as the limitations imposed on them by circumstances, whether social or otherwise, i.e., by nature. If we consider Hobbes' assertion that men are equally free in the state of nature, for example, the concept of freedom-power sheds light on the fact that power manifests itself in different ways in different men, and all are only so free to exercise it as the circumstances of nature allow. For instance, a man's power of swimming and spearing fishes is limited by circumstances in times of drought. The power is present, but not the freedom. In a social setting, a man's power of abstract thinking may be limited by another man's power of brute strength if the tribe in which he lives in is superstitious of seemingly strange ideas. I put 'freedom' and 'power' together in acknowledgement that all have power and varying knowledge about how to move, or express, their power, but the degree to which power is free to be expressed depends on the degrees of freedom-power of others, how others express their own, and on the circumstances of nature.

the other is disinclination to have power exercised over themselves” (Mill [1861] 1904:79). Whatever the cause of enslavement, be it breaking a law within a group, having been captured as a prisoner of war, or any other, the freedom-power of slaves and their will to be free can often be mobilized to break the chains of their enslavement. In contrast to Mill, Arendt states that, “a strong disinclination to obey is often accompanied by an equally strong disinclination to dominate and command” (Arendt 1970:40). Therefore, the limitations imposed on the freedom-power of slaves do not necessarily invoke the desire to place limitations on the freedom-power of captors for the sake of reversing the relation of domination and exploitation, or even to place any limitations on their captors’ freedom-power at all. Rather, the desire may simply be to restore their own freedom-power to its fullest possible capacity. That reducing the freedom-power of the dominant in order to achieve this end may be the only possible way to gain freedom is a by-product of extreme relations of domination and subjugation.

Does the definition of war as slavery adequately describe what war is as a social phenomenon? As with the previous definitions discussed to this point, I assert that it does not. In describing the relationships of enslaved individuals to the societies in which they are dominated, the understanding of war here again serves to highlight the conditions that may lead to war, some of the potential causes of war. According to W.B. Gallie, “war *arises* from basic social needs, and social arrangements of production”¹⁸ (Gallie 1978:76). Individual instances of enslavement and rebellion do not in themselves constitute war, but rather, they constitute individual instances of domination and exploitation, the victorious and successful establishment of a relation of domination and subjugation on the part of the conquerors. It is only when those who are enslaved

¹⁸ My italics.

organize themselves into a group of their own in order to rebel in solidarity against a dominant class of exploiters that the state of war may be said to be underway, and this only if they engage in lethal conflict. Should their organized rebellion take the form of a refusal to work, this neither is war, unless they are forced into violent self-defense as a result of their protest.

As with understandings of war discussed thus far, the notion of slavery as a state of war is useful to sociologists despite its inadequacy as a definition of war per se. This discussion of slavery sheds light on social processes and conditions that tempt the outbreak of war, and provides sociologists with a useful starting point for considering whether a lasting peace is possible, and if so, what the necessary conditions for peace might be.

War as Fatal Group Conflict For a Thing Called “Ours”

According to Rousseau, before the establishment of government, individuals compete in nature for land from which to grow food for survival (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1924:66; Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:132). He states that, “private wars between one man and another can exist neither in a state of nature, where there is no fixed property, nor in society, where everything is under the authority of law” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:55-6). Once government is established, individuals are joined together in groups in order to defend the land over which they have erected laws to govern the property relations between them (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:60;

Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:179). Gallie, commenting on the development of private property in early Greek history, states that,

independent ownership was endorsed and guaranteed by common recognition and communal defense. And indeed the needs of defense...gave a persistent and practical form to that city-based unity without which the system of individual proprietorship could easily have led to disruption and anarchy (Gallie 1978:77).

Under this schematic, groups form for the purposes of protecting private property relations, and it is these groups of individuals joined together in social contract with one another that wage wars.

However, Engels' account of the emergence of private property suggests that the matter is more complicated than it at first appears, given the explanations outlined above. He states, "everywhere where private property developed, this took place as the result of altered relations of production and exchange" (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:180). In his explanation of the development of private property, groups were not initially formed for the sake of protecting their private property relations, but rather, groups that formed directly from the state of nature were dissolved as a result of the introduction of private property:

[Private property] was limited to certain objects, in the ancient primitive communes of all civilized peoples. It developed even within these communes, at first through barter with strangers, til it reached the form of commodities. The more the products of the commune assumed the commodity form, that is, the less they were produced for their producers' own use and the more for the purpose of exchange, the more the original primitive division of labour was replaced by exchange also within the commune, the more did inequality develop in the property of the individual members of the commune, the more deeply was the ancient ownership of the land undermined, and the more rapidly did the commune move towards its dissolution and

transformation into a village of small peasants (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:179-80).

In Engels' view, then, the introduction of private property dissolved groups the members of which held property in common ownership. There is, however, no real disagreement between Engels and the writers discussed above with regard to property. Engels merely points out what they had overlooked. The previous explanation suggests that men join in contract to protect their private property because of the risks of competing as individuals in nature. Engels' explanation, on the other hand, suggests that the competition between men in the state of nature leads first to group formations that hold and protect property in common, and the altered economic conditions that follow lead to the dissolution of these groups. This, in turn, is what leads to the establishment of the social contract that protects private property, the dissolution of the group formed to protect common property.

According to Colonel B. Byely,

War emerged as a socio-political phenomenon at a definite stage of social development, namely, with the disintegration of the primeval system and the emergence of the slave-owning mode of production, when private ownership of the means of production appeared, when society was divided into antagonistic classes, and the state emerged. Private property bred social violence. The exploiter classes legalized organized armed struggle aimed at winning material gains, enslaving people and enhancing the economic and political rule of those classes (Byely [1972] in Semmel 1981:182).

While I concur in large part with Byely's statement, I cannot submit that war emerged as a result of the processes described above. That is, while some wars did and do emerge from these processes, and in greater magnitude and destructiveness due to the advances of capitalism, the beginning of these processes do not mark the beginnings of

war. For even before the establishment of private property, there was common property, and groups competing against one another undoubtedly had their wars¹⁹.

This definition of war as arising from property relations suggests two causes of war. The first is the need of groups to protect common property from other groups, and the second is the need of groups to protect the private property relations they've established amongst themselves after the dissolution of common property, both against claims of other group members, and against claims of other groups. Each of these causes can be considered either in terms of the will to survive as a cause of war, where there is a need to protect property that is essential to survival, or alternatively, in terms of greed as a cause of war, where the property over which conflict ensues is in excess of what is needed for survival.

The central concepts that characterize this definition are, of course property, both common and private, and also contract. The contract that characterizes the norms or laws of any group determines to an extent the nature of the property relations between group members, whether or not property will be held in common, or in private, or a combination of both, and also in which ways the regulations will be enforced. In my view, the contract determines these things only to an extent because the course of cause and effect is such that changes in circumstance, such as altered modes of production and exchange, tend in turn to determine the terms of the contract.

As to the question of whether or not this definition describes what war is, it does, in that it identifies war as a lethal confrontation between groups. Furthermore, while

¹⁹ Consider, for instance, a flood that forces one group to move into another's territory, or a battle over scarce resources caused by a drought. Private property, as of yet to be introduced, could not have triggered such wars, but rather, a clash of interests over which group might claim communal ownership of desirable land.

some wars might not have their causes rooted in property relations, all wars inevitably involve property and territorial concerns, and so 'what is ours' and 'what is theirs' are undeniably integral elements of what war is as a social phenomenon.

War as Armies Engaged in Lethal Combat

According to Anthony Giddens, war is defined as "armed combat between groups in which physical violence is used by or on behalf of one community against another" (Giddens 1987:53). A similar understanding of war is put forward by Mead when she states that warfare is "recognized conflict between two groups *as groups*, in which each group puts an army (even if the army is only fifteen pygmies) into the field to fight and kill, if possible, some of the members of the army of the other group" (Mead 1940:270). In addition to defining war in terms of conflicting relations between groups, these definitions make an important qualification that sets them apart from the others discussed to this point: the inclusion of the army in the definition. In Giddens' definition, the entire community may actively wage war, or alternatively may be represented by fighters who defend the community. On the other hand, Mead's definition posits the army as a central aspect of war; the warriors engage in warfare on behalf of the community, but the entire community is not actively engaged in the war. What is common to them is that the groups are armed to harm and/or kill.

Another definition of war that accounts for the role of the army in warfare is put forth by Riches:

War is understood as ‘the authorized employment of physical force against other persons, as a means by which groups competing for control of public resources and benefits attempt to influence the outcome of the competition in their favour.’ This definition evidently leaves as unspecified the identity and boundaries of the groups concerned, but implies that their structure is corporate” (Riches 1987:17).

This definition is similar to those put forth by Giddens and Mead in the sense that ‘the authorized employment of force’ of one group against another implies an army. What is different about this expression of the definition is that there is a reason specified for the conflict. It is debatable whether the cause of war should be included as an integral aspect of the definition, though it is notable that here again, as with all of the other understandings of war discussed thus far, the cause is somehow tied in with the notion of property²⁰, or at least, contested property in the form of ‘public resources and benefits.’

Likewise, Park, in discussing a Darwinist theory of war put forth by Spencer Wilkinson, states that,

Because he is not only a gregarious animal...but a social and rational creature as well, man carried on the ‘struggle for existence,’ as Darwin described it, not merely by individual competition, but by the conflict of organized groups or societies. Such conflict between organized groups is war, and the instrument by which wars are carried on are armies (Park 1941:234).

He goes on to say, in explaining Wilkinson’s Darwinist theory of war, that armies are akin to the natural weapons of animals in the wild, the fangs and claws and shells of groups of men joined together in society with one another (Park 1941:234). In this sense, the function of war is understood to be part of the process of natural selection, of

²⁰ The only seeming exception to this is the second understanding of war discussed, that put forth by Locke, war as knowledge of another’s unlegitimated declaration of intent to kill or dominate. However, it can be argued that property is an element of this understanding of war as well, in the sense that the threatened individual is treated like property that can be owned (dominated) and treated in any way that the dominant individual wills, or discarded (killed).

ensuring 'survival of the fittest,' "not so much of individuals as of peoples and the institutions by means of which nations and people carry on collective life" (Park 1941:234).

In this explanation there is not only inclusion of the army, but as with Riches' definition, there is also an identification of the cause of armed conflict. It is different or unique in that it specifically identifies war with the theory of natural selection.

Altogether, the various expressions of this definition of war pinpoint two possible causes of war. The first is survival, war for the sake of attaining the resources required for survival. It is in the sense that resources are things that people can possess, that this definition like the others discussed before it also implicates property issues as causal of war. We shouldn't be surprised, however, since "living organisms multiply more rapidly than the food supply" (Park 1941:234). The matter of how to distribute resources that are necessary for survival is therefore one that can be causal of war. Also, as with the previous understanding of war discussed, the matter of war waged for the attainment of property, in this case, 'public resources and benefits,' can also be considered as caused, in some instances, by greed, when the resources over which war is waged are not necessary for survival but are nevertheless coveted by competing groups.

The key concept that pertains to this definition of war is an army, as an army is central to any group's ability to wage and win a war. I do not include the notions of natural selection or survival of the fittest as central concepts pertaining to this definition, as these pertain to a theory of the function of war, and not necessarily to what war is as a social phenomenon. It may be argued that war is central to processes of natural selection and 'survival of the fittest' among human beings; however, given that many victories

may be won on the basis of chance and circumstance rather than superior ability, I reject the claim that Darwinist theory can be central to the definition of war.

With regard to the question of whether or not the definition of war presented here defines what war is, the answer is unequivocally that yes, it does, and in my view, it is the clearest and most accurate definition: at base, war is properly defined as potentially fatal, armed, violent conflict between at least two opposing groups whose criteria of membership are more-or-less clearly defined. As with the other definitions discussed to this point, some of the expressions of this definition point to the causes of war. However, causes notwithstanding, this definition describes what, precisely, the social phenomenon is.

The utility of this definition is that it enables sociologists to be clear about what is meant by war, and to clear the cobwebs in discussions that confuse the processes that lead to war with what war itself is. Why is this important? It is important because the various elements of war and the processes that can lead to war are not war itself, and if they are mistakenly treated as such, it can lead to complications in discussions and debates. If, for instance, one theorist speaks of war in terms of 'each man for himself' in a state of anarchy, and another in terms of the exploitation of slaves under a dominant social contract, then the characteristics of the 'wars' in question are utterly different and the causes of any actual wars that might arise from either set of circumstances are not comparable, but contrast in various ways. In the first instance, the will to survive is the primary cause of conflict, and potentially of war; in the second, it is the conflict of interests between the dominant exploiters and the exploited subordinate who seek freedom. Therefore, the definition of war presented in this section of this essay is most

useful for clarifying precisely what war is and what it means to be in a state of war, regardless of the causes. Rather than define war in terms of any of its causes, it describes what the social phenomenon is and leaves room for exploration of the possible causes of any given war.

From a sociological point of view, understanding the causes of war is useful for helping us to understand what the necessary conditions for peace might be, and with this definition it is possible to consider a plethora of possible causes without being restricted by the terms of the definition.

War as Self-Defense in the Wild, Revisited: Of Big Bodies of People Joined Under the State

Another of the explicit definitions of war found in the literature explains war as a relation between states. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri state that in traditional thought, “war has been conceived as the armed conflict between sovereign political entities, that is, during the modern period, between nation-states” (Hardt and Negri 2004:3). This conception of war is clearly visible in the work of Rousseau, who asserts that war

is not a relation between men, but between states; in war individuals are enemies wholly by chance, not as men, not even as citizens, but only as soldiers; not as members of their country, but only as its defenders. In a word, a state can have as an enemy only another state, not men, because there can be no real relation between things possessing different intrinsic natures (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:56).

Rousseau seems to contradict himself in this statement in that, as previously explained, he views the enslavement of the defeated as a continuation of the state war

between the conqueror and the conquered. If this is so, then how may an individual captive be said to be in a state of war with the victors who conquered him? The answer to this is that the enslaved individual is seen as a representative member of the other state, the conquered state, and his enslavement rather than his death presupposes that the state for which he fought has not been fully destroyed. It is reasonable to expect that if such a captive should find a way to free himself, he may return to the enemy state from which he came and the war between those states has not been concluded with a final victory²¹.

It is prudent here to clarify what is meant by the state. According to Giddens, “a state can be defined as a political organization whose rule is territorially ordered and which is able to mobilize the means of violence to sustain that rule” (Giddens 1987:20). Furthermore, Giddens points out that the state is sometimes understood to refer to the governing body of a society, or as the governing body together with the society it governs (Giddens 1987:17). The state’s capacity to mobilize violence in its interests is twofold.

According to Colin Creighton and Martin Shaw,

War is a very different social phenomenon from internal social conflict (which itself takes sharply varying forms). Although they are both violent the one does not necessarily produce the other...The state is the social institution which explains the dichotomous relationship of modern societies to violence. The experience...in which the scope of war has widened while that of legitimate violence has narrowed, has its roots in the state’s ever more successful assertion of its legal monopoly of force (Creighton and Shaw 1987:5).

²¹ In the previous discussion of Rousseau’s thinking on enslavement, the enslaved was considered in terms of a rebel overpowered for breaking the law, whom Rousseau wrote should be banished or killed rather than enslaved. Here I have extended his logic about an internal enemy in order to address the issue of the enslavement of an enemy from without, and what it means in terms of wars between states. With regard to how it might be that an internal enemy (law-breaker) can be at war with a state which enslaves him given that they have different intrinsic natures, this is a contradiction in Rousseau’s thinking.

The dichotomy identified here, between the state's ability to sanction internal conflict with force and to wage war externally will be further explored in the subsequent chapter. What is important to note in light of the present discussion is that violent conflict between states is understood to constitute war, whereas the imposition of sanctions on citizens by means of the use of force is largely deemed to be a matter of social control rather than war²².

According to Philip K. Lawrence, centralization of the state's power to govern began to appear under absolutism, through the transition of European feudal states to capitalism. He states that, "the military capacity of the state was seen as the essential prerequisite for economic success. Enhanced military performance meant a stronger state, an even more unified center, and the preconditions for yet more success" (Lawrence 1997:17). In this view, the military, and specifically the superiority of successful militaries, are the *raison d'être* of the state (Park 1941:242). In light of Engels' assertion that "the triumph of force is based on the production of arms, and this in turn on production in general" (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:184), then it is plain to see that capitalism and all of the technical advances spurred by the industrial revolution are central characteristics of the development of the modern state and of modern wars (Arendt 1970:3; Bukharin [1929] in Semmel 1981:154; Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:189; Gallie 1978:92; Lawrence 1997:32).

In Engels' view, the primary function of the state is to maintain an army, and the subjects of the state are merely intended as producers and recruits for the army (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:189). This is in keeping with Byely's assertion that "the state has become a committee for managing the affairs of the monopoly bourgeoisie, the

²² Although this is a matter of debate that will be addressed in the next section of this chapter.

armed forces – a weapon for the implementation of their imperialist politics” (Byely [1972] in Semmel 1981:186).

As famously stated by Clausewitz, “war is a mere continuation of policy by other means”²³ (Clausewitz [1832] in Maude 1962:23), to which Lenin added, “by ‘namely, violent’ means” (Sokolovskii [1963] in Semmel 1981:277). This addition of Lenin’s was criticized as leaving out various strategic and tactical elements of warfare: the “ideological, political, psychological, economic, financial, commercial, diplomatic, [and] subversive” (Sokolovskii [1963] in Semmel 1981:277). However, in my view Lenin was correct in making the qualification that he did. While various elements of warfare are non-violent, if the violence of war is removed and the other elements alone remain, it is not war at hand, but the power politics of which Clausewitz asserts war is the continuation.

Although Clausewitz is widely credited for clarifying the link between politics and war (Savkin [1972] in Semmel 1981:72), he is also criticized for ignoring the foundations of war in the economic order and class structures of states (Byely [1972] in Semmel 1981:70; Savkin [1972] in Semmel 1981:72). “He had in mind actually only the politics of the ruling class and did not recognize...the fact that politics was conditioned by the economic system of society” (Savkin [1972] in Semmel 1981:72).

The implication of these assertions is that war is a fatal contest between states that primarily serves the interests of the ruling classes in those states. As Giddens put it, “only

²³ In my view, this statement does not describe what war is, specifically, but one of its causes. As Lawrence explains, “The purpose of war is to further the achievement of political ends. War without political direction is pointless” (Lawrence 1997:23). And so it is not that war *is* the continuation of politics by other means, but that unsuccessful politics can produce the kind of conflict that is war. That is, while political ends may be achieved by means of war and thus be causal of war, war itself as a social phenomenon is not described ontologically by this definition of Clausewitz’.

in modern nation-states can the state apparatus generally...lay *successful* claim to the monopoly of the means of violence” (Giddens 1987:18). However, any state willing and/or needing to wage war, as the case may be, must have the support of its people: “the contest of strength is not only a contest of military and economic power, but also a contest of human power and morale...whatever is done has to be done by human beings; protracted war and final victory will not come about without human action” (Tse-tung [1967] in Semmel 1981:87). Therefore, whether or not it is true that any particular war between states is waged in the interests of the ruling classes arguably depends upon both the integrity of the rulers involved and the degree to which citizens are informed of the real reasons for a given call to war.

If war is understood to be a violent relation between states, it is because states have become the largest institutional bodies capable of waging war. Though it is not an interpretation that he favours, Samuel Huntington also discusses war as a relation between states. Huntington’s main thesis is that states are grouped into civilizations, which are “the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species” (Huntington 1993:24) and that “conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world” (Huntington 1993:22). In this regard, it is tempting to say that he views war as a relation between civilizations, but this is not the case. Rather, Huntington asserts that the cultural differences between civilizations promote conflict between them and he predicts that future wars will be fought by and for civilizations. Presently, however, where these conflicts become violent, the case is that they are wars fought by the states, or some of the states in the state-systems that compose

civilizations, and war is not, at this point in time, a relation between civilizations. In describing the realist theory of international relations, he says, “states are and will remain the dominant entities in world affairs” (Huntington 1996:34).

The causes of war suggested by this definition of war as a relation between states are several, and inter-related. First, there is the call to war in order to ensure economic prosperity. This was discussed in terms of developing states, but may be considered a cause of war with regard to developed states that can stand to gain from the economic production and distribution of arms and/or the destruction of a competing state. Unless a state’s motivation for destroying another state by such means is that resources are scarce and war is necessary for survival, then the cause of war is greed.

A second cause of war illustrated by this discussion is the desire to expand the state’s freedom-power. This is demonstrated both by the centralization of power in the development of the modern state, and by the ways in which the advances of capitalism and the industrial revolution were specifically utilized to strengthen armies and wage wars. This cause of war can also be understood alternatively in terms of survival or greed.

A third cause of war that may be inferred from this definition of war as a relation between states is unsuccessful political negotiations, or an inability, or unwillingness, of states to concede to other states on matters of conflicting interests. According to Park, war has long been understood as a method for deciding issues that cannot be resolved by non-violent means (Park 1941:230). He quotes Heinrich von Treitschke: “‘Between civilized nations also war is the form of litigation by which states make their claims valid. The arguments brought forward in these terrible lawsuits of the nations compel as no arguments in civil suits ever can do’” (Treitschke [1939] in Park 1941:230). In my

understanding, then, war as ‘the continuation of politics by other means’ identifies sociality as a cause of war, the achievement of political ends being the ends for which war is the means. It is important to emphasize here that war is not politics and politics are not war, that it is the failure of politics that can produce war.

A fourth cause of war that comes to light by way of discussion of this definition of war, is the greed of the ruling classes, be it greed for increased freedom-power, greed for economic advantage, or both. Given that the ruling classes of a state have considerably more freedom-power than other members to begin with, this cause of war is especially troubling for those desirous of peace, in that there are many resources that can be mobilized with which to fool the people about the actual causes of war.

Finally, a fifth cause of war that can be identified in light of conflict between states is the need, real or perceived, of people to protect the collective cultural identity and mode of life shared under any particular state’s jurisdiction. We have only to think of the clashes between various Christian and Islamic states, or of those between various capitalist and socialist states, to appreciate that this is an important ideological cause of war. This cause of war, then, can be understood in terms of the will to be free, or a people’s desire to willfully choose their way of life freely.

The central concepts under this definition of war, then, are the state, capitalism, industrialization, monopoly, class, and politics. It was the advance of capitalism and industrialization that gave rise to the modern state and the contemporary international state system. As Lawrence points out, the technological advances that accompanied these developments enabled Western European states of the nineteenth century to expand colonial rule abroad while European states themselves began to experience peace at home

(Lawrence 1997:27-9;31). There is a "...central role of the process of war in realizing the state's control over society" (Creighton and Shaw 1987:5). The gradual centralization of power into distinct European states accompanied by mass production for war altered the political landscape such that it became possible to wage wars abroad while peace at home was maintained by the thriving economy and the monopoly on the means of violence that the state had at its disposal.

It is my finding that the definition of war as a relation between states does identify what war is as a social phenomenon. However, this is because it is an expression of the definition of war as a relation between groups, and I assert that the state is not an integral element of the definition of war, despite the fact that states arguably represent the dominant group formation of those participating in recent and contemporary wars. It may be argued that in contemporary societies, the state is an integral aspect of the definition of war, and it goes without saying that states have played an important role in advancing the destructive capacities of warfare. Nevertheless, groups may form and fight wars without taking on the characteristics of statehood, and so the state is not central to how war is defined, although it is central to historic changes in how war is waged.

War as Internal Conflict Within a Sovereign Territory; Civil Rebellion to Contest the Legitimacy of Authority and the Standing Social and Economic Orders

In contrast to the definition of war as armed conflict between sovereign states, Hardt and Negri propose that in contemporary times, war has largely been transformed into a network of interrelated civil wars, where civil war denotes "armed conflict between

sovereign and/or nonsovereign combatants *within a single sovereign territory*” (Hardt and Negri 2004:3) and these wars are often characterized by high-intensity police action, which is “often indistinguishable from low-intensity warfare” (Hardt and Negri 2004:39).

According to Creighton and Shaw, sociologists have largely overlooked civil wars in analyses of peace and war in favour of a focus on the external violence of states, the wars that occur between states. However, they posit that the analysis of civil wars is important for shedding light on social change and the development of states and societies (Creighton and Shaw 1987:6). Gallie, in explaining Marxist theory, states that, “human values arise from pressures for social change which rest, ultimately, on new possibilities of production; and it is only in so far as war helps to expedite such changes that it can be regarded as a progressive agency in human affairs” (Gallie 1978:74). In this view, then, war is not inherently evil nor is it only destructive, but it can be the catalyst for implementing positive changes in the social and economic orders of society. As Engels put it,

All historical antagonisms between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes to this very day find their explanation in [the] relatively undeveloped productivity of human labour. So long as the really working population was so much occupied in their necessary labour that they had no time left for looking after the common affairs of society...so long was it necessary that there should exist a special class, freed from actual labour, to manage these affairs; and this special class never failed to impose a greater and greater burden of labour, for its own advantage, on the working masses (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:201).

This special class is the administrative branch of the state which Giddens asserts is an integral aspect of the state, “a hierarchy of officials who specialize in administrative tasks (including the arts of war)” (Giddens 1987:61). Engels explains, however, that just

as the processes of capitalist development and the industrial revolution created new divisions of labour and new class distinctions based on an unequal distribution of wealth, they also provided the means by which the lower classes have become empowered to revolt, having for the first time in history enough time to spare between dawn and dusk to both rest from work and to participate actively in the affairs of society (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:201). “In politics there are only two decisive powers: organized state power, and the unorganized elementary power of the popular masses” (Engels 1934:309).

Hardt and Negri identify this ‘unorganized power of the popular masses’ as the ‘multitude.’ As will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, the classical thinkers of the Enlightenment period wrote of the formation of the state in terms of the unity of the people into one sovereign body. Hardt and Negri state that,

The people is one. The population, of course, is composed of numerous different individuals and classes, but the people synthesizes or reduces these social differences into one identity...The component parts of the people are indifferent in their unity; they become an identity by negating or setting aside their differences...The multitude, by contrast, is not unified but remains plural and multiple (Hardt and Negri 2004:99).

Hardt and Negri explain that within the context of the state’s unified identity, where differences are set aside in the name of unity, the various singularities of the multitude, with all of their various differences, come together to act in concert on the basis of what they have in common (Hardt and Negri 2004:100). And so struggles based on divisions of class, race, or religion, to name a few examples, are waged by the component parts of the multitude who share these differing identities within the context of the unity of the state. According to Hardt and Negri, this understanding of the

composition of the members of a state challenges the notion of state sovereignty, in that rather than “a *political body* of which there is a head that commands, limbs that obey, and organs that function together to support the ruler” (Hardt and Negri 2004:100), there is a multitude whose various singularities are “able to act in common and thus rule itself” (Hardt and Negri 2004:100). This view is in keeping with Arendt’s assertion that revolutions are the result of circumstances and are never planned arbitrarily (Arendt 1970:12). Parts of the multitude thus come together as a result of common concerns that are a product of the circumstances imposed by living conditions within a given state.

Since civil wars are not always clearly visible as wars per se, but sometimes appear as internal conflicts that are within a state’s sovereign jurisdiction to sanction with a claim to the legitimate monopoly on the application of violence, it may not always be clear to outside observers that a war is underway²⁴. However, as Hardt and Negri point out, asymmetrical conflicts between one group with a great military and technological advantage, and another group that is disadvantaged in these terms, always rests on the support of the people (Hardt and Negri 2004:52). That is, if a significant portion of the population did not support the militarily disadvantaged group, the state would be able to identify the enemies to state power within its territory with ease and then use its military might to put a swift end to the conflict. That such conflicts may persist for a considerable length of time is indicative of two things: first, a significant segment of the society supports the undermining of the state’s authority, and second, that there are therefore at

²⁴ And perhaps this explains, at least partially, the reluctance of sociologists to address this form of warfare, as it entails explicitly questioning the sovereignty of the state, the state’s monopoly on the use of force, and whether or not citizens of a given state indeed have a right to take power from the state’s organization, against the will of the state’s executors.

least two opposed groups engaged in lethal conflict. The implication is that war is at hand.

Hardt and Negri posit that contemporary civil wars are not isolated incidents specific only to the territories in which they occur, but are rather battles that are waged as part of a larger network of civil wars that ultimately constitute the same ongoing war. They state that,

Each local war should not be viewed in isolation...but seen as part of a grand constellation, linked in varying degrees both to other war zones and to areas not presently at war. The pretense of sovereignty of these combatants is doubtful to say the least. They are struggling rather for relative dominance within the hierarchies at the highest and lowest levels of the global system...[It is] a *general global state of war* that erodes the distinction between war and peace (Hardt and Negri 2004:4-5).

In this definition of war as the conflict between the state and some of its constituents, then, we have in fact, two definitions that are similar, but nevertheless distinct. One is the concept of internal conflict between two groups within a sovereign territory, civil war, for the sake of contesting, on the one hand, and maintaining, on the other, local authority. This echoes Hobbes' assertion that rebellion of the people constitutes war. The other is the concept that each of these civil wars is not unique and isolated from the others, but part of an ongoing global war that transcends territorial borders. If we consider the world's global population in terms of the multitude, then it is plain to see the links between various civil wars, whose combatants may not be aware that they are fighting for the same causes as their counterparts living in other states, but who are nevertheless often fighting based on what they have in common with other singularities of the multitude elsewhere. The one version of this definition of war, then,

concerns state citizens rebelling against the state; the other, global citizens rebelling against the global state-system.

The central concepts under this definition of war, then, are sovereignty and the legitimacy of the state's monopoly on the application of violent force. That a significant proportion of a state's population might rise up in violent rebellion screams 'treason!' in the face of a state's claim to sovereignty and legitimate authority to claim a monopoly on the use of violence. The demonstration is that the state's authority is not respected, and that its claim to sovereignty is in the people, without whose support it cannot function to maintain internal order, nor provide protection from external threats.

The causes of war suggested by this definition are greed and the will to be free from domination and exploitation. All pertain ultimately to matters of class divisions and exploitation, and so also, then, to property. One cause that was identified is the introduction of possibilities for new modes of production that can alter divisions of labour and thereby shift people's statuses and the degree of exploitation experienced in particular classes. Such possibilities were identified as producing pressure for social change, and it is arguably the case that the higher the degree of exploitation and the greater the benefits of change might be for the exploited, the pressure for change is stronger. It was also noted that the non-productive administrative workers can be understood to exploit the productive working classes, and so the disparities in wealth and class status between these groups are understood to contribute to the frustrations of the underprivileged, and potentially, to civil war. It is my view that while the class of administrative workers can be exploitative of the working class, and arguably often is, this is not always necessarily the case. In a healthy state that functions to fulfill the

proclaimed purposes of the state, the administrative class is necessary to oversee the state's business. The general population's tolerance, or intolerance, of the privileges this class enjoys is one indication of whether the administrative class earns its privileges and does well by the people in serving its functions, or is flagrantly exploiting the hard work of other subjects of the state.

Another possible cause of war brought to light by this definition of war was commented upon by Engels, who understood that standardization and mass production resulted in shortened lengths of time needed to accomplish the tasks of labour. In his view, this increased the abilities²⁵ of workers to participate actively in political affairs, and thereby to pay heed and take action with regard to the ways in which their labour power was exploited. While this may have initially been the case, it is my view that in contemporary societies, it is largely false (though perhaps only very recently so), and especially in technologically advanced societies. This is so because for every technical advance made in the means of production, contemporary workers are pressured to learn ever-more new skills in order to keep up with new modes of production, lest their skills become obsolete. The implication is that many workers all over the world continue to study the techniques of performing their labour tasks outside the rubric of the official working day. The time that the use of the mechanical labour of machines was once understood to have 'freed up' is now often spent learning how to maintain, employ, and improve said machines. It should be granted to Engels, however, that then, and in some places even now, 'spare' time from labour for the working classes has contributed to the ability of exploited workers to organize. I reject that it is ultimately a cause of war, though, on the grounds that common conditions of exploitation are what prompt such

²⁵ Freedom-power.

organization in the first place, and not the ability to organize. For even when exploited workers might not have (had) time to meet together, opportunities to discuss possibilities of rebellion have always existed in network forms of communication by word-of-mouth in the course of a day's work.

Finally, another cause of war brought to light by this definition of war is one that has not been addressed explicitly by the writers discussed here, though it is worth mentioning and considering why it was left out. It is arguably the case that religious differences, divisions based on race, and issues pertaining to differing political affiliations, have each been and still can be the catalysts for civil war. My understanding is that these fall under the rubric of class divisions and exploitation as a cause of war as well. When any of these groups clash either within a state or against the state, the underlying issue is always freedom-power, the disparities between one group's ability to wield state power and to enforce its laws, and the other group's assertion that it is either equally, or more, entitled to enjoy the privileges of the highest class in that state's society. Oftentimes, the divisions of labour and those between classes within a state are based on various social categories, and some civil wars that appear as 'race' wars or 'religious' wars, are really class wars that have been masked or confused as something else for political purposes. In this way, some class wars become, for all intents and purposes, wars about ideological identities, but they nevertheless ultimately rest on unequal class divisions and the conflicts of freedom-power between exploiters and exploited, dominant and subjugated, on the question of who gets to write and enforce the rules, i.e., state law.

The various definitions of war presented here, either as internal conflict within the territory of a sovereign state, or as a global class conflict between oppressed classes and the global state-system that transcends borders, each serve to define what war is. In each instance, it is possible to identify at least two groups that are engaged in lethal conflict with one another.

It may be argued that in some instances, it is not possible to clearly identify the groups that are involved, and so this definition of war might actually describe anarchy rather than war.

In terms of conflict between a state and a class, or classes, within its own territory, it may be argued that all participants are members of the same group, citizens of the same state, and so the conflict between a class of citizens and the enforcement agencies of state authority does not constitute war, but civil rebellion and the state's implementation of its right to sanction unauthorized violence. To this I say, it is war: one group's application of lethal force in order to defeat the other. It makes no difference to the definition of what war is that one group formed itself within a larger group to wage its war, or that one group claims legitimacy and accuses the other of illegitimate violent behaviour.

It might also be argued that while the conflict is underway, it is not always possible to discern group affiliations, that is, who is friend or foe. Where the boundaries of group affiliation are unclear, everyone is suspect, and thus in such an instance, war is not the proper frame of reference, but anarchy. Where a class war has been waged against a state and a state is in the process either of disintegration or of reunification, in the 'middle ground,' where combatants are uncertain of the outcome, it may reasonably be expected that people can and sometimes will switch allegiances at any given moment in

favour of wherever the best chances of survival are perceived to be. Under such circumstances, it is the 'state of nature' which prevails, each man for himself, and only when group identities have been reformed and are commonly recognized, does the state of war, group against group, resume, or is on the other hand abolished by the state of agreement reached by the survivors of the transition.

In terms of a global civil war between the underprivileged classes and the dominant classes of the state-system, the ruling classes of states that encounter similar struggles to maintain legitimacy might not identify with the ruling classes of other states as members of the same global class, and so not identify as members of a group with common interests. Likewise, and more likely at that, oppressed classes in different states may not explicitly identify with one another as partaking in the same cause(s) of a global war that has multiple battle-fronts. Nevertheless, it is still not only possible, but entirely realistic in terms of global society, to view these global classes as at least two or more distinct groups belonging officially on the one hand as group members to different states, but on the other hand, as members of larger groups that transcend state borders. "A binary structure runs through society", wrote Foucault, and "there are two groups, two categories of individuals, or two armies, and they are opposed to each other...this ancient war is a permanent war" (Foucault 1997:51).

According to Lenin,

Capitalism now finds that the old national states, without whose formation it could not have overthrown feudalism, are too cramped for it. Capitalism has developed concentration to such a degree that entire branches are controlled by syndicates, trusts and associations of capitalist multimillionaires and almost the entire globe has been divided up among the 'lords of capital' either in the form of colonies,

or by entangling other countries in thousands of threads of financial exploitation (Lenin [1915] in Semmel 1981:166).

This statement of Lenin's, along with the discussion that precedes it, is useful for illuminating an important point with regard to this definition of war as lethal conflict between the state, or state-system, with the subjects of states. It is not necessarily the state itself as an entity or institution against which citizens engaged in civil war rebel, but against those who have the freedom-power to, and/or who are perceived to, manipulate the state's power for their own ends, for the sake of greed and capitalist exploitation at the expense of people who have placed their trust in the state for their mutual protection and well-being. And as Lin Piao puts it, "war brings destruction, sacrifice, and suffering on the people. But [these] will be much greater if no resistance is offered to imperialist armed aggression and the people become willing slaves" (Piao [1969] in Semmel 1981:275).

The utility of this definition of war, then, is that it makes clear that civil war is sometimes the only feasible option available to oppressed classes, when rulers²⁶ leave their subjects with no other realistic options of success in recourse against exploitation. Furthermore, it forces into the spotlight of inquiry the question of whether or not the state, however understood, and also the people with the freedom-power to run it, can really claim any legitimacy to a monopoly on the use of force. This is a very important question both for sociologists, as students and experts in the field of human group behaviour, and also for all of the inhabitants of the globe, who must live with the very

²⁶ Rulers may be understood as those who are officially recognized, whether deemed legitimate or illegitimate, as creating and maintaining the law, and also as those who rule 'behind the scenes' unbeknownst to the masses, by means of their wealth and associated freedom-power.

real day-to-day consequences of states' exercise of the collective freedom-powers of peoples.

The Power Politics of Peace Understood as War

The final explicit definition of war that emerged from the literature is found in Foucault's explanation of Henri de Boulainvilliers' work, as well as his thinking on that of Clausewitz. Foucault explains that de Boulainvilliers understood war to be a part of all social relationships (Foucault 1997:162), and furthermore, that Clausewitz' view that war is the continuation of politics by other means can be reversed, and politics understood as the continuation of war by other means (Foucault 1997:15). He states that, "the role of political power is perpetually to use a sort of silent war to reinscribe that relationship of force...[it] sanctions and reproduces the disequilibrium of forces manifested in war...within this 'civil peace'" (Foucault 1997:15-6). In this view, war is an ongoing conflict that never ceases, not even with the establishment of peace, which itself is fraught with, sometimes very subtle and sometimes blatantly apparent, conflicts and power struggles, which are in themselves manifestations of war.

As Foucault puts it,

Law is not pacification, for beneath the law, war continues to rage in all the mechanisms of power...War is the motor behind institutions and order. In the smallest of its cogs, peace is waging a secret war...[there is a] war that is going on beneath peace; peace itself is a coded war. We are therefore at war with one another; a battlefield runs through the whole of society, continuously and permanently (Foucault 1997:50-1).

In support of this view, Foucault cites three examples that illustrate Hobbes as understanding war as a permanent state. First he cites Hobbes' example of robbers who are permanently at war with travelers; next, of how American settlers lived at war with one another in the America of his time; and finally, of how European states at war are comparable to two men at odds with their weapons pointed at each other (Foucault 1997:90). In my view, it is only the last of these examples that might constitute war. In the first, there is no war, but lawlessness. It becomes war if lethal conflict ensues between a band of robbers and a band of travelers. Where it is one man against another man, it is a private conflict, a competition for life; where a band of robbers against one man, unfortunate bullying, and murder if the victim is killed; but not war. In the second example, of pilgrims engaged in lethal conflict without a governing body of law to mediate it, again, it is not war, but anarchy, 'the war of every man against every man,' a competition for survival of each man for himself, a private and personal matter. The third example cited, of European states opposed and prepared for war, is the closest to an example of war. However, as previously stated, the intention to make war, and thus similarly, preparedness for war, does not in itself constitute war. Only the collective, violent acts of two mutually opposed groups entail the state of war.

The central concepts in consideration of this definition of war are peace and politics, which are understood not as the ends of war, in victory, but as war itself. In this view war is disguised as 'peaceful' and waged by largely non-violent methods, such as the employment of wealth to manipulate politics, of propaganda to manipulate ideology, and of ideology to manipulate actions, to name a few.

In consideration of this definition of war, that the politics of peace are a continuation of war by non-violent means, the cause of war is the mere fact of sociality, wherever it exists, and war is an inescapable fact of life.

In my view, this understanding of war does not describe what war is as a social phenomenon. Its utility, as with other understandings of war presented in this chapter, is that it sheds light on social processes that can lead to war: the politics of the dominant and the subjugated, of the law-makers and the citizens who must abide by the law, of the law enforcers and the law breakers, of the masters and the slaves. These power politics, these conflicts of freedom-power, exist in states of peace, yes, but they do not constitute war. Rather, they exist in the absence of war and may lead to war when and where the balance of freedom-power shifts²⁷. To put forth the argument that peace *is* war is to negate the differences between all of the social circumstances that cause war and to assert that war is an inescapable and unavoidable facet of all social life. It is to negate the state of affairs that *is* war, and to deny the difference that does indeed exist between war and peace. For while the absence of war may not always entail entirely peaceful circumstances and be without conflict, there is nevertheless a marked difference between, on the one hand, the malcontents of a state of 'peace' that could be more satisfactory and 'peaceful,' and on the other hand, the horrors that are the reality of war, of violent armed conflict between two opposed groups.

To call 'peace' 'war' is to undermine the experiences of those who have lived through wars and of those who have died at war. It is to suggest that someone such as myself, who has never seen or experienced first-hand a single fatal conflict, is as much in

²⁷ And it always does.

a state of war as people who currently live out their lives amidst a day-to-day ricochet of gunshots and bomb-blasted rubble.

It is important to demarcate war from the social processes that may lead to it, and also to demarcate peace from these, in order that the question of whether a widespread peace is possible may be answered and the conditions necessary for peace may be determined.

I will turn now to a discussion of the only explicit definition of peace that appears in the literature, and I will then turn in conclusion of this chapter to a discussion of the implications of these various definitions for both the sociology of peace and war, and the possibilities of peace.

A Lonely Definition of Peace

Only one explicit definition of peace emerges from the literature surveyed, and it is voiced by Kant as “the end of all hostilities” (Kant [1795] in Humphrey 2003:2). This definition of peace is shared by Hobbes, who states that peace is equivalent to the certainty that the disposition of others to cause the individual harm is absent (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:107)²⁸. As will be explained in greater detail in the following chapter, both Kant and Hobbes, among others, understand the establishment of this peace in terms of the establishment of government by means of social contracts. However,

²⁸ It should be noted that while Kant, on the one hand, refers to the end of hostilities between groups, and Hobbes, on the other, to that between individuals, the premise is the same in both instances. Peace, according to Kant and Hobbes respectively, is equivalent to the absence of hostilities and threats to safety. In other words, peace is synonymous with security.

before exploring in detail the implicit definition of peace that this entails, it is prudent to ask what this explicit definition means.

First, what is the end of all hostilities? Second, is the end of all hostilities possible?

In answer to the first question, the end of all hostilities entails the absence of any antagonisms of any kind, of any conflict whatsoever, violent or otherwise. This is so because antagonisms necessitate hostility. It seems to me, then, that the end of all hostilities, either in micro-sociological terms or in macro-sociological terms, is utterly impossible. Short of satire, I can hardly imagine any written works pertaining to human social life in which there are no antagonisms between characters, let alone any human relations that are not characterized in one way or another, at some time or another, by some form of antagonism, even if hidden and/or unspoken²⁹.

If peace is defined in this way, as the end of all hostilities, then peace is a nearly impossible goal, achievable only by the most isolated of hermits who must never feel pain of any kind imposed by the actions of another human being. As Arendt states, “violence is neither bestial nor irrational” (Arendt 1970:63) and “rage and the violence that sometimes...goes with it belong among the ‘natural’ *human* emotions, and to cure man of them would mean nothing less than to dehumanize or emasculate him” (Arendt 1970:64). This is to say that anger, and therefore hostility, are natural conditions of human existence, and can never be eradicated³⁰.

²⁹ This may seem pessimistic and cynical, but I assert that it is realistic. Even the most jovial, kindred, and loving of relationships are often characterized at some point by element(s) of competition, conflict, disagreement, or something of the like.

³⁰ Or that should they somehow be eradicated, for example, by artificial means, would be to strip people of their humanity, anger and hostility being perfectly natural under some conditions.

The causes of war suggested by this definition of peace are hostility and human aggression, and the cause of peace, or of engaging in peaceful relations toward the end of eliminating hostilities, can therefore be understood to be a desire to limit the effects of these. The central theme which characterizes this definition of peace is security, provided by the absence of hostilities and of the violence that sometimes results.

It is my view that this definition of peace is inadequate, in sociological terms and in terms of contemporary human social relations. This is because while the absence of hostilities certainly contribute to a state of peace, their absence does not describe what peace *is*. Rather, this understanding of peace sheds light on what is *not* peace and can never be peaceful: hostility. However, it is possible to encounter situations in which there are no present hostilities, and yet in which ‘peace’ is not necessarily present³¹.

The utility of this definition is that its inadequacy demands that further sociological investigation be undertaken into the exploration of what human ‘peace’ is, what it means. According to Creighton and Shaw, there is “a great deal more difficulty with the concept of ‘peace’ than with that of ‘war.’ Peace can be defined as the absence of war; but can we ever say that war is absent in any modern society?” (Creighton and Shaw 1987:10). Certainly, the absence of war facilitates peace, and the absence of petty conflicts and hostilities facilitate peace, but what is left in their absence? In answer to Creighton and Shaw’s question, I posit that war can be absent in modern societies, as it is in my community at the time of writing. However, what cannot be absent are hostilities and conflicts, which are natural to human social life.

³¹ Consider for example a social situation in which war is not present, nor personal hostilities of a less serious kind, but in which environmental or economic conditions predispose people to be unhappy. It is feasible that where there is a plague or a food shortage, for example, both conflict and peace may be absent.

In the striving toward peace then, to what desired end are means directed? According to Arendt, “the end of war – end taken in its twofold meaning – is peace or victory; but to the question And what is the end of peace? there is no answer” (Arendt 1970:51). And as Creighton and Shaw put it, “in defining the social and political conditions which may make it possible to avoid war, we may make a more substantial contribution to a lasting peace than by an *a priori* definition of this goal” (Creighton and Shaw 1987:3).

The implication of these statements is that there is no objective definition of peace upon which all might agree, and the best way of achieving it might be to focus attention on the methods by which war may be avoided. While this view has merit, it is nevertheless arguably important for sociologists to attempt to identify and define the state of peace. This is so because proclaimed reasons and motivations for engaging in warfare are often tied in with the human desire for peace. Whatever the cause(s) of any given war, peace is the ultimate goal, and if we do not know, or agree upon, that goal toward which we strive, we cannot hope to make good, informed decisions about the proper methods for achieving our ends.

Summary: Of Meanings and Causes

To this point, it has been shown that there are eight explicit definitions of war and one explicit definition of peace to be found in the literature surveyed. Some of these definitions address war in terms of relations between individuals, and some in terms of

relations between groups, and the one explicit definition of peace that was found can be considered in both micro- and macro-sociological terms. I argued that the majority of the understandings of war uncovered describe social processes that can lead to war, rather than what war is a social phenomenon. I put forth the argument that war is potentially fatal, armed, violent conflict between at least two opposing groups whose criteria of membership is more-or-less clearly defined, and that similar conflicts between individuals do not constitute war. I also noted that property relations are integral to the characterization of war as a social phenomenon, in that the theme resurfaced in the majority of discussions of the various understandings of war put forth, and where it did not emerge explicitly, the link could be made plainly clear.

Despite the inadequacy *as definitions* of the majority of the understandings of war discussed, each proved useful for identifying some of the causes of war. While each of the specific causes of war that were uncovered in the literature have particular meanings in light of the contexts from which they emerged, each can nevertheless be subsumed under one or more of the following broad categories: 1) the will to survive; 2) greed; 3) the will to dominate; 4) the will to be free; and/or 5) sociality.

Furthermore, in consideration of the explicit definition of peace provided in the literature, I argued that it does not adequately describe what peace is, but rather, identifies one of the possible conditions that are favourable to peace, the absence of hostilities, which happens to be impossible to achieve. These findings indicate that war is too broadly defined in the literature, and peace too narrowly defined, such that the typology outlined above suggests that widespread peace is impossible and war is inevitably ever-present. However, it is my view that if the causes of war are differentiated from the

definition, or phenomenon, of war, and if peace is defined in more realistic terms than the absence of all hostilities, it may be possible to discover some ways in which war may be avoided and the conditions necessary for peace created.

I will turn now to a discussion of the implicit definition of peace that prevails in the literature, that is, peace understood in terms of security, as the creation of law and order in and between groups by way of the establishment of social contracts and the creation of social justice.

Chapter Three: Of Law, Order, and Security In and Between Groups; The Search For Peace

As previously discussed, in the literature under analysis, only one explicit definition of peace emerged, peace understood as the end of all hostilities. However, it is also implicitly defined in terms of the creation and maintenance of order and security in and between groups through the establishment and enforcement of law³². In this understanding of peace, it is understood that violence deemed to be ‘legitimate’ may be applied in order to enforce law and maintain security. What is also plain in the literature is that the establishment of peaceful in-groups can and does tend to produce war between groups. Peace is framed in terms of the absence of ‘illegitimate’ or undue violence in favour of consensual law enforcement for the sake of security.

In the pages that follow, I will begin with a discussion of fairly recent writings concerning peace groups, in order to demonstrate what a peace group is and how these may come about informally without codified laws. I will then go on to discuss the classical conceptions of the social contract put forth by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau in order to demonstrate some of the ways in which the peace group is understood to evolve into a formal body with codified laws, the state. Next, I will discuss some of the contemporary understandings of the evolution of states and the relations between them, and I will turn in conclusion to a discussion of whether or not the implicit framing of

³² Since both Kant and Hobbes, in their explicit definition of peace discussed in the previous chapter, view the potential for the end of hostilities and the threat to safety in terms of the establishment of law, it may be argued that the definition being discussed in this chapter is not a different, implicit definition, but is rather an explication of Kant’s and Hobbes’ explicit definition. This would not be an entirely false argument. However, the understanding of peace as being achieved through the establishment and enforcement of law appears in the works of a considerable number of writers, few of whom explicitly define peace in such terms, or rather, at all, but whose work implicitly suggests peace to come about by such means. Furthermore, the theme also appears in a variety of ways that in some instances differ from the ways in which the process is described in the work of Kant and Hobbes, and so it deserves greater attention and consideration than the discussion of the explicit definition permitted in the first chapter.

peace in terms of law, order, and security in and between groups is an adequate conception.

Informal Peace Groups

A good starting point is an understanding of what constitutes a group in basic sociological terms. What is it to belong to a group? According to Charles Horton Cooley, “one identifies himself with a group and speaks of the common will, opinion, service or the like in terms of ‘we’ and ‘us’” (Cooley [1902] 1964:209). In this view, a group may be understood as such without any formal criteria of membership or rules of law having been proclaimed. A dyad or triad of individuals who are otherwise little involved with one another may, for example, hunt together for safety purposes, and then return to their separate camps. In this instance, the group only lasts so long as they are joined together as ‘we’ or ‘us’ regarding their common will and mutual interests. If they happen to hunt together on a regular basis, a lasting sense of ‘we’ or ‘us’ may emerge alongside bonds of friendship. However, laws are not necessary for the maintenance of harmony within such a group.

According to Mark A. May, “most groups place a heavy taboo on ingroup aggression...a peace group is one in which there is the minimum amount of physical violence among the members”³³ (May 1943:156-57). Considering the example above, it is easy to see that such an informal group may constitute a peace group, even without

³³ It should be noted that this notion of a ‘peace group’ does not specify the absence of hostilities between all group members, but rather, the absence of aggression, of acting on hostilities, as a characteristic of the group dynamic.

rules and laws to regulate the interactions between members. As May points out, peace groups come into being as soon as people recognize that there is greater benefit in working together in groups than attempting survival alone (May 1943:156). Sumner supports this view and states that, “every individual excludes every other in the competition of life unless they can by combining together win more out of nature by joint effort than the sum of what they can win separately” (Sumner 1911:208). According to Sigmund Freud, it is this shared interest among the members of the forming group that contributes to a sense of group unity and solidarity; it is the common interests of members that make the group strong as such (Freud [1932] in Shea 1989:28).

In Aafke Komter’s view, reciprocity is an essential aspect of solidarity, in that everyone gains something by group membership and no appeals are made to altruism alone (Komter 2005:183). In the case of the hunting group, it is not as though one person or the other is doing the others a one-sided favour by joining with the group to hunt; each gains additional security from danger by the presence of the others, and each arguably also gains increased chances of success on the hunt by virtue of the co-operation of other group members in tracking and attacking prey.

The way in which group members determine their expected behaviour patterns is to alter-cast, that is, to imagine themselves in the position of the other in order to determine what the other might expect. According to George Herbert Mead, “the immediate function which [the] taking of the role of the other serves is that of making the organism an object to itself” (Mead in Morris et al 1938:448). In the case of the hunting group, each person alter-casts in order to determine what the others might logically expect of him. It is not necessarily the case that members of the group must agree upon

any rules prior to the hunt; it suffices that each recognize the common interests of the other group members and act accordingly. As Hobbes put it, in positive terms, “*whatsoever you require that others should do to you, that do ye to them*” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:110), or in negative terms, “*do not that to another which you would not have done to yourself*” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:130). This is understood by Hobbes to be the basic law of nature under which all other laws are subsumed and from which all other laws are derived (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:130); if people would adhere to this principle first and foremost, there would be little or no need for other laws.

According to Komter, the ability to alter-cast is a crucial element of solidarity within groups. He states, “being able to sympathize and identify with the predicament of another person is a key precondition to solidarity. Only a self that mirrors the imagined viewpoints of others is capable of solidarity” (Komter 2005:174). In some cases, then, an informal understanding of the peace group’s interests and the resultant behavioural expectations of individual members may suffice to maintain non-violent interaction between them.

From the discussion to this point, it is plain to see that common interests can and do bring individuals together into peace groups that do not necessarily require formal laws to regulate behaviour. However, simply because people ought to treat others the way they would like to be treated does not entail that they will do so. Consider, for example, the hunting group again, which is an informal group and unregulated by law. Each individual in the group knows that he should not kill another group member, nor kidnap a daughter from the camp of any other in the group, despite the fact that there may be no express laws to this effect. Each member of the hunting group, assuming he has mature

logical faculties, should be able to judge that if he should murder another group member or kidnap another's daughter, there will very likely be severe consequences of some kind, that emotions might flare and lead to violence. However, as the peace group thus far has as its foundation shared interests, and perhaps bonds of friendship, these alone are not understood to be sufficient to maintain safety and security should any of the members choose to act contrary to wisdom or the law of nature. After all, even in an informal peace group where members may very well like each other, each individual is nevertheless primarily concerned with his own interests and is always liable to put those before the good of the group, especially where his survival is concerned.

According to May,

People who have found by experience that life flows more smoothly, that happiness is more abundant, that their wants and needs are better met by friendly than by hostile relations with others, are far more strongly predisposed to settle disputes, both domestic and foreign, by peaceful means. If an individual is consistently rewarded more for cooperative behaviour and friendly relations with other individuals or groups than for competitive behaviour and antagonistic relations, he will acquire habits and attitudes that favour peace. But even these do not guarantee peace...the procedures which have proved successful in satisfying man's wants and in meeting his needs are most highly prized and sanctioned by him (May 1943:151-52).

That said, it is possible for peace groups to form and act in concert without a regulative apparatus of some kind. However, it is understood in the literature that there is in such a group little or no guarantee of safety and security until formal rules are developed to regulate behaviour and "guarantee as far as possible that all members of a group may reap the maximum benefits from social interaction with each other" (May 1943:157). An individual who has learned that the use of force in the attaining of his

goals tends to lead to success will not be predisposed to try other methods until a) the use of force in the attainment of his ends ceases to be effective, or b) he learns that there is a more effective method that may be employed to serve his interests.

Margaret Gilbert puts forth a definition of the group in which she identifies it as a plural subject: a body or unit composed of individuals who are jointly committed to something (Gilbert 2000:2), where that to which they are committed can be anything ranging from ideas and beliefs to intentions and actions, among other things (Gilbert 2000:101). The concept of a joint commitment is crucial to her theorization of the plural subject, and it is arguably of considerable significance to any understanding of group formations or group behaviour, where the common interest is the foundation of the group. According to Gilbert, joint commitments are the core of human sociality (Gilbert 2000:4) and they “tie or bind...participants together into a unit or a whole,” the plural subject (Gilbert 2000:3). A joint commitment, simply put, is a commitment made by two or more people toward any end (Gilbert 2000:3).

According to Gilbert, once a joint commitment has been made, no party can rescind his or her commitment unilaterally (Gilbert 2000:7). This is because,

by virtue of one's participation in a joint commitment with another person *one gains a special standing with respect to the actions of that other person...each party to a joint commitment has a right to conforming actions from the other, and each is under a corresponding obligation to that other* (Gilbert 2000:7-8).

It is plain to see here the beginnings of law, of a sense of social justice, though the normative behavioural expectations developed within a group thus far may yet be informal.

According to Gilbert, the only way to rescind a joint commitment is for all parties to express a willingness for the joint commitment to come to an end (Gilbert 2000:54). If this does not occur, and one party attempts unilaterally to rescind their commitment without the consent of other concerned parties, the withdrawing party necessarily offends the others' right to conforming action and discord ensues within the group. However, contrary to Gilbert's assertion, joint commitments can be unilaterally rescinded, unless they are backed and enforced by law. As famously stated by Hobbes, "covenants without the sword are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all" (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:139). Joint commitments, then, result in the creation of a sense of justice, and when broken unilaterally, conflict ensues. Social justice is a mere abstraction, however, until it can be enforced.

Consider in the case of the informal hunting group, how it might be that a pattern emerges such that members of the group know that every fifth day will be a hunting day. Each group member relies on the others to appear at some designated location every fifth day, though no rule to that effect was ever expressed and agreed upon. Should any of the group members unilaterally rescind his commitment to the hunting group and cease to meet with the other hunters, offend them he does, but act unjustly he does not, as group membership and behavioural expectations are informal. However, laws or no laws, it is likely that the group will somehow sanction him, perhaps by exclusion from the group at some future time, or perhaps even violently, to name a couple of examples. Laws serve to clarify normative behavioural expectations and the penalties for non-conformity.

According to Sumner, "there can be peace and order inside only by law...but a law creates and enforces rights" (Sumner 1911:214). The benefits of making joint

commitments within a group can only be assured if members can be certain that the terms of agreements are enforced. Freud states that, “there are two factors of cohesion in a community: violent compulsion and ties of sentiment...between the members of the group” (Freud [1932] in Shea 1989:35). If bonds of friendship and loyalty cannot at all times ensure the stability of the group, then the violent punishment of offenses may serve to socialize individuals into conforming to behavioural expectations and contribute to order within the group³⁴. As Freud points out, rights and laws are equated with the might, the violence, of the community; the nature of violence is altered from a relation between individuals to a relation between each individual with the greater community; “it is the communal, not individual, violence that has its way” (Freud [1932] in Shea 1989:26-7). Rights and laws emerge within the group as a result of violence, as a protection against it, and violence is then used to enforce those rights and laws³⁵ (Freud [1932] in Shea 1989:23). As Herbert Spencer points out, “in proportion as men are compelled to cooperate, their self-prompted actions are restrained” (Spencer 1896:301). That is, order within the group is maintained by the self-interest of individual members so long as the advantages of being in the peace group outweigh the disadvantages of being excluded, so long as the benefits of abiding by the group’s laws are greater than the costs of breaking them.

³⁴ It should be noted that while non-violent sanctions may also serve this end, violent sanctions are most effective when non-violent means prove unsuccessful.

³⁵ These are the beginnings of the ‘legitimation’ of the use of violence. However, whether or not the authority behind it is legitimate is debateable. In the first chapter I argued that authority stemming from respect and authority stemming from greater strength are equally legitimate forms of authority, in that both forms result in the fruition of the will of the enforcer. In this discussion, that same argument is equally valid. The legitimacy of the group’s employment of violence to enforce its will is demonstrated by its ability to do so. Only when a sufficiently significant portion of the group’s membership challenges this legitimacy with a demonstration of equal or greater strength is the legitimacy undermined, when the group proves unable to enforce sanctions.

According to Alexis de Tocqueville, “it may be admitted as a general and constant rule that among civilized nations the warlike passions will become more rare and less intense in proportion as social conditions shall be more equal”³⁶ (de Tocqueville 1863:329). There are two immediate implications of this statement. The first is that within the peace group, discord is least likely where the laws are generally perceived as fair and just to all, where the interests of all group members are served without preference given to some members. It is not necessarily the case that all members must enjoy the same benefits as part of the group, but that each is held accountable, and equally so, before the common laws of the group. According to Engels, “the exercise of social function [is] everywhere the basis of political supremacy...political supremacy has existed for any length of time only when it fulfilled its social functions” (Engels [1878] in Dutt 1939:198-99). As noted in Chapter Two, group members carrying greater responsibilities for the group than other members may have conferred upon them authority along with special rights and privileges. They may also have special laws to guide what is acceptable with regard to the performance of their social functions (Engels [1878] in Dutt 1939:198-99). What is important in order to ensure order within the group is that these rights and laws are perceived as just and in the interest of the group, and that they are applied and enforced equally to all group members occupying the same positions over time.

³⁶ This assertion of de Tocqueville’s may appear to be at odds with Hobbes’ understanding that relative equality produces conflict, however, it is important to recall that in Hobbes’ work, this is only understood to be the case in the state of nature where each individual fends for himself in competition for survival against all other individuals. In the context that de Tocqueville describes, groups the formation of which have progressed to the national or state level require as much equality as possible within, in terms of social conditions and the application of law, so that order may be maintained and the outbreak of war avoided.

The second implication of de Tocqueville's assertion concerns relations between groups. Social conditions being more or less equal for neighbouring groups, the likelihood of war is decreased. However, should one group enjoy the benefits, for example, of living on the best land in the region while neighbouring groups live at a noticeable disadvantage, it may be expected that as social conditions worsen for the disadvantaged groups, the propensity for war between the groups is increased.

According to Sumner, "any group in order to be strong against an outside enemy, must be well disciplined, harmonious, and peaceful inside...discord inside would cause defeat in battle with another group" (Sumner 1911:210). This statement points to an important recurring theme in the literature. Not only are peace groups formed and laws eventually codified so that individuals may gain protection from one another as such in individual conflicts, but they are also formed as a safeguard against potential dangers imposed by other peace groups. The safety of individual members from each other is not the only, nor necessarily the primary, incentive for the codification of laws to maintain order, but rather the safety and security of the group depends in large part upon its ability to act in concert successfully against other groups when at war. As Spencer states,

For preserving its corporate life, a society is impelled to corporate action, and the preservation of its corporate life is the more probable in proportion as its corporate action is the more complete. For purposes of offense and defense, the forces of individuals have to be combined, and, where every individual contributes his force, the probability of success is greatest (Spencer 1896:300).

In order for this successful combination of forces to occur, it is necessary that group members enjoy safety and security within the group and a sense of solidarity with other members against the threat of violence from other groups. As Sumner puts it, the

members of a peace group constitute a 'we-group' or ingroup and every other group stands in relation to one's ingroup as an 'others-group' or outgroup (Sumner 1911:209).

Lawrence states that, "the binary relation of self and 'other' constructs identity" (Lawrence 1997:163). This occurs, on the one hand, through a sense of identification and solidarity with members of one's ingroup, whose values and ways of life are known, and, on the other hand, through a sense of differentiation from outgroups, whose values and ways of life may noticeably contrast. Amartya Sen supports the view that strong identification with one's ingroup can contribute to violence between groups, asserting that identity can "kill with abandon. A strong – and exclusive – sense of belonging to one group can in many cases carry with it the perception of distance and divergence from other groups. Within-group solidarity can help feed between-group discord" (Sen 2006:1-2). It is plainly the case, then, that the formation of groups for the purpose of escaping individual dangers in the anarchic wild contribute at least in part to the existence of war as a social phenomenon.

According to Sumner, the relation between groups is always one of suspicion and mistrust, whereby each group views the other as a potential enemy due to competition in the attainment of goals and conflicts of interest (Sumner 1911:210). He states that, "it is no paradox at all to say that peace makes war and war makes peace. There are two codes of morals and two sets of mores, one for comrades inside and the other for strangers outside, and they arise from the same interests" (Sumner 1911:210).

To this point, I have shown how an informal peace group may be formed that is not regulated by codified laws, but founded rather on the mutual self-interests of members and their ability to alter-cast and determine what one another's behavioural

expectations are. I have also demonstrated that this suffices so long as the benefits of conforming to group practices outweigh the advantages of being excluded from the group and being able to act as one pleases. I have also shown that joint commitments made by individual group members contribute to the beginnings of law, in that individuals thereby develop a sense of social justice in terms of rights and obligations to one another. Where there is no common law to enforce the terms of any given agreement, potentially violent discord ensues when any attempts to rescind a joint commitment unilaterally. I also illustrated that law comes to be instituted within the peace group to ensure, on the one hand, the safety and security of individuals living amongst one another in the group, and on the other hand, to ensure that the group is strong against potential enemy outgroups. I also demonstrated that strong identification with a particular group serves to highlight differences between groups and can fuel wars concerning conflicting interests.

I will now turn to a discussion of the classical conceptions of the social contract put forth by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau in order to illustrate some of the ways in which the peace group is understood to evolve into a formal body with codified laws, the state.

Peace Groups With Formal Regulatory Codes of Behaviour

In their classical conceptions of the social contract, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau each provide a detailed account of how and why a peace group may be created that takes the form of a state. What differentiates these accounts from those discussed thus far in

this chapter is the explicit emphasis placed by each author on the exchange of natural freedoms for lawful rights and personal security. These authors also place greater emphasis on the legitimation of authority by way of express consent on the part of all group members.

All three authors assert that people are naturally free (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:176; Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:118; Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:49). As mentioned in the previous chapter, in Hobbes' view this freedom entails an equality of ability to take away the life, freedom, or belongings of another in a situation in which "an invader has no more to fear than another man's single power" (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:105). In Rousseau's view, the only limit to natural freedom is the extent of an individual's physical power (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:65), and for Locke, natural freedom refers to the absence of any restraint from a greater power such as the will or the legislation of another (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:127). In sum, these definitions of freedom amount to the abilities of individuals to accomplish any given acts according to their own wills. Prior to the establishment of the peace group and the law, the safety and security of each individual and his belongings are understood to always be at risk due to the relatively equal freedom-power everyone has to do as he pleases in the pursuit of his interests.

In the work of all three authors, but especially in that of Locke and Rousseau, emphasis is placed on the importance of the protection of people's property as a key motive for entering into a formal peace group by way of the social contract. According to Rousseau, before the establishment of the social contract, possession of land is on the basis of either the use of force, or alternatively, what he calls "the right of the first

occupant.” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:65). In his view, the right of the first occupant is valid so long as no one else resides on the land yet, only so much as is needed for subsistence is claimed, and the land is cultivated by the claimant (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:66). However, he also states that, “the ‘right of the first occupant,’ although more real than the ‘right of the strongest,’ does not become a true right until the institution of property,” which is derived from the social contract³⁷ (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:66).

In a similar vein, Locke also asserts that the work a man puts into cultivating the land is an essential aspect of property. He states,

Though the earth and all inferior creatures be common to all men, yet every man has a ‘property’ in his own ‘person.’ This nobody has any right to but himself. The ‘labour’ of his body and the ‘work’ of his hands, we may say, are properly his... Whatsoever, then, he removes out of the state that Nature hath provided and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with it, and joined it to something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state Nature placed it in, it hath by his labour something annexed to it that excludes the common right of other men (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:130).

In this view, the right to property by virtue of one’s labour is valid as such even in the absence of a social contract conferring legal title. However, due to the freedom of men to do whatever they can in order to survive, one’s property and hence one’s own chances of survival are understood to be under constant threat until a peace group is formed and a formal social contract is established to socially legitimate property claims.

³⁷ Contrary to Rousseau’s view, the right of the strongest is undeniably ‘more real’ than the right of the first occupant, regardless even of the institution of property under the social contract. This is because the strongest can always take away the rights of others. In this sense, socially constructed rights are secondary and ‘less real’ than the natural rights prescribed by the realities of the degrees of freedom-power which people possess to enforce their will.

An additional consideration of relevance concerning property was put forth by Engels and discussed in the previous chapter. He maintains that in primitive communes, there was common ownership of the land, though like Locke, his understanding is that each individual's labour appropriated property from the common to the private. He explains that so long as the products of labour remained for use by the producers, the standing between the members of the communes was relatively equal. However, when barter with strangers led to the commodification of property, a difference of value came to be placed on the products of each man's labour and inequality began to develop between group members. This, he goes on to say, was worsened by trade and exchange within the communes until eventually common ownership of the land came to be undermined (Engels [1878] in Dutt and Burns 1939:179-80).

According to the classical social contract theorists, the only way out of this dangerous predicament whereby one's land, products of labour, and life are constantly at risk is to establish a governing social contract that has jurisdiction over the men who are party to the contract, and in Locke and Rousseau's views, also over their land (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:108-09; Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:178; Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:67).

What is the social contract? In simple terms, it is the consensual exchange of natural freedoms and individual power for laws and legal rights that are enforced with the combined might of the community thus formed. According to Rousseau, "the social order is a sacred right which serves as a basis for all other rights. And as it is not a natural right [such as the right to self-defense], it must be one founded on covenants" (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:50). Rousseau goes on to say that "these articles of

association...are reducible to a single one, namely the total alienation by each associate of himself and all his rights to the whole community” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:60). In speaking of people’s alienation from their rights, Rousseau is not referring to legal rights, but to the natural freedom-power of individuals before the establishment of the contract (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:50). Locke understands the creation of the social contract in much the same way, asserting that political society comes into being when people give up their natural power to the community for protection by way of the law (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:159). He states that wherever “any number of men so unite into one society as to quit every one his executive power of the law of Nature, and to resign it to the public...this puts men out of the state of Nature and into that of a commonwealth” (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:160), where the law of Nature is that freedom to use force and violence against enemies for self-preservation and the safety of the innocent (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:125). Hobbes’ view of the social contract also emphasizes the exchange of freedom for rights, and is understood in terms of the mutual transfer of rights (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:112) for the purpose of establishing a power stronger than each individual to make judgments concerning the peace and safety of all group members (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:142). As Rousseau puts it,

since each man gives himself to all, he gives himself to no one; and since there is no associate over whom he does not gain the same rights as others gain over him, each man recovers the equivalent of everything he loses, and in the bargain he acquires more power to preserve what he has (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:61).

Though the theme of mutual exchange is common to the writings of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, an important difference emerges concerning the placement of the group’s combined power, to which I will turn in due course.

First, one of the important seeming distinctions of these conceptualizations of the social contract from the previous discussion of the formation of peace groups is the explicit emphasis on mutual exchange. In the informal peace group in which there are no regulating laws to abide by, no member is understood to give up any of his freedom, but rather each decides for himself how to behave based on an assessment of needs and the best way of attaining them in relation to other group members. It is arguably the case that the establishment of the social contract in the terms of which Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau each write, describes much the same process. What is distinctive is that the process is formally codified into a recognized system of law rather than informally recognized as a system of rewards and sanctions pertaining to behaviour expectations. In both schematics, however, natural freedom-power is never actually given up, 'rights' are never 'exchanged' or 'transferred.' Rather, in the classical conceptions of the establishment of the social contract, the mutual agreement to restrict certain exercises of freedom-power is made explicit rather than developed, applied, and learned gradually through the process of socialization, as with the informal peace group. Furthermore, people may enter or leave an informal peace group at will, whereas the social contract theory of the establishment of a governing system of law entails permanent membership so long as the group persists (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:178).

Additionally, a second distinction is that in the classical conceptions, the social contract is understood to form a group composed of individuals that is analogous to a living body, in contrast to the informal peace group which can form and disband non-violently according to convenience. According to Rousseau, "this act of association creates an artificial and corporate body...and by this same act that body acquires its

unity, its common *ego*, its life and its will” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:61). Likewise, Locke asserts that to live in union under a common, authoritative law together in civil society creates a body of which each group member is a part (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:159). Hobbes, too, makes this assertion, stating that the social contract amounts to “a real unity of them all in one and the same person, made by covenant of every man with every man...This is the generation of that great Leviathan...to which we owe...our peace and defense” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:142-43).

The notion of the peace group as a body formed by the social contract has implications for the relations of the body with others. According to Locke, “though in a commonwealth the members of it are distinct persons...in reference to the rest of mankind, they make one body, which is...still in the state of Nature with the rest of mankind” (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:191). That said, the social contract serves to establish increased safety, security, and order within a group among all of its constituent members, however, the newly formed body is still in a state of danger, insecurity, and lawlessness with regard to other bodies. In Hobbes’ view, the social contract authorizes the person invested with the power of the commonwealth to “*use the strength and means of them all as he shall think expedient for their peace and common defense*” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:143). Each individual party to the social contract is then theoretically assured that conflicts within the group will not be life threatening³⁸, and is strengthened against outsiders to the social contract. However, the danger of conflicts between individuals, or small groups of individuals is hereby replaced by a greater danger, the potential for conflicts between large groups who have no obligations to one

³⁸ For the social contract and the force of the people behind it cannot prevent crimes of passion, though it can mediate social relations such that they are less likely to occur, and can be sanctioned swiftly and authoritatively when they do occur.

another. Here then, is one of the foundations of war, in the formation of groups whose purpose is to take men out of the state of anarchy and individual danger, but places them under both an obligation and sometimes a need to engage in warfare to protect their collective lives and modes of living under their mutual contract.

According to Rousseau, the body formed by the social contract constitutes an individual in relation to others and can enter into contracts with them as well, in much the same way that the individual parties to the social contract have done in order to become one body (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:63). Sumner defines peace pacts as, “conventional agreements creating some combination between the groups which are parties to the agreement” (Sumner 1911:210), and these are understood to be the means of establishing peaceful relations between groups; that is, relations that are not characterized by warfare (Kant [1795] in Humphrey 2003:13-14; Vaughan 1917:11; Rousseau [1761] in Vaughan 1917:39). The absence of peace pacts between neighbouring bodies of people consists in the constant threat and uncertainty of pending war, which I have argued is properly defined as the potentially fatal, violent, armed conflict between at least two opposing groups whose criteria of membership is more-or-less clearly defined. This constant threat of war is due to the fact that two neighbouring peoples cannot realistically remain entirely isolated from one another, and as Rousseau states, “no one can injure any one of the members without attacking the whole...duty and self-interest thus equally oblige the...contracting parties to give each other mutual aid” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:63). That said, any serious conflict of interests

between individual members of two distinct bodies tends to involve both bodies in their entirety in the conflict rather than merely the individuals directly concerned³⁹.

An integral aspect of the social contract theories of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau concerns the issue of consent. All three authors posit that a valid social contract requires the consent of the contracting parties. According to Locke, only consent can put one individual into subjection under another⁴⁰ (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:177). In a similar vein, Hobbes states that laws cannot be made until people agree who will make them (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:107-08). Likewise in Rousseau's thinking, who states that, "the civil association is the most voluntary act in the world; every man having been born free and master of himself, no one else may under any pretext whatever subject him without his consent" (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:152).

According to Locke, the consent of free people is the only basis for lawful government (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:166) and "every man that hath any possession or enjoyment of any part of the dominions of any government doth hereby give his tacit consent, and is as far forth obliged to obedience to the laws of that government" (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:177). This is to say that, laws permitting, men are free to come and go as they please, but should a man elect to stay on a tract of land under the jurisdiction of a government erected by free people consenting to it, he is bound to honour the laws of that government. Rousseau concurs, asserting that if any should object to the establishment of the social contract, the contract remains valid for those who do consent

³⁹ Or at least representatives of each body in its entirety. For example, in the case of states, the branches of government responsible for dealing with various types of disputes do so on behalf of the entire citizenry, rather than merely on behalf of the individuals involved.

⁴⁰ This is, of course, a fallacy. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, there are a number of circumstances that can and do result in the domination of some individuals by others. The inability of some people to break free from subjection due to lesser degrees of freedom-power in any given situation is no indication of 'consent' in the true sense of what it means to willfully choose versus being coercively forced. This will be discussed further in due course.

and any dissenters are merely outsiders to the group; once the contract has been established, to reside on the territory inhabited by the group is understood as a sign of consent (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:153). Furthermore, it is Rousseau's view that of all the laws enacted by way of the social contract, the establishment of the contract itself is the only law to which all members must consent unanimously (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:152). He states, "the citizen consents to all the laws, even to those that are passed against his will, and even to those who punish him when he dares to break any one of them" (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:153). In addition to these assertions, Hobbes and Rousseau both maintain that the silence of people with regard to the enactment of laws also implies consent (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:211; Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:70).

It is important to ask how this consent of the people is to be understood. The classical social contract theories discussed here each presuppose a state of affairs in which government has yet to be erected, and it is asserted that they are only erected by the mutual consent of free individuals coming together willingly as a group. However, there is no known situation in which there is no system of rules or law whatsoever (formal or informal) regulating human interaction. Even supposing a situation in which no peace group other than the family has been formed in a state of anarchy, the values, norms, and sanctions within the family regulate behaviour and no member is entirely free or without restraint upon his actions, even if codified law backed by force is not the source of the restraint. Hence, whether living without government or living under government, the degrees of freedom-power individuals have with which to willfully choose to consent to any contract are not equal, but vary. It may be argued that when a

child reaches maturity, the individual gains more freedom-power to choose whether or not to consent to the authority of a peace group over his actions. This freedom is nevertheless constrained by circumstances. For example, if an individual lives on a barren terrain that necessitates cooperation and group life for survival, the individual's freedom-power to choose to consent is framed by whether or not he wishes to live or die, not whether or not he agrees with the terms of the contract of the group in question. It is arguably the case that in such a situation the individual's choice to remain with the group is a valid sign of consent, however, one must admit that the 'freedom' of such an individual is fairly limited by his lack of freedom-power to go elsewhere in the first place. Should there be corruption of the laws or injustice within such a group, the individual's consent to those laws is less a matter of choice than a matter of necessity for survival.

Additionally, it must be acknowledged that in the contemporary world, governments have already been erected with claims to jurisdiction over all of the habitable parts of the globe. If ever they were, people are not born free from subjugation to others; they are born into pre-existing social orders, and it is arguably the case that they do not always freely choose to remain in subjugation, whether they approve of a given social contract or not. That is, some in the world may have the freedom-power to choose to consent to one social order or another, to migrate from one territory or jurisdiction to another, but some do not. Consider, for instance, the mid-twentieth century story of Carolina Maria de Jesus, a Brazilian woman of African descent who spent a considerable portion of her life living in abject poverty in a favela on the outskirts of the city of Sao Paulo. Her diary chronicles her experiences collecting tin cans, glass bottles,

paper, and scrap metal to recycle for pocket change and her despair at having to rummage through garbage dumpsters for meat during the worst of times in order to feed herself and her three children. Her writing is rife with grief, frustration and anger concerning her living conditions and politics in her country at the time. On July 24th, 1955, she wrote, “Oh, if I could move out of this favela! I feel like I’m in hell!” (de Jesus [1960] in St. Clair 2003:19). In another entry written July 28th, 1958, she described an encounter with a young man whose aspiration was to become a politician. Upon asking of his political plans, he answered that he would like to get rich. She wrote, “I was shocked. Nobody any more has any patriotism,” and, “I was so unhappy! With a tremendous desire to kill myself. Today whoever is born and can put up with this life until death must be considered a hero” (de Jesus [1960] in St. Clair 2003:94). These passages clearly illustrate that some are not born free to make the willful choice of consenting to a particular social contract, and that some do indeed live in subjection to others without consenting to do so. The diary of de Jesus indicates that she often woke very early and went to sleep very late, working hard throughout the day to provide for herself and her family, essentially providing a social service in clearing refuse from the streets in exchange for very little return for her work. She did not have the freedom-power to move to another location, as the vast majority of her time was spent searching for food or the means to acquire it. According to Locke,

since the government has a direct jurisdiction over the land and reaches the possessor of it...only as he dwells upon and enjoys that, the obligation any one is under by virtue of such enjoyment to submit to the government begins and ends with the enjoyment (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:178).

Contrary to this assertion of Locke's, though de Jesus lived on a tract of land under the jurisdiction of a particular social contract, her writings clearly indicate that she did not consent to the policies of her government at the time of writing. Is it accurate to say that she consented to the initial social contract that gave rise to the government, and not to the subsequent laws? Arguably, yes, as her writings demonstrate a strong desire to improve the plight of the impoverished among her people. On the other hand, one may also argue that she was born into the existing social order and never chose to consent to it at all; she merely lacked the freedom-power to make any other choice. Furthermore, supposing she could have by some means found a way to the border of her government's territory without dying of starvation first, she may not have been admitted to cross into another jurisdiction. Her life, then, was tied to the land on which she resided, and the question of her freedom-power to choose between alternative social contracts was not entirely in her hands. In my view, the consent of an individual whose only choices are between a chance at life and probable death cannot be measured of equal value in comparison to the consent of a person whose choices are between a chance at life one way and a chance at life another way. If the only choice is between life and probable death, choosing to do what one must in order to survive is not a sufficient sign of consenting to government under others, as the consent is coerced rather than given truly voluntarily.

Another problematic issue regarding consent concerns the assertions of Hobbes and Rousseau that silence implies consent. First, Hobbes himself states that, "it belongs to the essence of...laws to be known to every man that shall be obliged to obey them, either by word, or writing, or some other act known to proceed from...authority"

(Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:216). In complex contemporary societies, it is arguably the case that the vast majority of the citizenry is unaware of the vast majority of the laws that govern day-to-day interactions. Even experts of judicature arguably cannot be said to know all of the laws, and so a citizen desiring to educate himself in the matter might spend a lifetime of study and never succeed in learning them all. In my view, ignorant silence cannot be equated with approval or consent⁴¹.

Furthermore, considering those laws that are commonly known: in her story, de Jesus was unique among her neighbours in the favela in that she knew how to read and write (St. Clair 2003:x). Her ability to do so enabled her to voice her dissenting opinions and disseminate them beyond the favela in which she lived. However, for the vast majority of favelados, arguably the only way to voice dissent against harmful government policies was to deviate from the laws of society in the attainment of their needs: crime, violence, and disorder in the pursuit of food, money, and happiness. As Rousseau states, “in a well-governed state few are punished, not because there are many pardons, but because there are few criminals” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:80). A high incidence of crime, then, may be interpreted as a sign of imbalance in the terms of the social contract and/or the distribution of wealth under the contract, and as rebellion or dissent against these. As Hobbes put it, “he that should be modest and tractable and perform all he promises in such time and place where no man else should do so should but make himself a prey to others and procure his own certain ruin” (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:130).

⁴¹ At least, it cannot be equated with informed consent. And if it should take any individual the greater part of a lifetime to become fully informed, the task is ridiculously unreasonable to expect of citizens.

If dissenters are, as Rousseau wrote, by virtue of their dissent excluded from the social contract, and if there is no other territory with an alternative social contract to which they may turn and freely give their consent to be governed, in what state may they be said to live? Such people are arguably ‘stateless’ people, subjugated in captivity. Given what has been shown thus far regarding the formation of peace groups and the reasons for which they are formed, it is plain to see that such people may reasonably be expected to join together as singularities of the multitude sharing common interests and form a new social contract, one that could potentially put them at war with the dominant group in the territory. In this view, a revolution is ultimately a war between contracting parties in which one group finds the will and the strength to assert that, “you no longer have legitimate authority over us,” or, “you no longer possess the authority to claim a legitimate monopoly on the use of violence against us.” It is as Locke maintained, only the consent of the free can give legitimate authority to a government established by social contract; otherwise the contract is invalid and does not bind.

These considerations also have implications for the circumstances of a people defeated by conquest. The forces that compel such a people to consent to a new social contract are not the same as those discussed in the previous example. Rather than the force of unjust laws or dire economic circumstances that threaten life and well-being, the compelling motive to ‘consent’ in the case of conquest is direct, life-threatening violence.

According to Locke,

many have mistaken the force of arms for the consent of the people, and reckon conquest as one of the originals of government...it often makes way for a new frame of a commonwealth by destroying the former; but without the consent of the people, can never erect a new one...he that conquers in an unjust war can...have no title to the subjection

and obedience of the conquered (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:207-08).

Though the circumstances are different in the case of conquest, the issues are the same. A people that does not consent to be governed but that is allowed or forced to live on a territory under the jurisdiction of another body is enslaved. According to Max Weber, “a ‘compulsory association’ (*Anstalt*) is a corporate group the establishment of which has...been successfully imposed on every individual who conforms with certain specific criteria” (Weber in Henderson and Parsons 1947:151). A person who desires to live cannot be said to freely choose to give consent to a social contract if the only choice is one between life and death.

Niccolo Machiavelli, famous for his strategic thinking on the governance and expansion of the territories of princes, as well as the ways that a prince might maintain order, advises that if a conquered people are not killed at the outset of victory, the people should be given active roles in their own governance (Machiavelli [1513] in Donno 1966:28). He states that, “all well-ordered states and all wise princes have been diligent in seeking to avoid exasperating the nobles and in keeping the common people satisfied. For this is one of the most important duties that falls to a prince” (Machiavelli [1513] in Donno 1966:72). This is an important statement, in that the satisfaction of a people is arguably a clear sign of consent and of order upheld by legitimate authority. However, if a conquered peoples’ only choice upon having being spared and allowed to live is to remain in the territory, and perhaps even participate in governance, this does not constitute valid consent, since the only other option is death. On the other hand, once defeated and having been spared, if there is a valid option to go to another territory and enter an alternative social contract or to remain and participate in the new one being

established, a people may be considered to give valid consent if they choose to remain. This is only the case, however, if it is actually viable that they may enter into another territory and be accepted as new, freely consenting members to another social contract. Rousseau states that, “the right of conquest has no other foundation than the law of the strongest” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:57) and that, “all legitimate authority among men must be based on covenants” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:53). This is to say that a social contract in which individuals are truly free to give consent is legitimate and authoritatively binding. Hence, the kind of social contracts proposed by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau each constitute what Weber calls *Verein*, a ‘voluntary association:’ “a corporate group originating in a voluntary agreement and in which the established order claims authority over the members by virtue of a personal act of adherence” (Weber in Henderson and Parsons 1947:151). It is my view that the threat of war is ever-present within a compulsory association, and least likely within a truly voluntary association, but also that authority is equally legitimate under both conditions until such a time as it is successfully challenged.

Consider now a situation in which all parties do indeed freely consent to the exchange of their natural freedoms for laws and legal rights protected by the terms of the social contract with the community’s might. What does this exchange entail? The form of government and the ways in which order are understood to be maintained depend on the terms of the social contract.

For Hobbes, this exchange entails the renunciation or transfer of every individual’s natural rights and freedoms (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:111) into the hands of one person or assembly who will hold the legitimate authority to exercise both

the legislative and the executive power of the group (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:142-43). In Hobbes's view, the person or assembly upon whom the power of the group is conferred retains the rights both of judicature and of punishing offenders (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:148-49). Hobbes, then, favours a despotic monarchical or aristocratic government, the power of the group in the hands of, and representation of the group by, one person or an assembly composed of a portion of the contracting parties (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:153).

For Locke, on the other hand, the exchange of natural freedoms for rights entails the transfer of every individual's rights and freedoms into the hands of one person or assembly of people (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:185) who will hold the legitimate authority to exercise the legislative power of the group, but not the executive power of law enforcement, which remains in the hands of the whole group to be directed by the law (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:181). Locke too, then, also favours monarchical government or aristocratic government, which he calls oligarchy (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:182), though as he defines it, it is synonymous with Hobbes' definition of aristocracy. As Hobbes puts it, "tyranny and oligarchy...are not the names of other forms of government, but of the same forms disliked...they that are displeased with *aristocracy* call it *oligarchy*" (Hobbes [1651] in Schneider 1958:153).

It is important to note here that though Locke favours monarchy, he is opposed to absolute monarchy, stating that,

absolute monarchs are but men...how much better [is] it than the state of Nature, where one man commanding a multitude has the liberty...and may do to all his subjects whatever he pleases without the least question or control of those who execute his pleasure? (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:123).

The important difference between Hobbes' and Locke's conceptions, then, is that Locke's notion of monarchy is republican, the executive force of the community is not in the hands of the monarch himself, but in the hands of the group as a whole, to be directed according to the law, the deciding of which alone is in the hands of the monarch.

For Rousseau, in contrast to the social contract theories of Hobbes and Locke, the exchange of natural freedoms for legal rights entails the mutual transfer of every individual's natural rights and freedoms into the hands of the entire group of contracting parties (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:61), each of whom individually holds an equal portion of, and all of whom hold entirely, the legislative power (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:101; 103-04), to be enforced by the government (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:158-59). According to Rousseau, the government is "an intermediary body established between the subjects and the sovereign for their mutual communication...charged with the execution of the laws" (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:102). And whereas for Hobbes, the person or assembly wielding the power of the people on their behalf is called the sovereign, for Rousseau, sovereignty cannot be represented and remains in the hands of the contracting parties (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:69). In Rousseau's thinking, the people is actively involved in the making of laws by way of the general will, which concerns the common interests of group members (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:72) and is determined by way of vote (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:154). Rousseau's understanding of the social contract, then, is one that favours republican democracy, in which "the government [is] in the hands of the whole people...so that there are more citizen magistrates than there are ordinary private citizens" (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:110).

According to Locke, which form of government arises from the social contract depends on where the people decide to place the legislative power (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:183), which is clear to see from the discussion above. However, as Rousseau points out, “no government of simple form exists. A single head of state has to have subordinate magistrates; a people’s government must have a head...sometimes the many submit to the few, and sometimes the few submit to the many” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:122-23).

In Machiavelli’s thinking, there is a cycle through which states pass. Contrary to Hobbes’ assertion that tyranny and oligarchy are merely names given to monarchy and aristocracy by the discontented, Machiavelli maintains that monarchy is the first form of government to arise when groups form, but that if and when it becomes corrupted, it degenerates into tyranny. The solution for this, he explains, is the creation of aristocracy, which eventually degenerates into oligarchy when the ruling class becomes corrupted in the place of the tyrant. At this phase in the evolution of states, the people, he explains, recall how monarchy became tyranny before aristocracy became oligarchy, and they elect to create a democracy in the hopes of avoiding the trappings of prior forms of governance. However, democracy gradually degenerates into anarchy and the whole process is renewed (Machiavelli [1513] in Donno 1966:102-04).

What the classical conceptions of the social contract put forth by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau provide are formulas for the creation of government and the maintenance of law, order, and security that are based on a particular understanding of the legitimation of authority by way of free consent. As Rousseau states, “since no man has any natural authority over his fellows, and since force alone bestows no right, all legitimate authority

among men must be based on covenants” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:53). What Machiavelli’s insight into the cycle of state formations reveals is that the consent of the people only lasts so long as the authority of those in power is used responsibly. According to Weber, a state is such so long as “its administrative staff successfully upholds a claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order” (Weber in Henderson and Parsons 1947:154). Once a body of people begins to perceive the authority of the state as illegitimate and that it has sufficient freedom-power to challenge it collectively, the threat of war ensues within the group as it becomes subdivided. In Locke’s words, “using force on the people, without authority, and contrary to the trust put [in them that do] so, is a state of war with the people, who have a right to reinstate their legislative” (Locke [1689] in Rhys 1924:195). It is plain to see, then, that the social contract may produce and maintain order within a group, but only so long as it is perceived as just according to its own laws and the power of the people is not abused. Otherwise, it is bound to fail as the people withdraw their consent and regroup in order to create social contracts that better serve their interests. As I have previously noted, and as Rousseau points out, individuals do not, in fact, truly renounce their natural freedoms in creating the social contract (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:77), and “if ever the social pact is violated, every man regains his original rights and, recovering his natural freedom, loses that civil freedom for which he exchanged it” (Rousseau [1762] in Cranston 1968:60). More accurately, it may be said that whether or not the social pact is ever violated by another, every individual has a certain degree of freedom-power to violate it himself, and likely will if it better suits his interests than honouring it.

Summary: On the Purported Equivalency of Law-Enforced Security With Peace

In the discussion to this point, it has been shown that the safety and security of the lives of individuals may be maintained in both informal peace groups and in legally binding bodies arising from social contracts. The maintenance of order toward these ends is the dominant way in which peace is implicitly defined in the literature. It was shown that common interests along with informal norms and sanctions may serve to regulate individuals' behaviour in the former, but that personal security is increased in the latter by the freely consensual mutual agreement of group members to institute binding laws backed by the authoritative force of the community. This is only the case, however, under conditions in which people consent willingly and not due to coercion or a lack of freedom-power to do otherwise.

It was also noted that the implementation of the social contract creates bodies of segments of the multitude that stand as individuals in relation to other bodies. Since these contracting bodies are composed of masses of individuals, potential conflicts arising between them that are not resolved by further contracting can and sometimes do lead to war rather than a conflict between individuals as such.

The question now remains to be answered whether or not the implicit framing of peace in terms of safety and security by way of law enforcement constitutes a sufficient definition of peace. It is my view that it does not. On the one hand, it is plain that the safety and security of individual group members serves to contribute to conditions

favourable to peace. On the other hand, however, it is entirely feasible that people might live in safe and secure social conditions that are neither peaceful nor characterized by a state of war. This is to say that there is some quality to peace that is more than merely the absence of war. As pointed out previously by Riches, definitions of peace are subjective, and for this reason, sociologists and other social scientists have often shied away from attempts to define it and instead focused attention on the problems of violence and how to avoid war.

In conclusion, I will put forth one possible definition of peace that may perhaps be feasible to understand in broad terms as acceptable to all. If it should prove unsatisfactory, it may then serve as a starting point for further discussion and debate. I will also address my primary questions as to whether widespread peace is possible or war inevitable in light of my research findings.

Chapter Four: Conclusions

On the Questions of Widespread Peace? Or, the Inevitability of War?

Given that the definitions of peace uncovered in the literature are inadequate as descriptions of what peace is, it is prudent to address whether or not the question of what peace is can be answered, especially since the view has been put forth that peace is subjective. It is my view that, at base, peace entails the happiness and well-being of individuals, and these imply the absence of pain, since pain of any kind diminishes a person's happiness and well-being. While there may be a wide variety of ways to understand peace, it is arguably the case that the notions of peoples' happiness and well-being are integral aspects of any variant definition.

That said, it is now possible to answer the question of whether or not widespread peace is possible, the realistic response to which is that it is not. This is because it can never be assured that all of the inhabitants of the globe are happy, in good health, and free of pain; it can never be the case that all of the factors that diminish these⁴² can be eliminated for everyone in all times and places. Furthermore, there is a degree to which personal health and happiness are in the hands and minds of individuals, and conditions being good, some people may nevertheless tend toward a negative interpretation of circumstances and general dissatisfaction⁴³.

The assertion that widespread peace⁴⁴ is not possible should not be taken as a point of discouragement. Certainly, it does not in itself mean that war is inevitable, as peace and war are not the binary opposites that they appear to be, and even in the absence of peace, war may also be absent. Furthermore, while some of the factors that can

⁴² Such as natural social hostilities, or the pains growing, aging, and illness, to name a couple examples.

⁴³ i.e., 'the grass is always greener on the other side.'

⁴⁴ In the truest sense of what peace entails.

diminish peace are beyond either individual or societal control, much can nevertheless be done to create and improve conditions that are favourable to peace, such that the degrees to which people worldwide experience peace are increased. One such endeavour is, of course, the abolishment of war⁴⁵, the absence of which increases the likelihood that peace can emerge.

In light of the various understandings of war uncovered in my research, I have established that war, properly understood, is characterized by potentially fatal, armed, violent conflict between groups whose criteria of membership is more-or-less clearly defined. The question remains to be answered whether war is inevitable, or whether it is possible for human beings to avoid waging wars.

In Chapter Two it was shown that all of the various causes of war that emerged from the literature can be subsumed under one or more the following categories: 1) the will to survive; 2) greed; 3) the will to dominate; 4) the will to be free; and 5) sociality. Whether or not war can be eliminated from the realm of human social experience depends upon whether or not the causes of war can be circumvented, or dealt with by alternative means. In order to answer this, further research might be required with regard to each of the causes of war specifically, and how they might be dealt with by non-violent means. For these reasons, it is not prudent that I advocate either the view that war is inevitable or that it is possible to avoid it completely. However, some theoretical remarks can be put forth here on the basis of what is known thus far, and might be used as starting points for further research.

With regard to the first, the will to survive, it is an innate drive that cannot be easily abolished, nor should any attempt be made to do so lest the species cease to move

⁴⁵ Though it should be noted that it is not the only one.

forward into the future. What requires attention here is those conditions which invoke people to act on their survival instinct by means of warfare, and to determine whether it is feasible to address these by other means⁴⁶. If it is feasible, the question will then remain whether or not the potential solutions are deemed desirable by all, given that some may have more to gain by waging war than making peace. It is perhaps tempting to assert that the social contract theories put forth by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, along with the notion of peace pacts and treaties between groups, together provide the solutions to this dilemma. However, it is no secret that such contracts have themselves resulted in a myriad of state wars and revolutions. While these works deserve merit for shedding light upon on the codification of law and possibilities for producing safety and security within groups, perhaps other solutions may be devised which utilize other approaches.

As regards to the second general cause of war identified, greed, be it greed for increased freedom-power or greed for greater wealth, it is my view that this cause of war cannot be abolished by any natural means. On the other hand, it is possible that people may be socialized not to act upon greedy impulses. This may come about by way of ideology, combined with social rewards for sharing and social sanctions, such as shunning, in response to hoarding. It should be noted that while this might be considered feasible, such socialization cannot likely be achieved by planning, and can only evolve gradually. Furthermore, a strong sense of community and social responsibility is probably

⁴⁶ It is because there is such a plethora of ways that this will to survive can be invoked as a cause of war that this final question concerning the inevitability of war requires further research. In some instances, the will to survive may cause war due to a scarcity of food in the natural environment and the need to secure it before other groups do so. In other instances, it may be a real need to appropriate the land or property of another group because fresh water is accessible there. Alternatively, the need may arise for a group to defend itself against another group that either needs, or merely wants without needing, some of its resources. Again, another example concerns the need of a subjugated class or group within a larger group to overturn the existing social and/or economic order so that the odds of survival become favourable, as opposed to deplorable. These are just a few examples that have arisen from my research, and each of them requires individual attention beyond the scope and depth of this research project.

a necessary prerequisite to invoke sufficient shame upon the greedy to prevent actions motivated by greed, and so the degree to which it may be possible to socialize the suppression of greedy impulses likely depends upon existing social conditions.

In terms of the third cause of war identified, the will to dominate, it is arguably the case that this disposition among some human beings cannot be eradicated. Whether or not this is true is debatable; I base my thinking both on what knowledge I have of human struggles for increased freedom-power, and the common knowledge that other species in the animal kingdom also tend to acknowledge hierarchies and compete for status within their social orders. But as with the human tendency to be greedy for resources beyond that which is needed for survival, perhaps the impulse to dominate others can be socialized into suppression?

The fourth cause of war identified, the will to be free, is really not so much a direct cause of war as it is a product of the will to dominate. The successful domination of others is what invokes the will to be free, and so the solution to this cause of war is tied into whatever solutions may be devised to address the issue of non-consensual domination. The will to be free is nevertheless noted as a cause of war because successful domination implies a period of time in which that domination is uncontested, and so the decided motivation of the subjugated to free themselves is an integral cause of any war of liberation. The obvious solution with which to address this cause of war is to respect the freedom of others, and the fact that when enslaved, people still have some degree of freedom-power.

Finally, the fifth potential cause of war identified in the literature, sociality, is clearly unavoidable, save perhaps for a small number of isolated individuals hidden in

what remains of the world's wilderness. That people form into groups in order to escape the uncertainties and insecurities of the wild is an unavoidable facet of human existence, especially given the degree to which the species has expanded to date. It is arguably the case that whether or not it is possible for groups of human beings to avoid engaging in warfare depends primarily upon whether or not adequate methods can be devised to provide for people's survival needs, and restrain both greed and the tendency to attempt the domination of others.

While further research is needed to adequately answer the question of whether or not war is inevitable, based on my findings, it does seem to me that the root causes of war cannot be abolished, and addressing them non-violently, and successfully, poses a very difficult challenge to human beings.

It has been noted that many researchers, unclear about how to define peace objectively, have focused instead on how to solve the problem of war⁴⁷. Another approach that may yield potentially more favourable results in future research is to focus attention on the solution rather than the problem from the outset. That is, to ask simply and honestly, 'how might peace be created?' The advantage of this kind of approach is that such a question will lead the researcher directly to potential solutions, rather than flummoxed in a bog of overlapping complications to which there are few apparent remedies.

'What makes people happy?' Rather than attempting to change people by way of altering their natural dispositions, it might prove useful in future research and practice to focus the lens of analysis on what inclines people to feel peaceful in the first place.

⁴⁷ And it is notable that though my primary interest in conducting this research was with peace, I too immersed myself in literature about war in search of answers to my questions, seeking out the causes of war in order to determine whether widespread peace is possible.

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