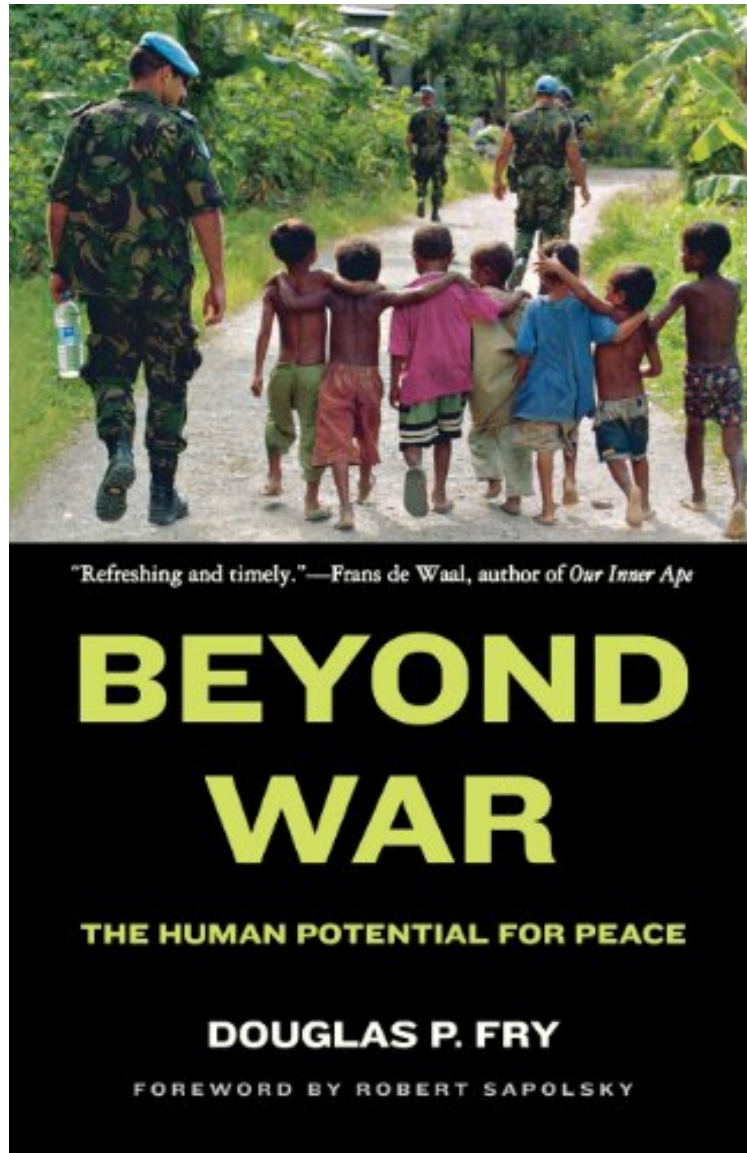


(Get free) Beyond War: The Human Potential for Peace

Beyond War: The Human Potential for Peace

Douglas P. Fry

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Douglas P. Fry : Beyond War: The Human Potential for Peace before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beyond War: The Human Potential for Peace:

7 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A Fantastic BookBy CPRThere are plenty of self-proclaimed "realists" advancing the argument that war comes naturally to human beings, but few scholars with the knowledge to effectively question that view and the writing ability to make their challenge a pleasure to read. Fry is one of them.I won't get into the debate itself, better to buy the book and let Fry lay it out for you. I would, however, disagree with

the previous reviewer about the importance of defining "war" before concluding that it is pervasive in human life. As Fry shows quite convincingly, you can only make the case for the universality of "war" if you define it as just about any lethal violence between three or more people. So a jealous man and his brother killing a third man (even within the same community) is considered to be "war" in these studies. Very misleading, dishonest science. The example from New Guinea is equally misleading. The reviewer is correct about the aggressive relations between groups there, but does he really think a tightly-packed island is a relevant model for the conditions in which human beings evolved? The world was a big, empty place from the perspective of early humans. Walking away from conflict was always an option. By the time studies were conducted in New Guinea, population density had reached a point where there was no place left to go in order to avoid conflict. This is more relevant to present conditions than to prehistory. But the reviewer's point about whether or not there is a universal human propensity to behave aggressively toward those not in our group (language, culture) is a good one. My reading of Fry's argument is that he acknowledges that humans have the "capacity" for violence, but not necessarily the "tendency." Obviously, we are capable of horrible brutality, but the notion that it comes naturally to us is belied by the severity and ubiquity of post-traumatic stress in those who have acted in violence -- other than psychopaths. Wolves and sharks don't suffer after having killed. Humans, by and large, do. In any case, I highly recommend *Beyond War* to anyone who wants to hear the other side of the story, and who wants to enjoy themselves as they learn. Christopher Ryan, author of *Sex at Dawn: The Prehistoric Origins of Modern Sexuality* 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Peace on our planet By Karen Reisdorf Though technical, Fry thoroughly shows that there are errors in previous research that make the assumption that humans are by nature warlike. It brought a gleamer of hope to alter our way of looking at humanity. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Ray of Hope By JKJ Like many people, I'd come to believe that human nature is essentially war-like. After reading this book, I now understand that the vast majority of humans prefer peace, harmony, and positive problem-solving. The one problem we can't seem to solve (which is not addressed in this book) is how to choose leaders who prefer negotiated problem solving rather than violence.

A profoundly heartening view of human nature, *Beyond War* offers a hopeful prognosis for a future without war. Douglas P. Fry convincingly argues that our ancient ancestors were not innately warlike--and neither are we. He points out that, for perhaps ninety-nine percent of our history, for well over a million years, humans lived in nomadic hunter-and-gatherer groups, egalitarian bands where warfare was a rarity. Drawing on archaeology and fascinating recent fieldwork on hunter-gatherer bands from around the world, Fry debunks the idea that war is ancient and inevitable. For instance, among Aboriginal Australians, warfare was an extreme anomaly. Fry also points out that even today, when war seems ever present, the vast majority of us live peaceful, nonviolent lives. We are not as warlike as we think, and if we can learn from our ancestors, we may be able to move beyond war to provide real justice and security for the world.

"This is a passionate book containing a tidy account of systems of war and peace."--New Scientist "This book offers a refreshing and timely look at the evidence that we have warfare in our genes. Clearly, the assumptions of those who argue this position exceed the facts. Using anthropological data, Fry argues forcefully that our species has not only a strong desire for peace, but also plenty of ways to achieve it."--Frans de Waal, author of *Our Inner Ape* "If you believe humanity is doomed to war, read this book. If you want to convince others that it is not, read this book. Fry does two very important things in *Beyond War*. He shows that humans are not innately warlike and are fully capable of living in peace. And he shows how past scholarship has been biased by an assumption of a 'beast within.' His magisterial tour of the evidence is clear, sensible, and entertaining."--Brian Ferguson, author of *Yanomami Warfare: A Political History* "Few questions are as controversial and consequential as whether war is 'natural.' In this important book, Fry does a fine job of demystifying the argument, while making a strong case for optimism. Human nature is a slippery thing, a concept often misused, yet crucial to understanding our past, present, and future. *Beyond War* will help scholar and lay-person alike to grasp hold."--David P. Barash, author of *Madame Bovary's Ovaries: A Darwinian Look at Literature* "An important and timely volume, [*Beyond War*]...is a valuable addition to the perennial debates on warfare."--American Anthropologist About the Author Douglas P. Fry teaches in the Faculty of Social and Caring Sciences at Åbo Akademi University in Finland and is an adjunct research scientist in the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology at the University of Arizona. A renowned anthropologist and a leading authority on aggression and conflict resolution, he has worked in this field for over twenty-five years and has published many articles and books on this subject.