

Acknowledgments

Just as peace and conflict emerge from a web of interactions, this book has been produced in interaction with numerous people, including activists, diplomats, academics, and friends. More than 100 years ago, Peirce and Ketner (1992 [1898], 76) wrote that ideas often emerge out of “conversations with all sorts of people,” but unfortunately “interesting people are as hard to find as interesting books.” Luckily, I have been surrounded by many not only interesting but also genuinely inspiring and brilliant people throughout my career. Many of the ideas in this book have emerged from conversations and collaborations with these people. As will become obvious throughout the book, I am in great intellectual debt to Randall Collins. Through personal conversations and a continuous willingness to discuss aspects of his theory, Collins has contributed both directly and indirectly to the production of this book, while at the same time proving true his own hypothesis about academic life: the importance of social bonds between scholars and the immense benefits of being close to “intellectual stars” (Collins 2009a). Another source of inspiration whose “stardust” has been critical for developing the ideas and thinking for this book is Ole Wæver. I am very grateful for the hours of inspiring, mindboggling dialogue on the nature and characteristics of conflict and peace that we have had. Similarly, many of the ideas for this book have emerged out of continuous discussions with Simone Molin Friis on the nature of violence and Lisa Strömbom on the dynamics of conflict transformation. I am grateful indeed to be surrounded by such great minds.

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