

Science for Peace

June 7, 2022

President's Column



Dear Members,

The big event I want to draw to your attention to is the **Annual General Meeting** on Thursday, June 23rd at 7 pm ET. It will begin with a half hour devoted to informing you about some changes in the organization of SfP and, more importantly, about the range of ideas and projects that now animates our organization. We are developing a program for the summer and fall that will feature a periodic book club (see below under Upcoming Events) and an informal series of interviews and webinars designed by our working groups. So do plan to attend the AGM via the zoom link below, which will later be available via the website and postings to sfpannounce.

I do urge you all to participate in our activities. The five working groups all welcome new members, and you don't have to be an expert in the particular field to join. We've asked the chairs of the working groups to list the forthcoming date of each working group meeting on the website, main page. If you want to join, you can contact either the chair of the group or Melisa Kuc, our executive coordinator. In addition, we hope you will be interested in our book club evenings, the first two of which are listed below.

We have four superb interns working with us this term, though two remain to be confirmed. They have all graduated with a BA or BSc. They each have, or will soon define, a relevant research project, leading to an article on our website and a presentation to the appropriate working group.

With a more ambitious program and two part time coordinators, Science for Peace has to attract more funding on a continuing basis. Have you paid your membership dues yet? If not, please do so right away via

scienceforpeace.org. On the home page, you will find the "Donate" option. It is simple to use, and provides you with a tax receipt for any donation. Think of becoming a sustaining member.

Please find below as well the tribute to our long-time and very active member of SfP, Jean Smith. She personified the enthusiasm and drive that are so crucial to our success in influencing public opinion and public policy.

David Parnas, a former president of SfP, also exhibits the same drive and excellence of mind. Do refer to his short column below.

I hope to see you on June 23rd.

Richard Sandbrook
Professor Emeritus of Political Science
University of Toronto

Upcoming Events

Science for Peace
Thinktank for the people



**JOIN IN ON SOME
VERY EXCITING
PROJECTS!**

Please reserve Thursday, June 23rd, 7-8:30 for a Zoom meeting. We're moving into a new era, and we want to tell you about some major changes and what lies in store.

The first half hour will outline these changes to Science for Peace and introduce you to the range of ideas and proposals that animate our five working groups. The usual business matters of an AGM will follow in the following 30 minutes or so.

<https://www.scienceforpeace.org>

AGM Zoom Link

Summer Book Club 2022

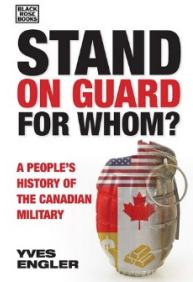
“Stand on Guard for Whom? A People’s History of the Canadian Military”

With author and activist Yves Engler

Buy Yves’ excellent new book,
read it and join us to discuss it.

Moderated by Tamara Lorincz, Senior Researcher,
NATO to Neutrality Working Group of Science for Peace.

Thursday, July 28 & Thursday August, 18
7:30-9:00 p.m. ET.



Free! All welcome! Register Using Zoom Link

Organized by Science for Peace (SfP) <https://www.scienceforpeace.org>
and the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW)

Recent Events

Science for Peace Calls for a Peaceful Settlement in Ukraine

Science for Peace condemns the Russian decision to launch military action against Ukraine and its efforts to depose a democratically elected government. Although Russia has plausible security concerns about NATO’s eastward march to Russia’s borders, these concerns do not justify this all-out military offensive.

[Read More.](#)

Recent Articles



Richard Sandbrook: Choosing Activism

“Philosophers have only interpreted the world [but] the point is to change it.” Those of us in the peace, justice and environmental movements embrace this Marxian aphorism. If we want to live by the dictum, what does that entail?

[Read More](#)



Arnd Jurgensen: Science for Peace: Facing the Existential Threats

Today we face at least three overlapping, existential crises: militarism, the climate crisis and the collapse of biodiversity. While interrelated in many complex ways, these are separate threats, in that solving one will not eliminate the others. Climate change is certainly exacerbating the decline of species in countless ways.

[Read More](#)



The War in Ukraine Shows Nuclear Weapons Must Be Abolished

We are already in a nuclear war. That may sound unlikely, but the moment President Putin threatened "consequences such as you have never seen in your history", for any "outside power" interfering with Russia's ability to achieve its goals in Ukraine, he turned the war nuclear.

[Read More](#)

Focus on Members

Remembering Jean Smith



Jean Smith, who died on May 13, was a familiar figure in Science for Peace (SfP). She married U of T Chemistry prof. John Valleau, one of SfP's founders, on 4 Oct. 1986, after a diverse career. John's son Nick says Jean was born in 1930, raised in Fort William (Thunder Bay), worked as a flight stewardess for Canadian Pacific Airlines, a Vancouver travel agent for a couple of years, and a Toronto schoolteacher for several years before marriage, and also ran federally for the NDP in Don Valley West two or maybe three times, probably in the 1960s.

After marrying John, she took up peace work with commitment, critical intelligence and writing skill. By winter 1992 she had been office manager of Peace Magazine (PM) for six years, but was moving on to other projects. For the spring 1990 PM she had done an interesting review of Northern Shadows: Canada and Central America; its author, Peter Macfarlane, set out how from 1904 Canada's companies and government had worked in the shadow of -- and benefited from -- American economic and political domination of Central America, also sketching Canadian NGO efforts to get injustices in Guatemala recognized. In the fall of 1990 with media critic Barrie Zwicker, she took note of Noam Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent as important for Canadians, listing film festivals showing it. Jean penned a fascinating piece in the winter 1993 PM on Chandler Davis, U of T math prof.-- and science fiction author! --

who was retiring.

In spring 1997 she and John, citing UN documents and positive developments, sharply critiqued a PM editorial and negative article on Cuba – stirring many subsequent comments! In the final 1997 issue she reviewed a Bill Blaikie booklet about the social gospel and globalization, recommending it for discussions on the impact of free trade agreements. Jean urged Canadians in the fall 2004 PM to heed the grim message in Dominick Jenkins's *The Final Frontier: America, Science, and Terror*, which set out US administration collaboration with the military and scientists to delude Americans and the world about their goal of world domination, with space the final frontier.

She also penned a letter noting that years ago SfP had urged we need a civilian peace force to respond to natural and man-made disasters, with engineers, doctors, and civil administration experts --still a timely proposal! In summer 2006, commenting on Haiti, she lamented that Canada shouldn't have helped the rich Haitian elite in their coup against President Aristide, but should defend democracy; she asked, is democracy under threat from our own government?

Feisty, well-read, engaged in vital issues, true to values of justice, peace, democracy and human rights: that was Jean Smith.

- *Phyllis Creighton*

"I first met Jean when she was working in the Peace Magazine office and I was working over the room divider in the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace office in the former Bathurst St United Church in Toronto. She was an outgoing and most engaging woman who quickly befriended me sweeping me up into her world of progressive politics. I know she had the same effect on others. She and her husband John Valleau were the best of partners sharing a deeply felt concern for the state of Canada and the world. Jean was definitely a Type A personality with the energy and ability to get things done. She engaged people in meaningful conversation, she wrote letters on peace and justice issues, and she attended innumerable meetings and forums. We marched together under a Science for Peace banner in the Labour Day parade in 1997 distributing leaflets about the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), the precursor to NAFTA. Science for Peace was opposed to the MAI because it sought to establish a new body of universal investment laws that would grant corporations unconditional rights to engage in financial operations around the world, without any regard to national laws and citizens' rights. We were in Quebec City together in 2001 with thousands of others who faced tear gas and water cannons to protest the negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement for the Americas. When I was the Coordinator for Science for Peace around 2000 Jean would come into the office to help with mundane but essential jobs such as getting out the newsletter and membership renewal letters.

Jean and John liked to host small dinner parties with good simple food and over a glass of red wine Jean would get the discussion flowing. There was usually a special guest, often it would be someone invited to give a lecture at a Science for Peace organized event. Rather than have a guest return to a hotel room, Jean and John would convene a dinner or gather at a restaurant as in the time they feted Jonathan Schell, the American author of *Fate of the Earth*, the enduring book published in the 80's that spelled out the consequences of nuclear war. Jean was a connector of people, caring for us on a personal level and interested in what we thought of the world. "

- *Carolyn Langdon*

David Lorge Parnas



Has Canada Caught the American Sickness?

It is called “the American Sickness” — the belief of many Americans that flooding their country with arms is the best way to resolve conflicts and save lives. For example, former President Trump reacted to the Uvalde massacre with the tired saying, “The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun, is a good guy with a gun.” Others called for arming teachers and posting armed guards at schools, restricting the number of doorways, etc., but strongly opposed laws intended to limit the availability of guns. The US is now world-famous for frequent mass murders enabled by the wide availability of deadly weapons. Distributing weapons doesn’t bring safety because:

- Trump’s bad guy easily acquires powerful weapons and often has the advantage of surprise.
- Trump’s bad guy may defeat Trump’s good guys and continue killing — often using the good guys’ guns. Armed good guys can get angry or feel threatened and become armed bad guys.
- As more participants are armed, others feel threatened and acquire ‘defensive’ arms. Defensive moves are often perceived as preparation for offence, and a vicious cycle ensues.
- When arms are widespread, people are constantly “on guard” and may attack someone who merely looks suspicious.
- Allies of victims may seek revenge using their own weapons.
- Abandoned or stolen guns can end up in the hands of others. The data support the hypothesis that the number of killings increases when the number of weapons increases.

President Biden’s reaction to recent mass murders at home was eloquent and moving. Recognizing that making weapons more available leads to more death and destruction, he called for “standing up” to the country’s arms manufacturers and limiting weapons acquisition. However, in foreign affairs, Biden has succumbed to the American Sickness. The US/NATO reaction to Russia’s stated security concerns was to arm and train Ukrainians thereby increasing Russia’s concerns. After Russia stopped asking for substantive discussions and sent troops into Ukraine, NATO began flooding Ukraine with even more weapons.

The Ukrainian government, itself badly infected, distributed thousands of automatic weapons to untrained civilians and instructed others to make and use Molotov Cocktails. This turned civilians into poorly trained combatants. The Russian forces, feeling threatened by these armed “civilians”, treats them as combatants. Further, Russia has been frantically trying to locate and destroy the Western weapons being supplied; by attacking transportation routes and suspected arms depots they are causing deaths and damage to both military and civilian infrastructure. Just as increased availability of powerful weapons did not prevent the Tulsa, Uvalde, or Buffalo massacres, it has not brought peace or security to Ukraine. Au contraire, Western supplied weapons, combined with Ukraine’s “arm everyone” policies, have exacerbated the death and destruction in Ukraine.

At home, Canadians understand the dangers of weapons and have escaped the American Sickness; our government is trying to limit handguns and assault weapons. However, we too are flooding Ukraine with weapons. Sending arms to Ukraine is hurting Russia but it is not helping Ukraine.

To really help Ukraine, Canada needs to stop sending arms, become a mediator, and encourage Russia and Ukraine to compromise and seek win-win agreements. We in Science for Peace need to explain to our fellow Canadians and elected leaders that succumbing to the American Sickness is not the way to help Ukrainians.

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