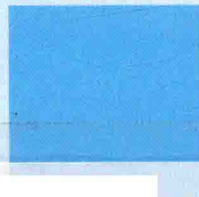
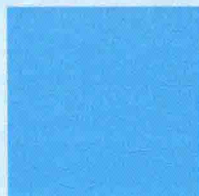
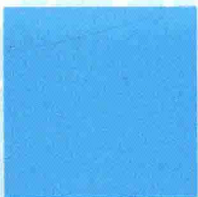


# Champions for Peace

Women Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize

SECOND EDITION

JUDITH HICKS STIEHM



书馆

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*Women Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize*

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# Champions for Peace

Historians too often praise reckless and  
arrogant leaders who send troops to wage war.

This book is intended to encourage and to honor those who seek  
to avoid war without relinquishing the pursuit of justice.



## Preface

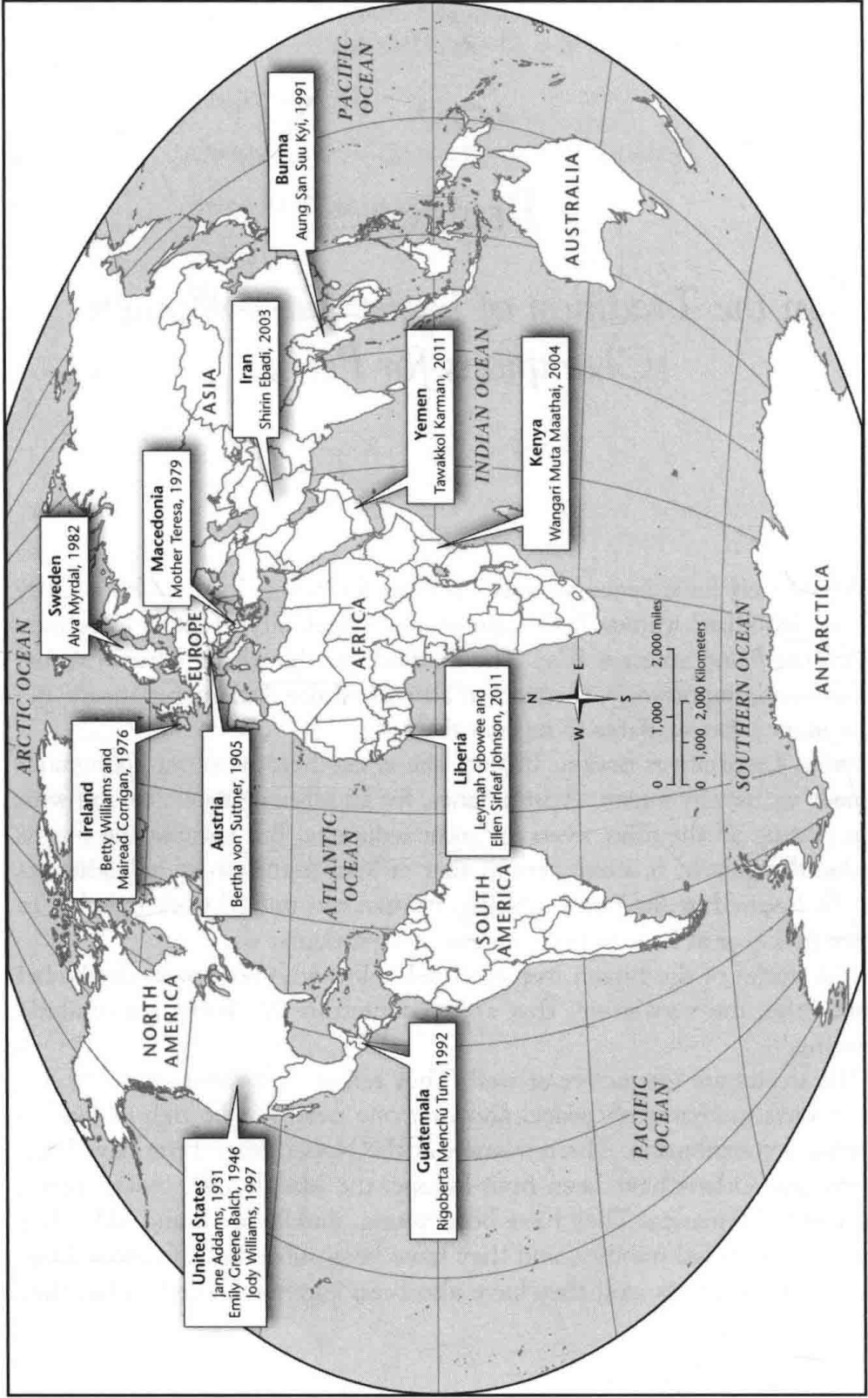
### *In the Tradition of Lysistrata—Women Champions for Peace*

Lysistrata may have begun women's actions for peace. In the fifth century BC she mobilized women from a number of Greek city-states to force men to end the Peloponnesian War. The method was the withholding of sexual favors—and, importantly, the women also seized the Athenian treasury. No more money was available to support the war.

Sadly, Lysistrata is fiction. Indeed, she is the heroine of an eponymous comedy written by a man, Aristophanes, for an all-male audience and with men playing all the roles, even the most seductive. But because the play is produced regularly, it seems certain that at least a portion of its audiences may be inspired by the possibility that women can indeed work together to create peace, or at least to bring an end to a particular war.

The stories of the fifteen women listed below who have won the Nobel Peace Prize, the very stories that are recounted in this book, are similarly inspiring.<sup>1</sup>

The stories are instructive as well. They tell us that there are many different ways to champion peace, and that one need not be rich or famous to make a contribution. Three winners of the Nobel Peace Prize have been Americans. Others have been from Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Central America. They have been young, middle-aged, and old. They have been of titled nobility, and they have been subsistence farmers. They have held doctorates, and they have also been barely schooled. What they



Women Winners from around the World

have had in common is a vision, a commitment to action, and a willingness to persevere in the face of criticism and, in some cases, imprisonment.

Working for peace does not mean that the consequences of one's work are predictable, or even that there will be agreement as to whether or not peace has been achieved. For example, some argue that simply ending an armed conflict results only in *negative peace*. They contend that while that kind of peace may be preferable to war, for peace to be sustained, it must be *positive*. It must be based on justice both between nations and within a nation.

Alfred Nobel, a Swedish industrialist and the inventor of dynamite, thought that his new explosive was so destructive that nations would have to forgo war. To encourage conciliatory behavior, he provided in his will support for a prize to be awarded annually to "the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses." A committee appointed by the Norwegian legislature (the Norwegian Nobel Committee) was charged with selecting an annual winner. Over the years, these committees have not found this an easy task, nor have they closely adhered to the criteria set forth by Nobel. Clearly, they have concluded both that there are many different ways to contribute to peace and that peace is more than the absence of armed conflict.

The first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1903, but the difficulties involved in selecting a winner are demonstrated by the fact that nineteen times since then, in almost one year out of every five, no prize was awarded. This sometimes occurred while a major war was in progress, but no award was made in ten other years as well.

A review of Nobel Peace Prize citations suggests that while the criteria have evolved over time, the selection committees have made awards to six distinct types of recipients: (1) international organizations; (2) successful national officials working in an international context while pursuing legal solutions to conflict; (3) peace activists working in an international context, some with, but many without, governmental approval; (4) individuals nonviolently seeking justice, freedom, security, or rights as a preliminary to peace; (5) leaders who have used or sanctioned the use of force but who have agreed to a peace settlement; and (6) altruists who render exemplary service to others.

About one-fifth of the prizes went to organizations rather than to individuals.<sup>2</sup> Organization winners have been spread over the past century,



and the International Committee of the Red Cross has won three times. Five organizations shared the prize with their leader. One of these leaders, Jody Williams of the United States, is a woman. Roughly half of the prize-winning organizations were devoted to relief, to the assuaging of misery. Thus, peace per se was not their primary mission, and some critics would even argue that the efforts of these organizations, in aiding refugees for example, can actually prolong war. Other organizations did pursue peace, but none through the exercise of power. Some had a particular focus; for example, the prevention of nuclear war or the support of prisoners of conscience.

About one-third of the individual laureates were national officials who worked in an international, legal context.<sup>3</sup> This kind of winner was particularly typical in the first half of the nineteenth century. A number of these prizes were awarded before women even had the vote, and many before women held high office. Still, there are two women in this group of national officials, Sweden's Alva Myrdal and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia.

Peace activist winners of the Nobel Peace Prize have been slightly more numerous than national politicians who pursued an international, legal agenda.<sup>4</sup> Some of the activists were esteemed and encouraged by their governments, others were not. In fact, some suffered arrest, prison, torture, or exile. Seven women are in this category: Austrian Baroness Bertha von Suttner, Jane Addams and Emily Greene Balch of the United States, Northern Ireland's Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan, American Jody Williams, who shared her prize with her organization—the International Campaign to Ban Landmines—and Leymah Gbowee of Liberia.

All winners of the prize by nonviolently seeking justice, freedom, security, or rights as a preliminary to peace won after World War II.<sup>5</sup> Most of these individuals challenged established powers while rejecting the use of force. Most sought justice within their homeland but received support from many nations. The women in this group are Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar (formerly Burma), Shirin Ebadi of Iran, Wangari Muta Maathai of Kenya, and Tawakkol Karman of Yemen.

A smaller and a more controversial category encompasses individuals who formerly were willing to use or to sanction the use of force but who finally agreed to a peace settlement.<sup>6</sup> Five times since 1973, the prize has gone to pairs of such opponents. In the eyes of some, these prizes went to war criminals; others saw them as traitors. One woman, Rigoberta Menchú

Tum, whose family fought and suffered grievously in her country's civil war, is included in this group, although she had no official role in that conflict and commanded no combatants.

Two individuals won for exemplary care and service: Albert Schweitzer in 1952 and Mother Teresa in 1979. Both were greatly admired, although it is not clear how their work related to peace.

It must be noted that women have had a long history of working for peace, and some scholars argue that women's gender role has given them a viewpoint about conflict that is different from that of men. Some of the women Nobel Peace Prize winners, for example, Addams, Balch, Jody Williams, and Gbowee have indeed worked within a tradition of peace activism. Many, including von Suttner, Mother Teresa, Myrdal, Menchú, Ebadi, and Maathai, as well as Addams, Balch, Gbowee, and Johnson Sirleaf, have been quite clear about their identity as women and have worked hard for and with other women. Others, including Betty Williams, Mairead Corrigan, Suu Kyi, and Karman have been thrust into peace work because of circumstances and without a significant gender consciousness.

In learning the stories of these women Nobel Peace Prize winners, the reader will find their courage and perseverance immediately evident. The stories evoke pride, but they also suggest that following in their footsteps is not an impossible dream. These women were not groomed for a Nobel Peace Prize. They did not pursue or expect to win one. Indeed, Peace Nobelists are not champions in the Olympic sense; that is, individuals who best all others, sometimes by a millisecond or a tenth of a point. In fact, their efforts are not always successful. Instead, these winners are examples. They illustrate what an individual can do. In their acceptance speeches, they inevitably note that they accept the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of many unrecognized others.

Each of us has the capacity to be one of those others. The stories that follow show that women have undertaken important tasks over the last hundred years and in a variety of circumstances. Their resources and personalities have varied widely, but even if their work began only with the planting of a tree or by insisting on regular garbage collection, their local actions led them to the understanding that peace and justice must be global in order to be positive.

I believe that we have the responsibility as well as a capacity to change our world, and that this responsibility and capacity goes beyond self-interest. It is relatively easy to mobilize women as mothers and against nuclear weapons,

terrorism, or other forms of violence perceived as threatening. But our peace work is not serious when it cares only for our own safety or even for preventing violence against women. Most violence is done by men, and much is done to men. Further, much if not most is done by governments claiming to be protecting their citizens. Peace work requires attention to men, their interests, and their gender roles. It also means ensuring that governments do not simply incorporate men's roles when they should be representing and fulfilling the wishes of all their citizens.

Let us turn now to the story of Bertha von Suttner, the woman who successfully persuaded Alfred Nobel to create a prize for peace.

## Notes

1. Eighty-five men have won Nobel Peace Prizes. In addition to the fifteen women discussed in this book, women have won twelve prizes in literature, ten in physiology and medicine, four in chemistry, two in physics, and one in economics. Marie Sklodowska Curie of France won in both chemistry and physics, and her daughter won in chemistry.

2. Organization winners include

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1904 | Institute of International Law, Belgium  |
| 1910 | Permanent International Peace Bureau, Switzerland  |
| 1917 | International Committee of the Red Cross, Switzerland                                      |
| 1938 | Nansen International Office for Refugees, Switzerland                                      |
| 1944 | International Committee of the Red Cross, Switzerland                                      |
| 1947 | American Friends Service Committee, United States; Friends Service Council, United Kingdom |
| 1954 | Office of the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, Switzerland                    |
| 1963 | International Committee of the Red Cross and League of Red Cross Societies, Switzerland    |
| 1965 | United Nations Children's Fund, United States  |
| 1969 | International Labour Organization, Switzerland   |
| 1977 | Amnesty International, Great Britain   |
| 1981 | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Switzerland                   |
| 1985 | International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, United States                  |
| 1988 | United Nations Peacekeeping Forces   |
| 1995 | Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs (shared)                                  |
| 1997 | International Campaign to Ban Landmines, United States (shared)                            |
| 1999 | Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), Belgium                                |
| 2005 | International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mohamed ElBaradei, Egypt                        |

- 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Albert Arnold (Al) Gore
- 2012 European Union (EU)
- 2013 Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

3. Winners include

- 1903 Sir William Randal Cremer, Great Britain
- 1908 Klas Pontus Arnoldson, Sweden; Fredrik Bajer, Denmark
- 1909 Auguste Marie Francois Beernaert, Belgium; Paul Henri Benjamin Balluet d'Estournelles de Constant, Baron de Constant, de Rebecque, France
- 1911 Tobias Michael Carel Asser, the Netherlands (shared)
- 1912 Elihu Root, United States
- 1913 Henri La Fontaine, Belgium
- 1920 Léon Victor Auguste Bourgeois, France
- 1921 Karl Hjalmar Branting, Sweden; Christian Lous Lange, Norway
- 1925 Sir Joseph Austen Chamberlain, Great Britain; Charles Gates Dawes, United States
- 1929 Frank Billings Kellogg, United States
- 1934 Arthur Henderson, Great Britain
- 1936 Carlos Saavedra Lamas, Argentina
- 1937 Lord E. A. Robert Cecil, Great Britain
- 1945 Cordell Hull, United States
- 1953 George Catlett Marshall, United States
- 1957 Lester Bowles Pearson, Canada
- 1959 Philip J. Noel-Baker, Great Britain
- 1968 René Cassin, France
- 1971 Willy Brandt, West Germany
- 1974 Eisaku Sato, Japan
- 1982 Alfonso García Robles, Mexico; Alva Myrdal, Sweden
- 1987 Oscar Arias Sánchez, Costa Rica
- 1990 Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, Soviet Union
- 2001 Kofi Annan, Ghana
- 2002 Jimmy Carter, United States
- 2008 Martti Ahtisaari, Finland
- 2009 Barack H. Obama, United States
- 2011 Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia

4. Activist winners were

- 1901 Jean Henry Dunant, Switzerland; Frédéric Passy, France
- 1902 Élie Ducommun, Switzerland; Charles Albert Gobat, Switzerland
- 1905 Baroness Bertha von Suttner, Austria
- 1907 Louis Renault, France; Ernesto Teodoro Moneta, Italy
- 1911 Alfred Hermann Fried, Austria (shared)
- 1922 Fridtjof Nansen, Norway
- 1927 Ludwig Quidde, Germany; Ferdinand Edouard Buisson, France

- 1930 Lars Olof Jonathan (Nathan) Söderblom, Sweden
- 1931 Jane Addams, United States; Nicholas Murray Butler, United States
- 1933 Sir Norman Angell, Great Britain
- 1935 Carl von Ossietzky, Germany
- 1946 John Raleigh Mott, United States; Emily Greene Balch, United States
- 1950 Ralph Bunche, United States
- 1958 Georges Henri Pire, Belgium
- 1961 Dag Hjalmar Agne Carl Hammarskjöld, Sweden
- 1962 Linus Pauling, United States
- 1974 Seán MacBride, Ireland
- 1975 Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov, Soviet Union
- 1976 Betty Williams, Northern Ireland; Mairead Corrigan, Northern Ireland (Although peace activists, these winners worked for peace within their own country.)
- 1980 Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Argentina
- 1986 Elie Wiesel, Romania/France/United States
- 1995 Joseph Rotblat, Poland/Great Britain (shared)
- 1996 Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, East Timor; José Ramos-Horta, East Timor
- 1997 Jody Williams, United States
- 2011 Leymah Gbowee, Liberia

5. This category includes

- 1949 Baron John Boyd Orr of Brechin Mearns, Great Britain
- 1951 Léon Jouhaux, France
- 1960 Albert John Lutuli, South Africa
- 1964 Martin Luther King Jr., United States
- 1970 Norman Borlaug, United States
- 1983 Lech Walesa, Poland
- 1984 Desmond Mpilo Tutu, South Africa
- 1989 The Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tibet
- 1991 Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma
- 2000 Kim Dae-jung, Republic of Korea
- 2003 Shirin Ebadi, Iran
- 2004 Wangari Muta Maathai, Kenya
- 2006 Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank, Bangladesh
- 2010 Liu Xiaobo, China
- 2011 Tawakkol Karman, Yemen

6. The following fall into this category.

- 1906 Theodore Roosevelt, United States
- 1919 Woodrow Wilson, United States
- 1926 Gustav Stresemann, Germany; Aristide Briand, France
- 1973 Henry A. Kissinger, United States; Le Duc Tho, North Vietnam
- 1978 Mohamed Anwar el-Sadat, Egypt; Menachem Begin, Israel

- 1992 Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Guatemala  
1993 Nelson Mandela, South Africa; Frederik Willem de Klerk, South Africa  
1994 Yasser Arafat, PLO; Shimon Peres, Israel; Yitzhak Rabin, Israel  
1998 John Hume, Northern Ireland; David Trimble, Northern Ireland



*Bertha von Suttner. Courtesy of the Norwegian Nobel Institute*



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