Cascades of Violence is one of the few books that all at once constructs a sophisticated and innovative theoretical framework, relies on a wealth of primary material, and presents extraordinary comparative breadth and depth. It will be of great value to students and scholars of violence.

– Séverine Autesserre, Barnard College, Columbia University, author of Peaceland and The Trouble with the Congo

This book can be a key text not only for academics but also policymakers and practitioners to understand the complex dynamics of peacebuilding, crime and nonviolence in South Asia. The authors have powerfully articulated both the macro contexts of the causes of crime and conflict, and the lived experiences of marginalised peoples such as the indigenous, minorities and tribal communities of South Asia.

– Sara Hossain, Human Rights Lawyer, Bangladesh; Member, International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission; editor of ‘Honour’: Crimes, Paradigms, and Violence against Women (with Lynn Welchman)

Braithwaite and D’Costa’s metaphor of violence cascades is the starting point for a landmark analysis of complex reciprocal relationships between war and crime. Years of exhaustive fieldwork across seven South Asian societies form the foundation for the authors’ powerful insights into war, crime and the interconnected humanitarian efforts at their prevention. This book’s remarkable formulation and analysis of 10 provocative propositions yields hopeful lessons that illuminate new pathways to the reduction of war and crime. Yet as thorough and comprehensive as this classic volume may be, its greatest gift is as a starting point for a new generation of scholarship targeting the complex, changing and still insufficiently understood worlds of war and crime. Responding to a world overwhelmed by inhumanity and atrocity, this book persuasively provides guideposts for reversal and restoration, a world of more peaceful possibilities grounded in social science and law.


Lovers of peace should read this book. It is a treasure trove explaining cascades of peace in South Asia. One special treasure is the way it explains how indigenous conflict resolution systems of South Asia—for example, the Jirga of Afghanistan and Pakistan—if understood and used properly by the powers, could bring peace to Afghanistan. Similarly, if local wisdom and ground realities had been promoted in Kashmir, this could have saved South Asia bloodshed which has been its lot for 70 years. With peace in Kashmir, South Asia today could be an oasis of peace, instead of the string of violent hot spots this book documents. Peace was possible in Kashmir if only the nonviolent movements had been nourished which sprung from the soil of South Asia, one being the Servants of God, led by Abdul Ghaffar Khan (1890–1988) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, another the nonviolent movement led by Gandhi. This insightful book explains how we can learn from the history of South Asia to make the world a more peaceful and interconnected place.

– Ali Gohar, Just Peace Initiatives
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