

**Toward a Theory of Peace: Randall Forsberg and Her Legacy**  
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**Randy Forsberg in our time**

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I had thought I would write a sketch of the social environment of Cambridge and Boston in the 1980s and Randy's role and place in it. But as I have been writing this, I have had the bittersweet experience of thinking of those times and experiencing anew what I have lost with Randy's death. In short, I have gone back into a state of mourning. Nonetheless, I will begin. I will not dwell on what we all know was so breathtaking about Randy: her vision, her sense of strategy, her public charisma, and, of course, her integrity. Randy was *of* Boston and Cambridge, *and* a living critique of it. We know she changed many lives, not only through her political work, but in her own scholarly work, and in the work she inspired in others, a number of whom are here at this conference.

I must have met Randy in the fall of 1983, when I first moved to Cambridge. But I actually got to know Randy in late June and early July of the next year, when she was in the hospital recovering from her second cancer operation, which was successful and which enabled her to live for 23 generally healthy years more. She did become plagued by a bad back, but it was not life threatening.

In what must have been more than one visit to the hospital, I don't know exactly what we talked about, but it was in that time and just after that we laid the basis of a friendship that was close for many years. When my partner, Ruth, moved to Boston in the fall of 1986 to get a master's degree, Randy became friends with Ruth as well. Although we moved from Boston at the end of 1987, Ruth and I stayed in touch with Randy and saw her from time to time. I remember Randy's wonderful 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party in 1993 when she celebrated with friends and her daughter Katarina, then in her late teens or possibly early twenties. As I recall, we played croquet. I remember Randy's light-filled and book-filled apartment in Brookline, in a neighborhood that was leafy and green. And, despite her hurting back, in 1996 Randy flew out to San Francisco for a celebration of Ruth's and my tenth anniversary of living together. I think the last time I, and we, saw Randy was in the summer of 2004 after she had moved from Boston to Cambridge and lived in a new and very light-filled condo in a great location.

Our friendship was, of course, the most important part of my relationship with Randy. Like many of us, I remember her warmth, her sense of humor, her family and friends—

and much else. I remember going to hear George Shearing with her. I remember a sushi dinner when we talked about overlooked nuclear weapons effects.

Beyond friendship, Randy grounded me in a community that was both quite familiar and enormously broadening.

I'll start with what was *not* familiar about being in Cambridge, and then sketch the experience I had of community, based on thinking that political change was both necessary and possible.

**The unfamiliar.** In the fall of 1983, I moved from Ann Arbor, Michigan to Cambridge to be a pre-doctoral fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School, specifically, at the Center for Science and International Affairs (CSIA), now called the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (BCSIA). I found myself in an environment I had not anticipated. I learned a huge amount and, as it turned out, made a couple of life-long friends, Charlie Glaser and Steve Miller. And how could I not really like my office mate, Steve Van Evera, who would greet me after most weekends with a warm gruff "Eden, what have you read that's good lately?" There was definitely a sense of community among the fellows. But altogether it was not the same friendly environment of the University of Michigan, where the basis of wardrobe for most male professors, and certainly for my advisor, was built upon a pair of jeans. My advisor, Chuck Tilly, in addition, tended to wear open collared shirts, and, if he were dressing up, perhaps a loose corduroy jacket (puce) with matching suede patches at the elbows. His demeanor upon greeting was most often a big smile.

At the Kennedy School, I was quite perplexed. Why did faculty often seem to float in some other higher universe? Why did male fellows wear jackets and ties to seminars? And why did they seem smarter than when they did *not* wear ties? How did the men know what questions they wanted to ask just as the speaker finished, and so shoot up their hands?

Why were there so few pre-doctoral fellows women? (I think there were no female post-docs my first year.) And where were the female professors? And, since I was not going to wear a tie, what should I wear around my neck? And why was I hearing stories of professorial behavior or having experiences that I had never before encountered, such as "So-and-so is so smooth he can turn a knife in your back and you won't even know it." Or why was I asked to shut a professor's office door, and then told by him that I would now hear what he really thought about an intellectual disagreement with a speaker [not me], but that it was strictly between us, that this professor would never say it outside the Kennedy School? Why did anyone think that upon first meeting someone new (me) at wine and cheese, they should introduce themselves by detailing their latest accomplishments?

**New community.** Of course, the interactions with Randy and her community were much more like what I had been used to at Michigan. I don't remember the first informal seminar at Randy's that I went to. I think it was most likely in the fall of 1983. I don't know how I got invited—perhaps Jane Sharp, who was at CSIA then? Randy was not center-stage at the seminars she held. The seminars were informal, interesting, challenging. Once I got to know Randy's community, the question became not what to wear, but what to do. These discussions not only opened up a very different set of concerns and approaches from what was discussed at the CSIA, but over time, I'm quite sure it was how I met a number of interesting people who were or would be in the security studies program at M.I.T.: Neta Crawford, Laura Reed, Kathryn McGraw, Carol Cohn, David Mayer, Natalie Goldring, and Josh Goldstein. (They, of course, and I would say, the women, in particular, have their own stories to tell about their experiences with M.I.T. professors. I remember an older male scholar coming up to a group of four women and addressing us as, "Look, a bevy of beauties.")

But I digress. In connection with Randy's seminars, I also remember Pam Solo, then a Bunting fellow at the Radcliffe Institute, and Randy Kehler, both major figures, perhaps best to say, both founding figures with Randy in the Nuclear Freeze Movement. (I know there was a fourth, but I do not remember his name.) I'm not sure when and where I met Matt Evangelista, or Judith Reppy, but it could well have been at one of Randy's gatherings, or at her research institute, the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies (IDDS).

Faculty at M.I.T., where Randy earned her Ph.D., had varying relationships with Randy. I remember some faculty being very supportive of Randy and her work: Judith Reppy at Cornell; Josh Cohen at M.I.T. and the publisher of the *Boston Review*; and Hayward Alker at M.I.T. And, as I learned from Matt and Neta's introduction to Randy's work (<https://einaudi.manifoldapp.org/projects/toward-a-theory-of-peace>), there were others who were supportive, for example, John Steinbruner. My sense was that Randy was more or less invisible to most faculty at M.I.T. and Harvard concerned with international security, even as they understood that she was very well known outside the academy. But, in the spirit of the Cambridge academic universe of the 1980s: so what?

True to character, it seemed to me that in general M.I.T. took very little notice of Randy. This was a place where it seemed just fine for a faculty member to introduce a visiting historian by saying that he, the faculty member, just loved reading history, especially late in the evening because it was so relaxing and helped put him to sleep. Harvard was more open to the world, or at least to fame. As I recall, Randy was more recognized there and was invited to speak at a dinner seminar or a public event—or, conceivably, both.

The discussions at Randy's, or convened by Randy, were different from those at CSIA—though those were extremely interesting to me, too. For Randy, the object was to

understand, inform, and change the world through deep understanding of the historical past and its implications for the future, to disseminate these new ideas through scholarship and public education, and to mobilize the public politically. Randy was idealistic, not naïve, though I suspect a number of M.I.T. and Harvard faculty thought her naïve: How can you change the world if you either have not yet discovered the covering laws of the political universe, or do not personally know the president, or several presidents, of the United States? Randy set different sights. And how far-reaching they were: to freeze, to stop the development and deployment of nuclear weapons. Years before it became more generally recognized, Randy's premise was that Gorbachev was serious in his desire for internal political and economic reform and in his desire to significantly reduce nuclear weapons.

Once I got to know people in Randy's community, a number of whom were university-based, the question for me became not what to wear but what to do. This was somewhat different from my community in Ann Arbor. Instead of talking about the English working class, the mobilization of protest, or food riots in 17<sup>th</sup> century Russia, the focus was on contemporary Soviet reform perspectives, European perspectives, and *how* to be politically effective.

Cambridge and its vast intellectual resources no doubt helped Randy to develop her ideas. But Randy was Randy, and her openness to the world (if in sometimes stubborn ways), the ideas she developed and led others to develop in their own work, and her goodness were, for many, including me, a crucial part of being in Cambridge and Boston. Through community and new friendships, I think many of us got more out of being there than we had ever imagined. I certainly got much more than I understood at the time.