above the old discredited consequentialism of "democratic peace" theorems. The book, actually a set of essays, brings illumination to subjects as varied as torture, assassination, drones, secrecy, and the dilemmas posed by revolutionary transitions to democracy. The greatest strength of *On War and Democracy* is surely that it speaks to our troubled times. It is a philosophical abreaction against the fact that the American democratic empire—like its two predecessors, classical Athens and revolutionary France—is today permanently at war.

We live in an age of "belligerent democracy," says Kutz. He well understands that the ethic of democracy is victimized by imperial interventions in the name of democracy. Against talk of realism, humanitarian intervention, and the responsibility to protect, his fundamental point is that the ethic of democratic politics is irenic. It is a precautionary principle that speaks against the beasts of war, their propensity to violate "the voice and integrity of others" and to destroy their "standing as equals in a shared dialogue about common causes and meanings" (p. 5).

—John Keane

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Taking Sides in Peacekeeping: Impartiality and the Future of the United Nations, Emily Paddon Rhoads (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 248 pp., $65.32 cloth.

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The norm of impartiality is pivotal to the United Nations' activities in the areas of conflict resolution, mediation, peacekeeping, humanitarian action, and adjudication. In recent years, however, the organization's principled adherence to impartiality has come under scrutiny. In particular, scholars and practitioners have started to question whether a posture of impartiality is appropriate when dealing with situations of genocide and mass atrocities. Given the prominence of this controversy, it is puzzling that systematic analysis of the norm of impartiality continues to be a lacuna in international relations scholarship.

In *Taking Sides in Peacekeeping*, Emily Paddon Rhoads starts to fill this gap and provides much-needed clarity on impartiality as a norm of UN peacekeeping. What does impartiality mean within the context of contemporary UN peacekeeping? How has the meaning of the norm of impartiality changed since the inception of peacekeeping in the 1950s? And what are the implications of a more assertive understanding of the norm of impartiality for peacekeeping practice on the ground?

To illuminate these questions, Paddon Rhoads adopts a social constructivist perspective and employs ethnographic research methods, such as extensive fieldwork in New York City and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), participant observation (she attended UN meetings and went on

patrol with peacekeepers), and over three hundred semi-structured elite interviews. Based on this impressive body of research, she comes to an important conclusion: impartiality continues to be a key norm of UN peacekeeping, but the meaning of the norm has been radically transformed. The dominant interpretation of the norm of impartiality has gradually shifted from "passive" to "assertive" impartiality. UN peacekeepers are now expected to perform the role of "impartial law enforcers," rather than the traditional role of "impartial mediators." This has far-reaching implications for UN peacekeeping and the United Nations more generally.

Paddon Rhoads suggests treating impartiality as a "composite norm" with two main elements: first, a procedural component that requires actors to be unbiased and informed in their decision-making (the mode of decision-making); and second, a substantive component that defines the background of valuation for these unbiased and informed decisions (the basis for decision-making). While it seems that the procedural component of impartiality is relatively fixed, the substantive component is open to change. In the context of UN peacekeeping this substantive component—the basis for decision-making—is the mission mandate. Paddon Rhoads quotes Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the former head of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as saying, "You could have a mandate that allows [peacekeepers] to crush a country . . . I mean, depending on how you write the mandate, 'defence of the mandate' can open [a mission] up to anything" (p. 78).

Indeed, Paddon Rhoads demonstrates that the basis for decision-making in the context of UN peacekeeping has been redefined, fuelled by the peacekeeping failures of the 1990s and a broader shift toward "assertive liberal internationalism." Once exclusively charged with implementing mandates consented to by the parties to a conflict, UN peacekeepers are now expected to promote humanity-focused human rights norms, such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict (PoC) and the responsibility to protect (RtoP). It is this transformation in the basis for decision-making that gives rise to "assertive impartiality." Impartially protecting civilians from harm or populations from atrocity crimes forces UN peacekeepers to consider such thorny issues as the distinction between victims and perpetrators or guilt and innocence and, ultimately, to take sides in civil wars.

There is a major problem, however. While universal agreement around these human rights norms is assumed, Paddon Rhoads shows persuasively that this is a mere assumption rather than an objective truth. A key theme that runs through *Taking Sides in Peacekeeping* is the contestation that has accompanied—and continues to accompany—the shift toward "assertive impartiality." Paddon Rhoads' research reveals that impartiality, in its assertive interpretation, is a highly contested norm: it was contested during the institutionalization phase at the global level and it continues to be contested during implementation on the local level.

What is unique about her analysis of norm contestation is that she studies contestation at the global level, the local level, and the interactions between the two. Her fascinating case study of the implementation of "assertive impartiality" in the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC/MONUSCO) suggests that contestation during institutionalization can lead to ambiguities and imprecisions in a norm that can then trigger further contestation and practical challenges during the

implementation phase. This is a novel and very promising contribution to the literature on norm diffusion.

The heavy focus on contestation raises two questions, however. First, what exactly is contested here? Is it really a new understanding of the norm of impartiality that is contested or is it the UN's embrace of human rights–related norms, such as PoC or RtoP? Often, the contestation that Paddon Rhoads describes revolves around the objective to protect civilians in complex and messy humanitarian emergencies. It seems, therefore, that the real controversy pertains to the UN's efforts to promote and protect human rights, rather than to the norm of impartiality. While Paddon Rhoads treats these human rights norms as part of the substantive component of impartiality, it is not clear that this helps to accurately capture the nature of the contestation. It also raises the question of whether the procedural and substantive components of the norm of impartiality are of equal importance.

Second, how much contestation can a norm take? If "assertive impartiality" is so heavily contested and in fact only promoted by a handful of states, as Paddon Rhoads demonstrates, is it still a norm? In her excellent discussion of the role of norms in international relations, she explains that norms are social facts. Norms exist and exert an influence only because they reflect beliefs that are held intersubjectively. But how much intersubjective agreement is required for an idea to be considered a norm? If "assertive impartiality" is advocated by three permanent members of the UN Security Council (the United States, the United Kingdom, and France) but resisted by most other states and even parts of the UN Secretariat, as Paddon Rhoads shows, should we still treat it as a norm in the sense that it reflects intersubjectively held beliefs?

Such questions aside, *Taking Sides in Peacekeeping* is an outstanding book and a must read for scholars and practitioners interested in the role of norms in international relations, UN peacekeeping, human rights, and the DRC.

—Ruben Reike

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The Planet Remade: How Geoengineering Could Change the World, Oliver Morton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 440 pp., $29.95 cloth.

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Economics is little more than organized common sense. Trade-offs, then, are among the most commonsense aspects of life as we know it. Unconstrained maximization might appear as a theory on a pure math exam, but in economics—as in life—constraints are everywhere. One of the most consequential is how much carbon dioxide the Earth's