

## APHA Peace Caucus Meeting

Friday, Nov. 11, 2022

7-8:30am PT / 10:00-11:30am ET

*Facilitated by:* Valerie Pacino, 2022 Peace Caucus Co-Chair

*Minutes by:* Anlan Cheney, 2022 Peace Caucus Communications Chair

*Link for access to slides and materials shared during the meeting:*

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EEDzmPz1E\\_bGG2t1fcV8xME5S3Nh3fz3?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EEDzmPz1E_bGG2t1fcV8xME5S3Nh3fz3?usp=share_link)

### Agenda and Minutes at a glance:

- I. *Welcome & Introductions*
  - A. 20 attendees, including the four 2022 Caucus leaders
- II. *Introduction to the Peace Caucus*
  - A. Bob and Patrice shared a [history of the Peace Caucus](#)
  - B. The Caucus has mainly organized around a [scientific program](#) and side events, demonstrations at APHA annual meetings and through [APHA policy statements](#).
  - C. The [Public Health Working Group on the Primary Prevention of War](#), founded in 2011, will be integrated into the structure of the Peace Caucus. Stay tuned.
- III. *APHA 2022 Meeting recap*
  - A. Anlan shared a [recap of sessions, activities, and engagement](#)
  - B. Attendees discussed increased coverage of war and conflict in the APHA program overall, disappointment about the lack of strong peace perspectives on Ukraine, a policy statement on Israel-Palestine health, strengthening APHA's policy implementation practices, and action on Yemen, among other topics.
- IV. *2023 Planning*
  - A. [APHA 2023](#) is Nov. 12-15, 2023, in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme is *Creating the Healthiest Nation: Overcoming Social and Ethical Challenges*.
  - B. Attendees put forward ideas for actions and topics around ethics of who matters in conflict, "*naming the intersections of war/conflict and racism/systemic oppression*," better collaboration with other caucuses/sections/forums such as Socialist Caucus, highlighting the [AJPH Student Think Tank's](#) "Peace as a fundamental determinant of public health" efforts, the [Back from the Brink](#) campaign and ratification of the UN Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and follow-up to [#HealthcareNotWarfare](#) session with more information on how the budget process works.
- V. *Engaging with Peace Caucus*
  - A. Join the Peace Caucus/renew your dues on our [website](#)
  - B. Follow, stay informed, and learn more at our [Twitter](#), [Youtube](#), and [PeaceCal](#)
  - C. Consider joining Peace Caucus *leadership* (as co-chair or co-program planner), joining a *committee* (program, policy, communications) or *liaise* between another section, caucus, etc. Have other ideas? Let us know at [peacecaucusapha@gmail.com](mailto:peacecaucusapha@gmail.com).

**See next pages for extended meeting minutes with links.**

## Welcome and Introductions

*Attending:* Neil Arya, Anlan “Annie” Cheney, Catherine DeLorey, Sandy Eaton, Mateo Frumholtz, Bob Gould, Amy Hagopian, Jonathan King, Barry Levy, Alan Meyers, Valerie Pacino, Charlotte Phillips, Karyn Pomerantz, Hannah Rayel, Len Rubenstein, Robert Rubinstein, David Spence, Patrice Sutton, Luissa Vahedi, Shelley White

## Introduction to Peace Caucus

**Patrice Sutton** and **Bob Gould**, Program Co-Chair and Caucus Co-Chair, respectively, presented the [history of the Peace Caucus](#) which was founded in 1985 by Gail Gordon after then APHA president Victor Sidel’s closing session covered “Prevention of Nuclear War as a Public Health Priority.” The Caucus had 116 founding members, including Larry Egbert, Bobby Singer, Larry Kushi and Kathy Fagan.

Throughout the years, the Peace Caucus has come to encompass both national and international foci, working to illuminate both the health impacts of war, conflict, and structural violence as well as upstream interventions and efforts to achieve their primary prevention. During the pandemic, remote sessions facilitated wider diversity of voices.

The Peace Caucus has mainly organized around a [scientific program](#) at APHA annual meetings and side events, including film screenings, photography exhibitions, and demonstrations. Members have also engaged in public policy, especially through [APHA policy statements](#). This year, the Peace Caucus organized an independently [collaborative webinar](#) with the Human Rights Forum on the impacts of war and conflict on refugees.

Members of the Caucus have also [collaborated](#) to write research papers and books. The [Public Health Working Group on the Primary Prevention of War](#), founded in 2011, will be integrated into the structure of the Peace Caucus. Stay tuned!

**Jonathan King** noted that he has been active in a number of Peace caucuses, and “*this has to be the most consistent, and impressive, and creative.*” He offered his congratulations to members and looks forward to helping prepare for APHA 2023 in Atlanta.

### Links shared:

- *History of the Peace Caucus presentation:*  
[https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/\\_files/ugd/feab26\\_f858b8d3c9fb4dc9b969fffe3f0b3d47.pdf](https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/_files/ugd/feab26_f858b8d3c9fb4dc9b969fffe3f0b3d47.pdf)
- *Archive of Peace Caucus programs and newsletters:* <https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/meetings>
- *APHA Policy Statements of note:* <https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/advocacy>
- *2022 webinar with Human Rights Forum on refugee well-being:*  
<https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/events>
- *Library of the Peace Caucus (under development) to include books, working papers, public policy, teaching resources, and more:* <https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/publications>
- *Public Health Working Group on the Primary Prevention of War:*  
<https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/group-on-prevention-of-war>

## APHA 2022 Recap

**Annie Cheney** shared a [recap of sessions, activities, and engagement](#) at APHA 2022.

**Amy Hagopian** noted that this was the first year our topics felt mainstreamed, not particularly radical. She suggested **Shelley White** update her [paper](#) on the number of courses being taught about war and conflict in public health, expecting an increase.

**Karyn Pomerantz** felt it was a weakness that we didn't have an anti-war demonstration at this meeting and suggested planning for next year. *"Ukraine will probably be continuing in some form, as well as so many other wars we don't acknowledge in this country."* She is committed to work behind the scenes on that and gave a well-received presentation entitled "Covid Protection Not War! Oppose US and Russian Imperialism in the War in Ukraine" at the [People's Public Health Conference](#) last week.

On activism, **Amy** described how speaker Isaac Evans-Frantz from Action Corps in the International Health section's session on Yemen had everyone [call their Congress people during the session](#) to register support for the War Powers Resolution. "It was sort of a demonstration, maybe even more effective."

**Jonathan King** was surprised there was not more coverage at the APHA national meeting on how the federal budget process works, given that public health depends primarily on this funding. He suggested the Peace Caucus makes sure to inform on this subject at APHA 2023.

On policy action, **Bob** emphasized how we have been able to pass policies but have seen less success with APHA's implementation of them. **Karyn** concurred there has been a lack of follow through from APHA as well as weakening of resolutions in the case of the Iraq policy. *"We have to figure out how we can work independently from APHA on how to make them meaningful. Are they meaningful? We do a lot of education, we can testify ... but how do we make them more powerful? I think we need to be more visible. That's why I have been thinking about the [Ukraine] demonstration,"* she said.

**Amy** decried a policy statement submitted as "[Improving Public Health as a Bridge to Positive Peace Between Israel and Palestine](#)" and applauded its negative recommendation from the Joint Policy Committee at APHA 2022. **Robert Rubinstein**, one of the policy's authors, noted the policy was revised. He invited Peace Caucus members to read the policy statement and provide feedback.

**Charlotte Phillips** questioned why the APHA 2022 opening session included the Ukrainian minister of health's gratitude for the US sending weapons, and why there was no discussion anywhere at the conference about that ([see his address at 43:00 stating "today the most effective vaccines are arms and weapons"](#) – Georges Benjamin appeared to be uncomfortable with this).

**Jonathan** concurred, thinking it was an extraordinary thing the talk ended with "send more arms." That is outrageous, in a public health setting, he said. Even the speaker said he thought he would never say that, but he said it.

**Robert** was taken aback by that as well. One of the things he noticed at [Ukraine session organized by Barry Levy](#) (with Leonard Rubenstein, Ira Helfand, and others) was discussion about laws of war, nuclear war, the tax on health workers and violence and health workers: “every single one of them came back to a collapse about norms in these various arenas. Trying to address the collapse of laws of wars, humanitarian space, etc. might be a very useful thing to do.” He suggested we might have an opportunity next year to examine further why the diplomatic track has been discredited or not followed. “[Now we’re just expecting carnage and the potential of going nuclear.”

Links shared:

- *Peace Caucus program at APHA 2022:*  
<https://apha.confex.com/apha/2022/meetingapp.cgi/Program/2213>
- *Paper by Shelley White, Bernard Lown, and Jon Rohde on war and conflict in public health curriculum (reactive vs proactive):* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3804102/>
- *APHA 2022 recap:*  
[https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/files/ugd/feab26\\_e368da030564429cbeac27008a52a38e.pdf](https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/files/ugd/feab26_e368da030564429cbeac27008a52a38e.pdf)
- *2022 People’s Public Health Conference:* <https://www.thepeoplespublichealth.org/>
- *Action at IH section session (#4140) on Yemen:*  
<https://apha.confex.com/apha/2022/meetingapp.cgi/Session/66265> and  
<https://twitter.com/theactioncorps/status/1590867571351629825>
- *Policy statement “Improving Public Health as a Bridge to Positive Peace Between Israel and Palestine” revised draft:*  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/10HIL3TQg5q3rsKqfyK7f6Nc1Q92dtG4M/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/10HIL3TQg5q3rsKqfyK7f6Nc1Q92dtG4M/view?usp=share_link)
- *Ukraine MOH addressing APHA 2022:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DO0QhFUvq2I>

## 2023 Planning Discussion

[APHA 2023](#) is Nov. 12-15, 2023, in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme is *Creating the Healthiest Nation: Overcoming Social and Ethical Challenges*.

**Jonathan King** was disappointed Reverend Barber wasn’t in attendance at APHA 2022 to take an explicitly anti-war position and proposes he and/or another Poor People’s Campaign representative be invited again to APHA 2023 to speak.

He also proposes another Health Care Not Warfare session, noting how having the president of National Nurses United, which represented 200,000 health care workers, was so powerful. Perhaps the information on actual budgetary mechanisms can be increased. At the Health Care Not Warfare’s roundtable on Tuesday, a number of attendees said they wanted to see an explicitly tradeoff i.e. if we don’t fund this bomber, what public health programs can we fund?

Jonathan also pointed out how in the South, military bases make up a much larger section of the economy.

On the theme of ethics, **Patrice** mused on topics like Palestinian health and why is it that some people in conflict count and others don’t. Drawing on the experience of the Peace Caucus, she noted “*whatever the energy is in the group is what will happen.*”

**Shelley** concurred: *“Naming the intersections of war/conflict and racism/systemic oppression would be great!”*

**Kalryn** added: *“Maybe a session on imperialism, what it is, how people can fight it, such as soldier rebellions, antiwar movements, labor actions, and revolution.”*

**Mateo Frumholz**, who is active with the Socialist Caucus, would be keen to see more engagement there. *“I feel there is much overlap and an opportunity to broaden the peace coalition.”*

**Luissa Vahedi** is a member of the of [AJPH Student Think Tank](#) whose focus this year is “Peace as a fundamental determinant of public health”. They have 9 papers in process of revisions. Could have a session at APHA but the challenge is getting everyone in place physically (not all students would have these resources).

**Patrice** suggests the Peace Caucus ask APHA to fund these students (it’s a very small group of students that understand early the relationship between Peace and Health). “This is the future. We want to do this session and they need to support this if they want to survive.”

**Bob** cited the Lancet countdown on climate health as a clear and forthright examination of how war in Ukraine has impacted our ability to deal with the climate crisis.

**David** suggested the [Back from the Brink](#) campaign should be highlighted in Atlanta. His roundtable presentation at APHA 2022 attracted only 8 attendees. Perhaps the Peace Caucus should staff a booth in the exhibit hall where the BftB sign up sheet would be prominent. One of the campaign priorities is that US should support participation and ratification of the UN Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. **Bob** reminded attendees that the [comprehensive nuclear weapons policy](#) we passed at the end of 2020 is an explicit support for the Treaty.

**Jonathan** pointed out that Atlanta is an international city and suggested we approach the International Health section for joint sponsorship of TPNW-related activities.

**Karyn** suggested presenting at the 2023 People’s Public Health Conference. [Recordings](#) are available of this year’s conference, and it’s a very welcoming group.

**Jonathan** suggested looking for a local Peace Action group to connect with on Health Care Not Warfare.

**Bob** noted PNHP has an annual meeting at APHA. Let’s think ahead and connect.

**Patrice** suggested bringing these groups together for a webinar sponsored by the Peace Caucus somewhere in the middle of the year as lead up to APHA 2023.

Links shared:

- APHA 2023 <https://apha.org/events-and-meetings/annual/past-and-future-annual-meetings>
- AJPH Student Think Tank: <https://linktr.ee/ajphthinktank>
- People’s Public Health Conference: <https://thepeoplespublichealth.org>
- 2020 APHA policy statement #2029 “Toward a World Free of Nuclear Weapons”:  
<https://www.apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy/Public-Health-Policy-Statements/Policy-Database/2021/01/13/Toward-a-World-Free-of-Nuclear-Weapons>

## Getting involved with the Peace Caucus

Follow, stay informed, and learn more at:

- Join at our website: <https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/join>
- Our Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APHAPeaceCaucus>
- Our Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@APHAPeaceCaucus>
- Peace, Health & Development “PeaceCal” Calendar: <https://www.tinyurl.com/peacecal>

There are also opportunities to join leadership and committees formally! For 2023, we are looking for leaders and members to assist as (see

[https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/files/ugd/feab26\\_e368da030564429cbeac27008a52a38e.pdf](https://www.aphapeacecaucus.org/files/ugd/feab26_e368da030564429cbeac27008a52a38e.pdf)):

- Co-Chair role
- Program committee members
- Policy committee members
- Liaisons to APHA sections, forums, caucuses, etc.
- Please let us know if you have any other or specific interests