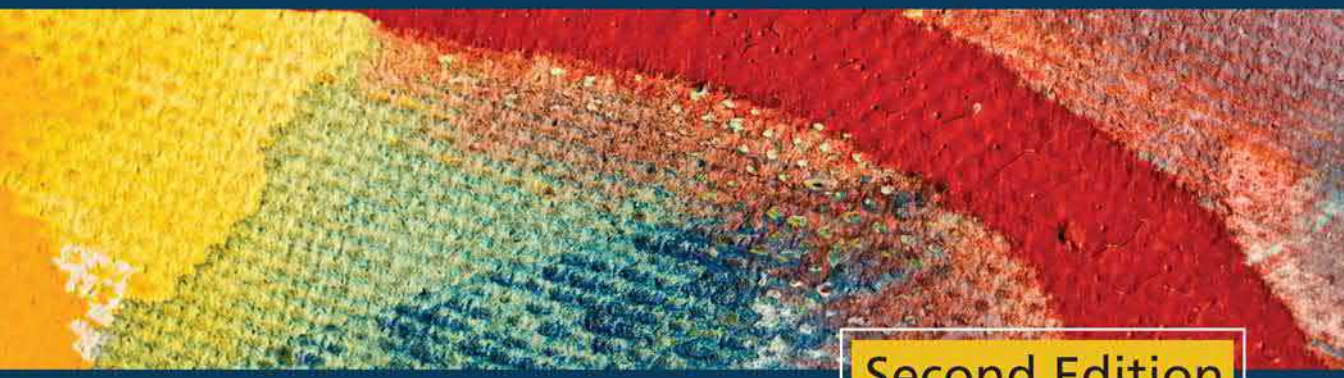
The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Communication

Integrating Theory, Research, and Practice



Second Edition

Edited by

John G. Oetzel

Stella Ting-Toomey

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The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Communication

Second Edition

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Dedication to our precious, loving sons

To Spencer and Ethan: May conflict never interrupt the true joy that you get from life; your laughter, your enthusiasm, and your love for life are inspiring.

—dada

To Adrian: May you know how to navigate flexibly in a conflict-filled world—with wisdom, courage, and hope.

—mum

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Preface

Conflict is frequent in our lives (CPP, 2008; Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2013; Wilmot & Hocker, 2011). Conflict is "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals" (Wilmot & Hocker, 2011, p. 11). We are exposed to many types of conflict in our lives from family disagreements, work disputes, community violence, and wars. A recent report found that 85% of people have to deal with conflict to some degree in the workplace (CPP, 2008). In addition, in April 2012, there were 60 countries and 317 militias, separatists groups, or states involved in armed conflicts (Wars in the World, 2012).

In addition to being frequent, conflict has important consequences for the parties directly involved, as well as the witnesses to conflict. The negative consequences are the ones often associated with conflict (rather than the positive or uncertain outcomes). These consequences include relationship dissolution, direct economic costs, opportunity costs, dissatisfaction, violence/death, discord, project failure, and trauma. For example, a report in 2007 estimated that Africa had costs of $300 billion (of about $18 billion per year) related to armed conflicts (Hillier, 2007).

On the other hand, conflict has positive outcomes such as opportunities for self-understanding, creating of new ideas, learning about others, seeing different perspectives, relational development, identifying and addressing problems, and improving communication skills. A report identified 75% of people in the workplace were able to see these positive consequences of conflict (CPP, 2008). Many communication scholars emphasize that the consequences of conflict are due to the way the conflict is managed (e.g., Folger et al., 2013; Wilmot & Hocker, 2011). If we manage conflicts constructively, then we have positive outcomes; if we manage conflicts poorly, we have negative outcomes.

What it means to manage conflict constructively or destructively is a complex issue. A simplistic answer is that constructive conflict is done cooperatively, while destructive conflict is done competitively. However, this superficial assessment belies the many factors involved in a conflict. There is a proliferation of research about conflict theory and practice. Much of this research examines the multitude of factors involved in conflict situations. The amount of research makes it difficult to synthesize key principles and practices of constructive conflict management in a simple manner. These chapters aim to provide this synthesis in a variety of specific contexts.

This particular *Handbook* emphasizes constructive conflict management from a communication perspective. This perspective places primacy in the message as the focus of conflict research and practice. The means to express conflict is through communication (verbal and nonverbal messages); likewise, the means to manage and address conflict is through communication. In this preface, we discuss

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the purpose, intended audience, and organizational framework of this volume. We also highlight changes in this second edition from the first edition. In describing the organizational framework, we also introduce the first three chapters, since these serve as general overviews for the four main sections.

Purpose, Audience, and Changes for This Volume

In the first edition, our general purpose of the *Sage Handbook of Conflict Communication* was threefold: (1) to assemble in one resource the knowledge base of the field of conflict communication; (2) to identify the best theories, ideas, and practices of conflict communication; and (3) to provide the opportunity for scholars and practitioners to link theoretical frameworks and application tools. This multipronged purpose grew from our focus on communication and the intended audience.

We have not changed our purpose for the second edition. The threefold purpose continues to work well. However, the second edition presents an opportunity for authors to update research in their respective areas. We conducted a library search of major databases in a variety of fields. The search parameters included the dates of January 1, 2006, to April 2012 (at the time of this writing), in any language (although the database tool includes mostly articles in English), and scholarly publications (including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, book chapters, and trade publications). The results using specific search terms were the following: (a) conflict: 636,264; (b) conflict and communication: 149,149; (c) interpersonal conflict: 4,207; (d) organizational conflict: 763; (e) community conflict: 782; and (f) intercultural or international conflict: 3,422. The limited search of these general terms illustrates that significant research has been conducted since the publications of the original *Handbook*. Thus, it is an opportune time for authors to update the review of research in their areas.

The first edition had three primary constituencies: (1) academics who will use it as a resource for their scholarship; (2) instructors who will use it as a main or supplementary text in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in conflict communication; and (3) practitioners who are responsible for a variety of conflict management processes and systems in a variety of settings and who are interested in bridging theory and practice (e.g., organizations, political entities, mediation, counseling, courts, etc.). The second edition still seeks to include these audiences, and yet we add one more key audience: students. While instructors choose to use the *Handbook* in the courses, we certainly want students to be able to understand and apply the information they read.

The multiple constituencies present a challenge to the authors of the *Handbook*. The authors handled this challenge brilliantly. For academics/instructors, the *Handbook* must reflect the state of the art regarding conflict communication theory and research. The content needs to advance thinking on conflict and stimulate new ideas and guide future scholarship and research. For practitioners, the *Handbook* must be practical and applicable to the ongoing conflicts that they view and participate in on a daily basis. The application of research must promote critical reflection on existing practices as well as provide creative and innovative ideas to improve conflict practices. For students, the information must be accessible. These goals are interdependent in that academics want innovative and heuristic ideas to benefit a variety of constituencies, practitioners want practical suggestions that are framed by current research, and everyone appreciates information that is accessible.

To this end, we asked authors to address the threefold purpose of the *Handbook* as they completed their review. We asked them to

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consider the latest theory/research and the best known practices rather than separating these components. In addition, we asked authors to consider three stylistic suggestions for each of the chapters: (1) visual models/figures and tables to synthesize and/or illustrate the review; (2) real-life examples/case studies to illustrate the research; and (c) accessible language at a level of beginning graduate student (i.e., to appeal to advanced undergraduates and newly starting graduate students). The authors used these stylistics approaches in various ways that are complementary to their research areas. The result is a richly textured *Handbook* with the latest theorizing efforts/research findings and best practices in the four conflict communication domains and, concurrently, is accessible to a larger audience than the first edition.

Finally, we also have some changes in content. Reviewers of the first edition recognized some holes in the volume and made suggestions of new chapters and topics for coverage. We decided to add a number of these topics by omitting a few of the original chapters (because of limited updated research in those areas) and shortening the length of each of the chapters. As a result, we added chapters in the following areas: (a) separate chapters on qualitative and quantitative research methods and conflict, (b) intimate partner violence, (c) mental health issues in families, (d) negotiation in the workplace, (e) workplace bullying, (f) health care and conflict, (g) community ethics and civic engagement, (h) spirituality and conflict, (i) trust and conflict in academic–community partnerships, (j) identity and intercultural conflict, (k) middle way approach to addressing intercultural conflict, (l) global conflict in the workplace, and (m) the culture-based situational conflict model. Thus, there are a number of fresh, updated chapters from the first edition as well as new invites on other topics.

There were also other topics that reviewers suggested, and we had some difficult choices in deciding what to include as full chapters due to space limitation. In the end, there were some topics that we felt warranted coverage and perhaps not at the level of a full chapter. To this end, we asked authors to consider the following issues in their reviews as best as they could: (a) culture, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and social class issues; (b) globalization; (c) power; (d) technology; (e) change/transformation; (f) forgiveness; and (g) ethics. We have tried to include as much relevant and new material as possible and recognized that we could not cover every topic as well as we would have liked, given space limitations.

Organizational Framework and Overview of Introductory Chapters

The *Handbook* is divided into four sections plus three introductory chapters and a conclusion. The three chapters in the introduction offer an overview of definitional, theoretical, and methodological issues in conflict communication. In Chapter 1, Putnam outlines the historical development of approaches and definitions to the study of conflict and communication. She reviews the early work on communication and conflict dating back to the 1970s and traces the role of communication in defining conflict, developing approaches to studying conflict, exploring models of negotiation and mediation, and moving from quantitative to qualitative methods of research. She concludes by suggesting ways to integrate knowledge across the discipline and to investigate the ways that conflict contributes to individual, organizational, and societal growth.

In Chapter 2, Fink and Cai (with Wang) offer an overview of quantitative approaches for researching conflict communication. Their goal is to consider research that creates social

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science theories that involve prediction and description. They also consider issues for comparing conflict communication across groups, particularly cross-cultural comparisons. They consider four critical topics in conducting quantitative research about conflict communication: (1) issues of measurement and observation; (2) research design—including experimental and nonexperimental cross-sectional, panel, and time-series studies; (3) sampling; and (4) data analysis. In each of these topics, they identify specific issues for researchers to consider and identify specific example studies that illustrate the choices that researchers made. Furthermore, Fink and Cai offer concrete suggestions and considerations when conducting quantitative conflict research that is geared toward creating social science theories.

In Chapter 3, Jiang and Buzzanell offer an overview of qualitative, and some mixed methods, approaches for researching conflict communication. They note that qualitative research aims to provide understanding and strategies for conflict resolution and consider the simultaneous positive and negative consequences of conflict. They also explain that qualitative research on conflict is not always labeled as such because researchers' philosophical bases presume contradiction and tension. Jiang and Buzzanell identify four predominant qualitative paradigms and describe the assumptions and approaches, as well as review concrete studies to illustrate the following four paradigms: (1) phenomenology, (2) sociocultural/social construction, (3) critical/cultural studies, and (4) poststructuralist/postmodernist. Then, they introduce five key methods of data collection that are used by qualitative conflict researchers: (1) narrative, (2) ethnography, (3) grounded theory, (4) case study, and (5) mixed methods. The methods are described, and particular conflict studies from diverse contexts are reviewed to illustrate the methods. In the case of the mixed methods, Jiang and Buzzanell include only studies that foreground qualitative research rather than studies that "take a back seat" to the quantitative methods.

These introductory chapters have a decidedly research flavor as they set the stage for the nature of conflict research in the four specific sections. These four sections focus on contexts in which conflict occurs: (1) interpersonal, (2) organizational, (3) community, and (4) intercultural/international. We describe each of these contexts, and the respective chapters, in the introductions for each section.

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To the readers, we thank you for taking the time to read each chapter in this *Handbook* with thoughtfulness and intellectual questioning. We encourage you to pursue your own conflict communication interest with passion and gusto. We hope the ideas in the *Handbook* would inspire you to bring your own visions out to the open and that you would be able to write down your own unique conflict insights with courage and imagination. We challenge you to extend the conflict communication field forward in the four conflict communication contexts, and you would also be able to leap forward fearlessly in different directions to explore the unknown and the unfamiliar, and to add your fresh perspectives to the conflict communication discipline. We hope you enjoy perusing this *Handbook* as much as we have found the rewards and gratifications in editing this volume.

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1

Definitions and Approaches to Conflict and Communication

Linda L. Putnam

Few scholars would deny that communication is an essential feature of conflict. As Thomas and Pondy (1977) noted in their massive review of conflict in organizations, "It is communication with which we are most concerned in understanding conflict management" (p. 1100). Communication aids in the forming of issues, framing of perceptions, translating feelings into conflict, and enacting the conflict itself (Putnam & Poole, 1987). It functions as an impromptu code to signal intentions, exchange information, exercise influence, and coordinate outcomes. Most of all, "communication is the means by which conflict gets socially defined" (Simons, 1974b, p. 3).

Despite the importance of communication in social conflicts, early researchers often cast it as a backdrop or a taken-for-granted activity. In particular, initial studies that include communication in the Prisoner's Dilemma games often treated it simplistically, as "let the players talk or don't let them talk" or as tacit cues that conveyed preferences through moves and countermoves (Bostrom, 1968; Gergen, 1969). Disenchanted with the paucity of attention to communication in conflict studies, scholars across the discipline gathered in 1972 in Philadelphia for a conference sponsored by the Speech Communication Association. This conference and subsequent publications that emanated from it (see Bowers, 1974b; Miller & Simons, 1974) nurtured the growth of communication and conflict studies as a distinct area that has mushroomed across the discipline. As this volume demonstrates, research on communication and conflict is alive and well.

Amid this widespread growth, communication scholars are often silent or presumptive about the relationship between communication and conflict. Scholars typically define conflict in a consensual way and then treat the elements of this definition as assumed within their research designs. Thus, characteristics and dimensions are often presumed within the operational nature and measurement instruments of conflict (Weider-Hatfield, 1993). For many scholars, communication is the manifest stage of conflict; that is, it surfaces as social

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interaction or as strategies and tactics. As such, communication seems bound by a set of presumed relationships between communication and conflict.

This chapter unpacks these relationships through presenting a historical overview of communication and conflict studies, including examining three seminal theories, comparing definitions and assumptions, reviewing models and approaches to conflict, and highlighting research methods. The latter part of the chapter provides an update on recent research in terms, especially, of developments between 2006 and 2012. In particular, it focuses on the roles of communication in conflict as a variable, a process, an interpretation or meaning, and a dialectical relationship. Finally, it sets forth some options for integrating research across the field and promoting theory building through future directions for communication studies.

Given the breadth of communication and conflict research, a full-scale historical treatment of each contextual arena is beyond the scope of this chapter. Moreover, each chapter in this volume offers its own historical background for conflict studies in particular domains. In like manner, this chapter is not an exhaustive state-of-the-art review, as presented in the early articles and handbook chapters (Donohue, Diez, & Stahle, 1983; D. W. Johnson, 1974; Olekalns, Putnam, Weingart, & Metcalf, 2008; Putnam & Jones, 1982b; Putnam & Poole, 1987; Roloff, 1987; Steinfatt, 1974) or summarized in the early textbooks that now appear in multiple editions (Folger & Poole, 1984; Hocker & Wilmot, 1978). What this chapter does, however, is to situate research on communication and conflict in the 1970s as a period that led to the rapid acceleration of conflict studies in family and interpersonal communication (Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979; Millar, Rogers, & Bavelas, 1984; Sillars, 1980a, 1980b), small group interaction (Pood, 1980; Waln, 1982), negotiation and bargaining (Donohue, 1981a, 1981b; Putnam & Jones, 1982b), organizational conflict styles (Putnam & Wilson, 1982; Riggs, 1983; Shockley-Zalabak, 1981), and intercultural conflict (Gudykunst, 1985; Ting-Toomey, 1985). This period is singled out because the conceptual and theoretical debates at that time clearly shaped the direction of future research. Although scholars have drawn heavily from conflict studies outside our field, this chapter concentrates primarily on the research and conceptual issues that have developed within communication.

Historical Overview of Communication and Conflict Studies

For more than 30 years, communication scholars have studied social conflicts. Initially aligned with rhetorical scholarship, research focused on diplomacy (Oliver, 1950, 1952) and the rhetoric of confrontation and agitation (Bowers & Ochs, 1971; Scott & Smith, 1969). Inspired by campus demonstrations, protest movements, and riots in the 1960s, communication scholars directed their attention to crisis rhetoric, persuasion in social conflicts, and rhetorical strategies of coercion (Burgess, 1973; Simons, 1969, 1972, 1974a). Specifically, Tompkins, Fisher, Infante, and Tompkins (1974) applied Burkian concepts to an analysis of mystery and order in the administration of a public university in the midst of campus conflicts.

Also focusing on public conflicts, Bowers (1974a) compared the perceived costs, potential rewards, and probability of using different individual and institutional forms of communication during community disputes. Individuals in social conflicts differed from institutions in presenting oral and written petitions, engaging in collective actions, and escalating confrontations; institutions, in turn, were limited to avoidance, counterpersuasion, and nonviolent suppression as defensive reactions. Rhetoricians also analyzed the public

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discourse surrounding the Arab–Israeli conflict (Heisy, 1970) and the argumentative competence of Henry Kissinger's negotiation (Schuetz, 1978).

Amid this attention to social and political conflicts, other scholars in the field employed experimental methods to study bargaining and conflict in dyads and small groups. Communication scholars were eager to rectify the shortcomings of game theory researchers who ignored social interactions (Beisecker, 1970a; Bostrom, 1968). Their early work focused on comparing tacit nonverbal messages with explicit verbal communication (Harris & Smith, 1974). At first, researchers concluded that an increase in explicit communication between negotiators increased cooperativeness (D. H. Smith, 1969; Steinfatt, Seibold, & Frye, 1974), but additional studies revealed that in highly competitive situations, communication became distorted, leading to error and misinformation (Beisecker, 1970a). Hence, increased opportunity for communication did not necessarily lead to cooperation.

To unpack the explicit versus implicit role of communication, D. W. Johnson, McCarty, and Allen (1976) compared cooperative with competitive bargainers in both verbal and nonverbal conditions. They observed that verbal statements of cooperation led to more agreements in less time than did the other three conditions, including nonverbal expressions of cooperation; thus, explicit cooperative messages had a strong effect on reaching a negotiated settlement. In a similar way, communication scholars contrasted bargaining outcomes in telephone, face-to-face, and written modes of interaction (Turnbull, Strickland, & Shaver, 1976). This study revealed that full, face-to-face interaction between disputants increased the number of successful payoffs and enhanced the diversity of negotiated settlements for cooperative conditions (Greenwood, 1974; D. H. Smith, 1969). Early communication researchers also examined information exchange (D. H. Smith, 1971), argumentation patterns (Reiches & Harral, 1974), cognitive complexity (Saine, 1974), and persuasive strategies that facilitated concession making (Beisecker, 1970b).

Small group researchers also began to study communication in cooperative and competitive groups. Specifically, Baird (1974) found that members of cooperative groups engaged in greater diversity of contributions, exchanged more relevant messages, and were more friendly and attentive to each other than were individuals in competitive teams. Focusing specifically on substantive, affective, and procedural conflicts, Bell (1974, 1979) observed that substantive messages were exchanged reciprocally and led to flexibility in decision making. Affective conflict seemed tied to ego involvement in that individuals who had high ego involvement were less likely to reach agreement than were dyads with minimal ego investment (Sereno & Mortensen, 1973).

In response to this growing work, Jandt (1973) assembled a collection of readings, mostly reprints from classic articles outside the field. The aim of this volume was to apply conflict research to multiple levels of communication studies—from dyads to sociopolitical conflicts. This volume also introduced the field to conflict studies in family, classroom, intraorganizational, racial, and intercultural arenas.

Thus, in the mid-1970s, the stage was set for a significant conference on communication and conflict studies. Attended by scholars throughout the discipline, researchers both agreed and disagreed about the directions for future conflict studies. The book *Perspectives on Communication in Social Conflict* (Miller & Simons, 1974) embodied this controversy, particularly diverse perspectives and ideological differences among researchers. These differences appeared in Simons's (1974b) prologue and Miller's (1974) epilogue and opened communication studies to the myriad perspectives that scholars currently see in the field today. In particular, their dissatisfaction with

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theories, definitions, and models for conflict research influenced the questions that scholars now pose, hybrid research designs, innovative topics and methods, and a quest to unpack the conceptual relationship between communication and conflict.

Conflict Theories and Perspectives: Charting the Disenchantment

Scholars at this landmark conference typically concurred that theories and models needed to be expanded. They recommended that research focus on "co-acting entities whose behaviors must be modeled dynamically and relationally" (Simons, 1974b, p. 3). They concurred in their critiques of game theory, but they disagreed on the viability of social exchange and systems theory as options for future studies.

Challenging Game Theory

Scholars at the conference were united in critiquing game theory and in issuing a plea for alternative models. Although pure game theory was never designed for laboratory experiments, social scientists borrowed liberally from it because it contained the basic elements of any conflict situation. Since it treated players as rational beings who aimed to maximize gains and minimize losses (Bostrom, 1968), scholars focused on how players selected moves and how these moves produced different types of rewards.

Communication scholars challenged the single-minded accounts of game theory through arguing that motives and intensions were particularly ambiguous when players could not communicate explicitly (Steinfatt & Miller, 1974). In addition, game theory's focus on payoffs and outcomes ignored a bargainer's psychological makeup, his or her relationship with the other negotiator, and concerns for face saving and self-esteem (Mortensen, 1974). This approach was also silent regarding the meanings of payoffs, utilities, and options (Simons, 1974b; D. H. Smith, 1983) and the validity of laboratory experiments (Jandt, 1974; Mortensen, 1974). Game theory also relied on static variables that failed to track changes in the process, goals, or payoff schedules (Hawes & Smith, 1973; Mortensen, 1974). In effect, communication scholars concurred that pure game theory held little promise for guiding research, but they differed as to whether laboratory games per se were problematic (Miller, 1974). With this disenchantment, scholars called for the development of alternatives "to bring forth fresh perspectives and to enliven old ones" (Simons, 1974b, p. 1).

Harnessing Social Exchange

The residue of game theory surfaced in social exchange models of conflict and negotiation. Similar to game theory, social exchange emulated an economic approach in which disputants held rational motives to maximize their own self-interests. Unlike game theory, however, disputants maximized profits based on rewards minus costs that were derived from social resources. For communication scholars, social resources were symbolic (e.g., affection, status, control) and any given exchange had multiple resources involved. Social exchange, then, entailed an interaction process or a series of sequential behaviors in which disputants provided each other with resources through their interactions (Roloff & Campion, 1985).

Critical to exchange theory was the notion of reciprocity, a concept that Bell (1979) identified in small group research. Reciprocity, first explicated by Gouldner (1960), typically referred to helping those who had helped you. Communication scholars invoked this norm by examining reciprocity in a number of ways, including obligations to exchange resources of equivalent value (Roloff & Campion, 1985), symmetrical message patterns in interpersonal

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and marital conflicts (Bavelas, Rogers, & Millar, 1985; Sillars, 1980b; Ting-Toomey, 1983), and matching integrative or distributive strategies in negotiations (Bednar & Curington, 1983; Donohue, 1981a; Putnam & Jones, 1982a) and divorce mediations (Jones, 1989a). Thus, the decline of game theory in the 1980s led the field to adopt modified versions of social exchange theory.

Recasting System Theory

Early scholars also criticized the linear views of communication employed in conflict studies (Hawes & Smith, 1973; Miller, 1974; Ruben, 1978). Linear models situated communication as the archer's arrow shot directly into a target that would instantly impact the state of a conflict (Bowers, 1974b; Ruben 1978). This sender-oriented approach characterized much of the early conflict research. In opposition to this view, researchers called for focusing on interdependent messages that developed within the interaction process. Thus, early conflict scholars uniformly rejected the notion that communication breakdowns led to conflict and that shooting more communication at a target would resolve a dispute (Hawes & Smith, 1973; Ruben, 1978).

Moreover, they reacted negatively to the assumptions of early systems theorists that conflict deviated from harmony and normality (Gamson, 1968). At this time, the dominant view was that conflict created an imbalance in the equilibrium of a system and, thus, needed to be resolved or prevented. Conference participants were uniformly dismayed with these anticonflict biases and challenged scholars to explore the benefits of conflict and to question conflict's role in changing rather than preserving extant systems (Miller, 1974).

Efforts to develop new models of communication and conflict grew out of these critiques. Specifically, Ruben (1978) advocated a living systems model that linked conflict to growth and change. In his view, conflict operated at the level of action, and paraconflict functioned at the level of symbol to evoke a self-reflexive nature between the two constructs. This approach combined conflict action with sensemaking (labeling and abstracting experiences); thus, conflict emerged as a cyclical, reflexive process in which action and sensemaking crossed individual and societal levels.

Drawing from the philosophy of pragmatism, Mortensen (1974) proposed a transactional model that favored a developmental view of conflict aimed at capturing the whole process as well as the unfolding and contingent aspects of it. This approach rejected environmental determinism, severe reductionism, and obtrusive structural models. Instead, it centered on both the "knowing" and the "known" of personal reality and emphasized three conflict dimensions: (1) orientation, (2) intensity, and (3) affect. Thus, this approach purported that the existence of a struggle was in itself not necessarily a conflict until someone labeled it as such. The best predictors of conflict, then, were the content, interpretations, and behaviors that emerged as transactions developed over time.

To test this model, Mortensen (1974) compared interactions from high- and low-intensity conflicts. His study revealed that parties in highly intense conflicts enacted self-fulfilling cycles through their use of comparative evaluations, accusatory statements, and polarized claims. In contrast, participants in low-intensity conflicts talked more deliberately for longer periods of time and used fewer interruptions, more qualifiers, and fewer commitment statements than did those in high-intensity disputes. By tracking the development of conflict intensity over time, the transaction model revealed how parties cocreated conflict communicatively.

This effort to recast systems theory laid the groundwork for the systems interaction views of communication that became so dominant in the 1980s. Building on small group and interpersonal communication research

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(Fisher, 1970; Rogers & Farace, 1975), scholars began to code interactions and track the evolution of conflict over time. This approach began with scholars who applied Bales's Interaction Process Analysis to mediation (Landsberger, 1955) and to negotiation (Theye & Seiler, 1979) and was solidified through the development of coding procedures, measurement instruments, and statistical tools that paved the way for a major shift in communication and conflict studies (Ellis & Fisher, 1975).

Definitions and Assumptions: Ideological Differences

Definitions of conflict were also proposed at this 1972 conference. Most scholars adopted some variation of Mortensen's (1974) definition: "Conflict is an expressed struggle over incompatible interests in the distribution of limited resources" (p. 93). An examination of Table 1.1 indicates considerable agreement between early and recent scholars on the definition of conflict, particularly its scope, nature of action, and relationship among parties.

Dimensions of Conflict Definitions

Specifically, conflict centers on incompatibilities, an expressed struggle, and interdependence among two or more parties (see Table 1.2). These features are similar to the ones that conflict theorists such as Fink (1968) and Mack and Snyder (1957) developed in the 1960s. Incompatibility refers to mutually exclusive or diametrically opposed goals, values, or beliefs. Most communication scholars treat incompatibilities as rooted in perceptions

Table 1.1 A Sample of Common Definitions of Communication and Conflict

Author	*Date, Page*	*Definition*
Mortensen	1974, p. 93	"an expressed struggle over incompatible interests in the distribution of limited resources"
Simons	1974b, p. 8	"that state of a social relationship in which incompatible interests between two or more people give rise to a struggle between them"
Hocker and Wilmot	1978, p. 9	"Conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals."
Ting Toomey	1985, p. 72	"Conflict . . . is conceptually defined as a form of intense interpersonal and /or intrapersonal dissonance (tension or antagonism) between two or more interdependent parties based on incompatible goals, needs, desires, values, beliefs/or attitudes."
Putnam and Poole	1987, p. 552	"Conflict . . . is defined as the interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposition of goals, aims, and values, and who see the other party as potentially interfering with the realization of these goals."
Pearce and Littlejohn	1997, p. 55	"Moral conflict occurs when disputants are acting within incommensurate grammars . . . or different forms of life overlap"

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Table 1.1 (Continued)

Author	*Date, Page*	*Definition*
Ting-Toomey and Oetzel	2001, p. 17	"Intercultural conflict is defined . . . as the experience of emotional frustration in conjunction with perceived incompatibility of values, norms, face orientations, goals, scare resources, processes, and/or outcomes between a minimum of two parties from two different cultural communities in an interactive situation."
Folger, Poole, and Stutman	2005, p. 4	"Conflict is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatibility and the possibility of interference from others as a result of this incompatibility."

Table 1.2 Components of Conflict Definitions

Author	*Scope*	*Nature of Action*	*Relationship*	*Communication*	*Context Features*
Mortenson (1974)	Incompatible interests	Expressed struggle		Distribution	Limited resources
Simons (1974b)	Incompatible interests	Struggle between them	Social relationship between two or more people	Includes symbolic acts	
Hocker and Wilmot (1978)	Incompatible goals	Expressed struggle, interference in achieving goals	At least two interdependent parties		Scarce resources
Ting Toomey (1985)	Incompatible goals, needs, desires, values, beliefs	Dissonance, tension, antagonism	Interpersonal and intrapersonal, two or more interdependent parties	Symbolic action, patterned sense of symbols and meanings	Regulated by culture
Putnam and Poole (1987)	Perceived opposition of goals, aims, values	Other party potentially interferes with goals	Interdependent people	Interaction	
Pearce and Littlejohn (1997)	Incommensurate grammars, different forms of life	Acting within	Disputants		

(Continued)

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Table 1.1 (Continued)

Author	*Scope*	*Nature of Action*	*Relationship*	*Communication*	*Context Features*
Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001)	Perceived incompatibility of values, norms, face orientations, goals, processes, outcomes	Emotional frustration	Minimum of two parties		Two different cultural communities, scarce resources
Folger, Poole, and Stutman (2005)	Perceived incompatibility	Possible interference from others	Interdependent people	Interaction, exchange of messages	

or located in cultures. In effect, parties may hold compatible goals, but they do not necessarily see them as congruent. Interdependence among parties typically means that individuals need each other to achieve their goals. Some scholars see interdependence as rooted in the mixed motives of cooperating and competing simultaneously (Putnam, 1985), while others treat relationships, structures, or culture as the source of this interdependence (Cahn, 1990; Canary & Cupach, 1988).

In essence, different nuances underlie the same words that scholars use in conflict definitions. Most communication scholars believe that some form of interaction is fundamental to the notion of conflict itself—as the expressed struggle, the nature of the relationship, or the strategies and tactics used. Yet scholars differ as to whether communication is a particular type of social interaction, exchanges of verbal and nonverbal messages, inconsistencies between messages, defensive communication, symbolic acts, negative interpersonal expressions, or even acts of defiance and violence (Canary, Cupach, & Messman, 1995; Miller, 1974).

Rather than define conflict, Canary et al. (1995) set forth dimensions in which interpersonal conflicts vary, particularly in terms of specific versus nonspecific behaviors and distinct episodes versus a continual process. Similar concerns are evident in defining moral and intractable conflicts in which episodes come and go, and the management of a conflict becomes rooted in identities, relationships, and social institutions (Jameson, 2003; Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997; Putnam & Wondolleck, 2003). Thus, conflict definitions across the field are generally similar, but they also differ in types and emphasis.

Distinguishing Among Types of Conflict. The crux of defining conflict, however, rests on differentiating it from related concepts, such as hostility, disagreement, and misunderstanding. One contribution that Keltner (1994) made to the field was to develop a struggle spectrum in which he showed how types of conflict differed across processes, relationships, communication, intervention, and outcomes. Through this spectrum, researchers could differentiate among related concepts, such as disagreements, disputes, and wars. This conceptualization also addressed Simons's (1974b) concern that most conflict definitions center too much on rational situations and ignore nonrealistic or highly volatile conflicts. At the level of theory, however, Keltner's (1994) model is untested, particularly in its assumption that conflict develops from mild differences to

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campaigns and wars. This assumption needs to be fleshed out and tested. Overall, though, researchers concur that different degrees of conflict development exist and can be arrayed on a struggle spectrum.

Distinguishing Communication in Conflict. Scholars have also made progress in distinguishing conflict from other types of social interaction, such as influence tactics, group decision making, persuasion, and argumentation (Roloff, Putnam, & Anastasiou, 2003). Using influence tactics, such as threats, coercion, and power plays, to produce compliance may occur during conflict situations, but conflict is a broader form of social interaction than is compliance gaining. Conflicts also occur during group decision making, but groups engage in forms of interaction other than conflict.

Persuasion, defined as convincing a person to do something that he or she would not normally do, and argumentation, as the process of asserting claims and supporting them with reasoning, surface in a variety of situations that lie outside of perceived incompatibilities. Conflict communication employs persuasion and argumentation, but these terms are not synonymous with conflict itself. For example, studies in interpersonal conflicts have focused on serial argumentation on the same issue in which the parties have not reached satisfactory agreement (Trapp & Hoff, 1985). Because they remain unresolved, the issues are likely to resurface in future interactions and form the basis of incompatibilities. Research has focused on serial argument characteristics, behaviors, coping strategies, and specific goals that characterized these types of interpersonal conflicts (Bevan, Hale, & Williams, 2004; K. L. Johnson & Roloff, 1998, 2000). Even though the studies center on serial argumentation, the arguments form patterns or strategies for addressing the expressed struggle over the incompatible issue.

Overall, communication scholars often use the same language to define conflict. In unpacking these definitions, however, scholars differ as to which features are central to their investigations. Communication scholars also distinguish conflict communication from other types of social interaction, including persuasion, argumentation, compliance gaining, and group decision making. In effect, the field has made headway since the 1970s in identifying the scope and essential components of conflict, but more attention is needed to explain the relationships between communication and conflict.

Assumptions About Conflict

Since the 1970s, communication scholars have embraced common assumptions about the nature of conflict. These assumptions cluster into three categories: (1) the subjective/objective basis, (2) the normalcy of conflict, and (3) the functional versus dysfunctional nature of it.

Subjective/Objective Basis of Conflict. One of the key debates at the 1972 conference was whether conflict was "out there" in the real world or whether parties had to perceive or socially construct it (Miller, 1974; Simons, 1974b; Steinfatt & Miller, 1974). Not surprisingly, the empirical scholars emphasized the physical aspects of conflict, for example, scarce resources, and economic and material bases of struggles, while the phenomenologists argued for subjective definitions. Other scholars believed that objective situational factors gave rise to perceived conflicts that became altered by material circumstances (Mortensen, 1974). But even scholars who embraced both perspectives had a decidedly receiver-oriented view of communication.

The growth of social construction, critical theory, and postmodernism in the field called the objective–subjective dimension into question. Specifically, scholars posited four alternative perspectives: (1) the cognitive, (2) systems–interactional, (3) symbolic–interpretive, and (4) critical (Wilson, Paulson, & Putnam, 2001).

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The cognitive or psychological approach advanced the belief that subjective mental processes shaped conflict behaviors, while the systems–interactional scholars focused on identifying behaviors, messages, and sequential patterns of conflict development. Interpretive/symbolic scholars centered on subjective meanings, conflict narratives, metaphors, and negotiated orders. Some critical theorists invoked both objective and subjective features through examining how conflict entered into the production and reproduction of social structures (Putnam & Poole, 1987). In effect, new approaches to communication urged scholars to avoid the objective/subjective trap and to move away from receiver-oriented models of communication.

Normalcy of Conflict. As previously noted, participants at the 1972 conference objected to the belief that conflict was an aberration that disrupted harmony. Communication scholars typically assumed that conflict was natural, inevitable, and normal. Moreover, scholars also concurred that conflicts were both rational and irrational and that they differed in intensity, disposition, frequency, and salience. Research, however, often presumed the existence of these dimensions rather than focusing on how to operationalize them.

For instance, early research on conflict styles deemed confrontation or problem solving as the most effective and most satisfactory of the five styles (Burke, 1970). Yet, when researchers tested conflict dimensions, they discovered that the choice and effectiveness of a particular style depended on the perceived importance of the issue in dispute, the significance of preserving the parties' relationship, time pressures for managing the conflict, and cultural backgrounds of the participants (Folger et al., 2005). Thus, scholars concurred that conflicts were a normal and natural part of everyday life and that specific dimensions influenced how parties chose to handle them.

Conflict as Functional and Dysfunctional. Similarly, communication scholars believed that conflict could be functional and dysfunctional. Conflict was highly beneficial in preventing system stagnation, stimulating interest and curiosity, fostering cohesiveness within groups, operating as a safety valve to express problems, and invoking change. In contrast, it could be detrimental to relationships, produce inflexible behavior, lead to decreased communication, and result in escalated stalemates (Coser, 1956; Deutsch, 1973). While scholars adhered to both assumptions, they have rarely studied conflict's productive contributions.

Thus, communication scholars typically focused on preventing destructive or highly escalatory conflicts. Destructive conflicts were the ones in which disputants ignored the original goals and, instead, aimed at hurting or annihilating each other (Deutsch, 1973). Destructive conflicts escalated through expanding the size and number of conflict issues, relying on power strategies and tactics, and increasing the costs that participants were willing to bear. In effect, communication investigators embraced the assumption that conflict was beneficial and productive, but they centered their research on preventing destructive conflict patterns.

Overall, communication scholars typically employed similar definitions, but they parted ways in highlighting different features of conflict. The field made strides in distinguishing conflict from related concepts, centering less on disagreements and more on incompatibilities, and distinguishing conflict interaction from persuasion and other types of communication. A form of unified diversity existed in which researchers differed but accepted alternative theoretical perspectives and approaches. Moreover, scholars typically concurred that conflict was normal and beneficial, yet research focused primarily on

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preventing destructive conflicts rather than on understanding productive ones.

Conflict Models

These definitions and assumptions underlie the conflict models that communication researchers employ. Eager to integrate interaction into the interdisciplinary domain of conflict research, early communication scholars relied on models developed outside of the field, but as conflict studies have grown, new approaches have expanded the theoretical domains of traditional research. This section provides a critical overview of four models widely used in communication and conflict research: (1) integrative and distributive negotiation, (2) the dual concern model, (3) the intergroup conflict model, and (4) mediation competency.

Integrative and Distributive Negotiation

Derived from Walton and McKersie's (1965) classic studies of collective bargaining, integrative and distributive negotiations refer to two of the four subprocesses that characterize conflict interaction. Prior to the 1960s, research and practice focused on distributive negotiation in which bargainers viewed their goals as fixed sum in win–lose types of conflicts. The distributive model highlighted withholding information, learning about your opponent's resistance point, and using strategies and tactics to acquire the largest share of a "fixed pie." In contrast, integrative approaches treated bargaining as variable sum in win–win situations. The integrative model advocated sharing information, engaging in problem solving, generating alternative solutions, making concession, and understanding the needs and interests of the other party (Putnam & Poole, 1987).

Integrative and distributive negotiation formed the foundation for communication studies of strategies and tactics in collective bargaining (Donohue, 1978, 1981a; Donohue, Diez, & Hamilton, 1984; Donohue & Roberto, 1996; Putnam & Jones, 1982a; Putnam & Wilson, 1989; Tutzauer & Roloff, 1988), in mediation (Donohue, Allen, & Burrell, 1985), and in interpersonal conflict (Sillars, 1980b; Sillars, Coletti, Parry, & Rogers, 1982). Strategies referred to a broad plan that encompassed a series of moves, while tactics were the specific messages that enacted the moves.

Communication scholarship played a pivotal role in the debates about the functions of strategies and tactics. Communication researchers observed that strategies and tactics played multiple roles, depending on how they were used during a negotiation. Even though some strategies, like flexibility and problem solving, were aligned with integrative processes and other tactics like threats fit with distributive processes, many strategies and tactics (e.g., information sharing, threats, arguments, concessions) performed multiple functions (Putnam & Wilson, 1989; Roloff, Tutzauer, & Dailey, 1989). Thus, analysis of communication patterns revealed that messages can serve multiple and varying functions as conflict evolved over time. This dynamic view brought communication research into examining prenegotiation plans and how these plans are altered during these negotiations (Jordan & Roloff, 1997; Roloff & Jordan, 1991). In effect, communication strategies and tactics played complex and interchangeable roles in integrative and distributive processes.

Dual Concern Model

Similar to studies of integrative and distributive negotiation, the dual concern model focused on styles of conflict management. Originally developed by Blake and Mouton (1964) and refined through Kilmann and Thomas's (1977) MODE instrument, this

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approach focused on five classic styles or predispositions for managing conflict. Shaped by two dimensions—aggressiveness or concern for self and affiliation or concern for others—these styles represented individual choices about conflict management.

The dual concern model influenced research in interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural conflict. Specifically, variations of the model shaped the development and refinement of communication-oriented conflict style scales (Nicotera, 1993, 1994; Putnam & Wilson, 1982; Riggs, 1983; Ross & DeWine, 1988). Several of these self-report measures clustered conflict tactics into three categories that paralleled integrative, distributive, and avoidance patterns (Putnam & Wilson, 1982; Ross & DeWine, 1988; Sillars et al., 1982) and were tailored for studies of communication competencies in conflicts (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Canary & Spitzberg, 1990; Papa & Canary, 1995).

Over time, communication scholars added emotional valence to the two dimensions (Nicotera, 1993, 1994)—covert and hidden tactics (Morrill & Thomas, 1992) and initial and follow-up strategies (Conrad, 1991). In intercultural settings, surveys of conflict styles provided a basis for comparing orientations to conflict across cultures (Cai & Fink, 2002; Lee & Rogan, 1991; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991) and revealed that particular styles evoked different meanings in Eastern and Western cultures.

Overall, the dual concern model and the work on conflict styles advanced research on communication and conflict. Although widely used as an index of strategies, this approach did not examine the actual ongoing interactions that were so vital to understanding conflict (Canary et al., 1995). Even though communication researchers have modified aspects of the original model, scholars have not developed full-scale alternative models to replace this approach.

Intergroup Conflict Models

Research on intractable and ethnopolitical conflicts have introduced new models for understanding the role of communication in conflicts, especially ones rooted in group identity (Ellis, 2006; Fiol, Pratt, & O'Connor, 2009; Putnam & Wondolleck, 2003). Intractable conflicts involve power imbalances, threats to the identity of particular groups, social and political separation of groups, and extreme emotional reactions (Ellis, 2006). In such conflicts, a group's identity is often defined through being in opposition to the other group. Communication is central to intractable conflicts through both micro- and macrointeractions in which symbols and meaning stem from the social and political circumstances that bind people to social systems. Communication plays a central role in managing these disputes through language patterns rooted deeply in first- and second-order changes that lead to conflict transformation rather than persistence or more of the same (Ellis, 2006). Second-order changes work on the content and the relational aspects of messages (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997), creating an atmosphere in which the participants can talk about perceptions of each other through interactive problem-solving groups (Kelman, 1997), dialogue groups (Maoz & Ellis, 2006), and apology and reconciliation (Doxtader, 2003).

Mediation Competency Models

Another basic conflict arena that early researchers explored was mediation. Mediation differed from negotiation in that a third party intervened to assist the disputants in managing conflict. Unlike arbitration, mediators did not make decisions; instead, they employed communication skills to guide parties through substantive discussions, oversee the process, and motivate parties to reach a settlement.

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Drawing from negotiation research, initial studies of communication and mediation compared strategies and tactics, phases of successful and unsuccessful mediations, and communication patterns of competent mediators. One of the earliest studies in the field focused on persuasion and wrestled with differences among bluffing, coercion, and influence in mediation (Keltner, 1965). This study also highlighted the mediator's role in framing issues for disputants, serving as a communication conduit between parties, and helping parties explore solutions.

Disenchanted with the growing list of tactics drawn from labor–management mediation, Jones (1989b) developed a taxonomy of communication strategies and tactics used in divorce mediations, one that clustered into the general functions of facilitation, substantive direction, and procedural control. Using a systems interaction approach, she compared the distribution of these tactics across phases of agreement and no-agreement mediations.

The role of different tactics at various stages of mediation, then, pointed to the need for competency models based on the appropriate timing of mediator interventions (Donohue, 1989, 1991). For example, to avoid conflict cycles, mediators should intervene immediately following a disputant's attack on the other party. To adjust to the disputants' emotional intensity, mediators needed to intensify framing early in the process, use structuring strategies in the middle, and decrease language intensity in the latter stages (Donohue, 1991). Continued work, particularly on peer and community mediations, incorporated perceptual and structural factors that impinged on the process (Burrell, Donohue, & Allen, 1990).

Overall, communication research has made important contributions to understanding the microprocesses of mediator interventions. Critique of this work has led to the growth of new models that challenge problem-solving approaches to mediation. In particular, transformational mediation is an interaction-based model that treats disputes as opportunities for moral growth, empowerment, and recognition (Bush & Folger, 1994). Empowerment refers to restoring an individual's sense of value and ability to handle life's problems, while recognition focuses on strengthening a person's empathy and understanding of a situation. Eschewing stage models, this approach advocates that mediators allow disputants to engage in uninterrupted dialogues, pursue diversions, reflect on the significance of events, and provide opportunities for recognition.

In a similar way, Shailor (1994) focuses on empowerment in mediation through the way that each participant structures the meaning of the situation. Also drawing on disputants' stories, he examines how participants co-construct rules and how structures of meaning are reflexively constituted and transformed. These new models situate communication and conflict in a different relationship, one that examines how they produce each other.

Models of negotiation and mediation rooted in feminist theory have emerged and challenged the dominant assumptions of exchange, reciprocity, and concession making that characterized integrative and distributive bargaining (Kolb & Putnam, 1997; Putnam & Kolb, 2000). This overview of these three models indicates that the field has clearly matured since its beginnings in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in terms of research contexts and methods.

Research Approaches

Particular conflict models encourage specific research approaches to the study of conflict. Research reflects both traditional social science approaches to research, as well as those that emphasize social construction and systems theoretical perspectives. This section discusses

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the conflict settings and types of methods used in the study of conflict.

Conflict Settings

At the 1972 conference, participants called for studies on a wide array of contexts, including marital conflict, labor–management negotiations, international diplomacy, public conflicts, and even militant confrontations (Simons, 1974b). Researchers responded to this plea through conducting field studies of actual labor–management negotiations (Friedman, 1995), analyzing transcripts of public sector bargaining (Donohue, 1981b; Putnam, Van Hoeven, & Bullis, 1991), and examining actual and training sessions for hostage negotiations (Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Rogan & Hammer, 1994, 1995). They made audio- or videotapes of conflict interactions between marital partners (Fitzpatrick, Fallis, & Vance, 1982; Sillars et al., 1982), conducted surveys of adolescents and parents about conflict behaviors (Comstock, 1994; Comstock & Buller, 1991), and studied married and dating couples (Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979; Witteman & Fitzpatrick, 1986). They coded transcripts of divorce mediations, community disputes, and roommate conflicts (Donohue, Allen, et al., 1985; Jones, 1989b; Sillars, 1980b); developed models of intergroup and face negotiation in diplomacy conflicts (Ting-Toomey & Cole, 1990); and even interviewed participants in multiparty environmental conflicts (Putnam & Peterson, 2003). Clearly, communication researchers heeded the advice of their predecessors to focus on situations in which disputants had a conflict history (Mortensen, 1974).

Although some researchers continued to use laboratory investigations, they employed buyer–seller negotiations and role-play simulations that enacted real-life experiences, such as students selling used textbooks (Jordan & Roloff, 1997). Researchers also compared communication patterns in actual with simulated teachers' negotiations (Donohue et al., 1984). Thus, communication scholars have centered their research on real-world conflicts, both in their research designs and their selection of conflict settings.

Types of Methods

Communication scholars have heeded the call to conduct descriptive studies and to examine conflict interactions over time. Specifically, researchers have distributed surveys in the field, produced transcripts of naturalistic interactions, and analyzed data through a wide array of quantitative and qualitative category systems. Language and discourse analysts have examined word choices, mapped components of narratives, and tracked turn taking and topic shifts. Using ethnographic approaches, researchers have taken field notes, conducted in-depth interviews with participants, and studied relevant documents (Cobb, 1994; Putnam et al., 1991). Hostage negotiation investigators not only observed training simulations but also talked with negotiators about their observed interactions (Rogan, Hammer, & Van Zandt, 1997). Scholars have also used in-depth case studies to analyze empowerment in mediations (Bush & Folger, 1994, 2005; Shailor, 1994) and to track the development of protracted conflicts (Cloud, 2005; Putnam & Peterson, 2003). These approaches illustrate the diversity of research methods that conflict scholars have employed in the past several decades.

Role of Communication in Conflict Research

As this review suggests, communication scholars have embraced a type of "unified diversity" in charting the role that social interaction plays in conflict. Communication surfaces as perceived strategies, actual verbal and nonverbal

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messages, patterned and sequenced messages, expressions of emotions, language and word use, media, symbols, interpretations of actions and reactions, and surface- and deep-level meanings. Hence, it emerges in studies as both a structural and an interaction variable, as a process that defines the essence of the conflict, and as sensemaking or interpretations of the conflict. These relationships cluster into the following categories: communication as a variable, as a process, as an interpretive approach, and as a dialectical relationship.

Communication as a Variable

Early researchers in the field treated communication as one of the many variables that shaped conflict (Chatman, Putnam, & Sondak, 1991). Thus, communication directly influenced outcomes as well as mediated and moderated the effects of other variables such as culture, gender, or orientation on conflict management. As a mediator, communication impinged on conflict outcomes by altering the way that high- and low-context cultures influenced joint gains (Adair, 2003). As a moderator, such communication tactics as asking questions moderated the effects of bargainer roles on joint profits (Cai, Wilson, & Drake, 2000). Thus, as a variable, communication shaped outcomes through structuring the conflict and determining the tactics that negotiators used.

As a Structural Variable. As a structural variable, communication functions as or shapes the antecedent conditions in which conflict occurs; thus, it influences outcomes directly. Research on the effects of media, such as audio, written, or electronic channels, typically casts communication as a structural variable (Purdy, Nye, & Balakrishnan, 2000). For example, researchers study the effects of face-to-face as opposed to audio communication on cooperation or concession making. Communication media, however, are complex, both in the existence of multiple channels and in the sensemaking about the media itself (Poole, Shannon, & De Sanctis, 1992). In the area of intergroup conflict, the use of computer-mediated communication offers the potential to improve relationships between hostile and highly diverse groups, particularly by mitigating the anxiety that accompanies face-to-face meetings and by helping focus discussions (Walther, 2009). Hence, the research on media and conflict is moving beyond structural variables and beginning to center on relational features of virtual conflict management.

Studies of conflict styles also treat communication as a structural variable that shapes conflict predispositions in particular ways. This research examines individual preferences for handling conflicts and the links between these preferences and other structural variables, such as gender, organizational role, or type of marital relationship (Cai & Fink, 2002; Lee & Rogan, 1991). Other researchers ask respondents to recall the tactics or strategies they use in a particular conflict episode (Canary & Spitzberg, 1989), how accurate or biased spouses are in predicting their partner's strategies (Segrin, Hanzal, & Domschke, 2009), and the information used in planning a negotiation session (Jordan & Roloff, 1997).

The major development in conflict styles in the past decade is work on conflict avoidance, especially in intimate situations (Afifi, McManus, Steuber, & Coho, 2009). The reasons that intimates withhold complaints or avoid conflicts include feelings of powerlessness, fear of verbal or physical aggression, or lack of communication skills (Cloven & Roloff, 1993; Roloff & Solomon, 2002). Other partners wait until the time is right to approach a partner about a conflicting issue (Roloff & Wright, 2009). Scholars have developed sophisticated typologies of conflict avoidance, ones that relate to interaction goals as well relationships to other conflict styles. In particular, couples differ in their uses of

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withdrawal, pretending, exit, outflanking, passive dominance, and yielding as types of avoidance strategies (Wang, Fink, & Cai, 2012). The more dissatisfied couples are in their respective relationships, the more they avoid the conflict, and the more it effects relational satisfaction, especially for women (Afifi et al., 2009). For many couples, however, conflict avoidance is a way that couples "pick their battles" and tolerate infrequent and minor irritants (Roloff & Solomon, 2002).

As an Interaction Variable. Interaction variables differed from structural ones in treating communication as a system that consisted of dynamic and multifunctional messages. Communication performed particular conflict management functions. For example, researchers might code communication tactics as threats, putdowns, or commitment statements or as performing the roles of problem solving, concession making, or procedural messages (Donohue, 1981b; Putnam & Jones, 1982a; Sillars, 1980a; Sillars et al., 1982).

Interaction variables were typically linked to conflict goals and outcomes. For instance, in cooperative negotiations, disputants who exchanged messages about underlying needs and priorities enhanced their chances of reaching high joint gains (Olekalns & Smith, 2000). In a similar way, Jones's (1989b) taxonomy of mediation strategies stemmed from messages that functioned to facilitate interaction, introduce topics, and guide the disputes. Similarly, supervisors and subordinates who treat role negotiations as integrative as opposed to distributive are likely to approach it through the use of elaboration and mutual concessions as opposed to withholding information or eliciting unilateral concessions (Meiners & Boster, 2012). Mediators also reframed disputants' comments and helped parties expand on information (Donohue, Drake, & Roberto, 1994). In agreement sessions, mediators provided intense reframing in response to a disputant's attack and used structuring and short interventions to enable both sides to speak equally (Donohue, 1991; Donohue et al., 1994).

Other lines of research that treated communication as an interaction variable include studies of arguments in conflict management, face management behaviors, and emotions in conflict management. Communication researchers have coded arguments in roommate and friendship conflicts (Sillars et al., 1982; Trapp, 1986), in diplomatic disputes (Schuetz, 1978), and in bargaining proposal development (Putnam & Geist, 1985; Putnam & Wilson, 1989). Face management also surfaces as a process variable when it accounts for cultural comparisons in conflict styles (Oetzel, Myers, Meares, & Lara, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1988) and relational development in different types of hostage situations (Rogan & Hammer, 1994). Researchers have also examined the effects of emotions on the use of interaction strategies. Specifically, angry negotiators are more likely to use positional statements and fewer integrative offers than nonangry bargainers (Liu, 2009), while their opponents are more likely to use fewer positional statements, exchange less information about priorities, and make more concessions when negotiating with an angry as opposed to a happy opponent (Liu, 2009; van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004). In an intervention context, however, mediators who encourage emotional identification, paraphrase disputants' emotional expressions, and foster emotional perspective taking helped disputants transform their conflict situations (Jameson, Bodtker, & Linker, 2010).

Treating communication as an interaction variable has shifted the direction of conflict studies in the field. Its growth in the early 1980s paved the way for scholars to investigate the communicative functions of conflict messages. Current scholars have moved away from equating interaction with conflict strategies and functions. One problem with this approach is that messages often fit

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multiple categories, particularly in how they are expressed, but scholars have developed very sophisticated and nuanced strategies that add complexity to examining communication as an interaction variable (Jameson et al., 2010; Liu, 2009).

Communication as a Process

Research that adopts a process perspective focuses on the development of interrelated patterns of communication and conflict over time. Thus, communication shapes the very nature of conflict through the evolution of social interaction. Rather than examining message categories as variables that shape outcomes, scholars investigate the relationships among these messages, the patterns derived from these relationships, and the role of communication in constituting conflict. Research that embraces a process approach falls into four arenas: (1) serial arguing, (2) sequential patterns, (3) phase and stage research, and (4) issue development.

Serial Arguing. A growing body of literature examines the nature of serial arguments in interpersonal relationships. Serial arguments are repetitive conflicts on a single topic over a period of time without resolution. These patterns become predictable and dysfunctional, typically resorting to a demand/withdrawal pattern of communication (Roloff & Reznik, 2008). Demand/withdrawal occurs when one party nags or demands and the other withdraws or avoids the conflict (Caughlin, 2002; Caughlin & Scott, 2010). Both serial arguing and demand–withdrawal patterns influence relational quality and increase stress after conflict episodes (Malis & Roloff, 2006).

Sequential Patterns. Serial arguments and demand–withdrawal patterns operate from a focus on action–reaction patterns or cue–response sequences that become predictable over time and define the nature of a conflict (Putnam, 1985). Three major types of patterns surface in these relationships: (1) reciprocal, (2) opposite, and (3) complementary (Olekalns & Smith, 2000). Reciprocal patterns stem from matching the other person's tactics, potentially leading to a lengthy cycle; thus, a threat would follow a threat, a rejection would follow a rejection statement, and so on.

This pattern fosters the development of self-perpetuating cycles or serial arguments that can spiral out of control as a conflict gains momentum. Research across a wide array of contexts demonstrates that stalemates, no-agreement situations, and distressed interactions arise from reciprocity in contentious communication patterns that evolve into conflict cycles (Donohue et al., 1984; Gottman, 1979; Krueger & Smith, 1982; Putnam & Jones, 1982a; Sillars, 1980b). Studies have replicated this important finding that reciprocity in contentious or competitive communication escalates conflict (Brett, Shapiro, & Lytle, 1998; Olekalns & Smith, 2000; Weingart, Prietula, Hyder, & Genovese, 1999).

In contrast, disputants also develop reciprocity in cooperative, problem-solving communication that fosters productive conflict. Specifically, couples who match each other's use of metacommunication, statements of concern, supportive messages, or multi-issue offers developed constructive patterns of communication and conflict (Krueger & Smith, 1982; Olekalns & Smith, 2000). Scholars observe that these patterns are hard to sustain; however, they are more likely to occur when disputants display knowledge of effective conflict management tactics or when negotiators have a cooperative orientation (Weingart et al., 1999).

Responding to the other party with an opposite move alters the development of a tight reciprocal pattern, especially an escalating one. For example, giving information or making a procedural comment in response to the other party's use of a contentious tactic

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may reduce the development of a conflict cycle (Donohue et al., 1984; Olekalns & Smith, 2000; Putnam & Jones, 1982a). Research on marital conflicts also reveals that normal couples as opposed to distressed ones respond in a variety of ways to contentious situations (Donohue, 1991; Krueger & Smith, 1982).

Two other patterns that deter the development of escalating conflict cycles are the use of complementary tactics and linguistic style matching. A complementary tactic balances a partner's typical response. For example, marital couples develop complementary tactics when one of the pair asserts dominance and the other responds with a submissive reaction (Bavelas et al., 1985; Ting-Toomey, 1983). Labor–management negotiators engage in a complementary dance through balancing each other's offensive–defensive approaches (Donohue et al., 1984; Putnam & Jones, 1982a). These complementary patterns parallel a concept known as linguistic style matching, which refers to the way that negotiators coordinate their word use throughout conflict interaction. High degrees of linguistic style matching sustain rapport development and foster coordination, which, in turn, results in successful outcomes in hostage negotiations (Taylor & Thomas, 2008).

In effect, research on sequential interaction patterns reveals that communication influences the nature of conflict. That is, reciprocal interactions take conflict in either a constructive or a destructive direction, while using an opposite tactic de-escalates a conflict spiral. Relying on complementary patterns and linguistic style matching also buffers against conflict escalation and fosters satisfactory agreements.

Phase and Stage Development. An extension of the work on sequential message patterns is the research on phases and stages of conflict development. Phases are lengthy constellations of sequential patterns that form coherent structures (Holmes, 1992). Studies of conflict phases reveal that particular communication patterns cluster into stages that develop over time. Research in this area initially embraces linear models of development in which the disputants pass through one stage before moving into the next one. Other studies suggest that conflict is characterized by multiple, cyclical phases and that dyads and groups often skip particular phases or cycle through them multiple times (Holmes, 1992).

Phase development in negotiation initially posited separate stages of conflict activity, often testing a three-phase (Douglas, 1962) or an eight-stage model (Gulliver, 1979). Theorists believed that distributive and integrative processes in negotiation occurred in distinct stages, often related to labor–management or buyer–seller role specializations (Putnam, 1990; Putnam, Wilson, & Turner, 1990). Current research, however, suggests that bargainers moved back and forth through distributive and integrative processes and that dyads who keep both processes distinct are less likely to reach agreements than are the ones who mix them (Olekalns, Brett, & Weingart, 2003; Olekalns, Smith, & Walsh, 1996). Specifically, the use of reciprocal sequences during the second half of an employment negotiation was more predictive of joint profits (Liu, 2011). Overall, alignment and adjustment of negotiator's strategies across phases, especially during process shifts, influence the quality of agreements (Olekalns & Weingart, 2008). These patterns depict a negotiation dance in which influence sequences and reciprocal information-sharing sequences lay the groundwork for mutual gains, especially in the first two stages of negotiation (Adair & Brett, 2005). As a metaphor, negotiation dance refers to the alignment of positions, concession making, and empathy as parties engage in tactical interactions and in the rhythm and flow of conflict (Young & Schlie, 2011). In effect, adaptation in negotiation, especially for cross-cultural interactions, is an emergent process

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in which negotiators discover each other's approaches, interpret each other's goals, and gradually move in sync.

Research on phase development in crisis negotiations employs phase mapping to examine simulated and authentic hostage negotiations. While simulated negotiations develop in patterns that resembled Gulliver's eight stages, authentic cases are less orderly and unorganized (Holmes & Sykes, 1993). Events outside of the negotiation, such as changing negotiators or talking with family members, influence negotiation development in actual hostage situations. Rogan and Hammer (1995) reported that message affect increases during the initial contact stage and decreases as the interaction moves into a relational development stage. In suicide and domestic cases, however, message affect becomes increasingly negative and erratic as the negotiation progresses.

In mediation sessions, phase patterns distinguish between successful and unsuccessful sessions. Specifically, in successful interactions, mediators excel in eliciting information by using extensive summaries, reframing the disputants' defensive arguments, maintaining control of the process, and generating proposals, especially during Phases 2 and 3. In the latter stages of the mediation, successful mediators employ fewer structuring statements and rule enforcement behaviors, while mediators in no-agreement sessions increase their use of these tactics and make more process comments when they should have concentrated on solutions and agreements (Donohue, 1991; Donohue, Weider-Hatfield, Hamilton, & Diez, 1985; Jones, 1988).

Overall, communication scholars have made substantial contributions to deciphering the patterns of conflict development over time. Different studies reveal similar patterns, even across contexts, particularly as to the way reciprocal contentious tactics lead to conflict cycles and the use of opposite, complementary, and linguistic matching styles to de-escalate these patterns. Even though phase research is primarily descriptive, it also demonstrates important findings as to the types of tactics that disputants employ early as opposed to later in a conflict's development.

Process research has extended our knowledge of the microprocesses that escalate or de-escalate a conflict. Prior to this work, conflict scholars viewed escalation as primarily a perceptual concept linked to in-group/out-group relationships, stereotyping, and distortion (Pruitt, Rubin, & Kim, 1994). Communication scholars have demonstrated how reciprocity of contentious microbehaviors leads to conflict spirals and how using the opposite or a complementary tactic potentially buffers the development of this cycle. Studies of conflict development over time also yield important findings about the linearity and dimensionality of these patterns.

Communication as an Interpretive Approach

Interpretive approaches to the study of communication and conflict center on the role of language and symbols in shaping the meaning of disputes. Unlike the variable and the process approaches, the interpretive perspective introduces history and context as key factors that shape discourse, framing and issue development, narratives and symbolic forms, and negotiated orders.

Discourse Analysis. Discourse studies treat conflict management as a particular type of conversation rather than as information exchange or strategic acts (Glenn & Susskind, 2010). Research focuses on how talk works in negotiation interactions, specifically verbal immediacy, language intensity, account giving, conversational analysis, and supportive statements and arguments. Verbal immediacy refers to how individuals use tacit behaviors to convey closeness or distance from the other party. Use of first-person pronouns such as

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"you" or "our," short utterances, and simple sentences indicated closeness and informality, while employing third-party pronouns, long utterances, and excessive numbers of verbs conveyed distance (Donohue, 1991; Donohue, Weider-Hatfield, et al., 1985). In a similar way, employing intense language, such as rude comments, excessive interruptions, and deceptive statements, strained negotiator relationships and escalated conflicts (Donohue & Diez, 1985; Donohue, Weider-Hatfield, et al., 1985).

Interpretive studies also employed conversational analysis to investigate how disputants assigned blame in conflict situations (Manusov, Cody, Donohue, & Zappa, 1994). While giving accounts allowed disputants to vent and voice critical issues, patterns of aggregating account sequences spiraled into negative evaluations and thus fostered conflict escalation. Drawing from conversation analysis, researchers have examined the discursive production of bargaining sequences, especially how counterproposals signal defer, demur, and deter in responding to the other party (e.g., Maynard, 2010). In a different context, investigators study how mediators who use questions and answers to control the topic flow, develop turn-taking norms, and transform disputants' complaints into less inflammatory comments (Garcia, 1991). Using these types of interventions, however, hinge on whether a mediator adopts a therapeutic or a bargaining style of intervention (Tracy & Spradlin, 1994). Conversational analysis has also been used to study how mediators balance directing disputants' talk while remaining sensitive and responsive to each party's point of view (Glenn, 2010).

Framing and Issue Development. Framing and issue development centers on how disputants discursively define their conflict situation (DeWulf et al., 2009). Drawing from an interactional view of framing, scholars focus on how language use shapes sensemaking and how parties enact their understandings of issues and conflict situations. Thus, it examines how disputants interpret issues over time to show how bargainers reframe or reevaluate the scope of their problems. Conflict framing focuses on how disputants enact a process that transforms the very nature of a conflict as parties acquire new understandings about their situation (Felstiner, Abel, & Sarat, 1980–1981; Putnam, 1994).

Communication studies reveal that issue development occurs through reframing agenda items and shifting levels of abstraction while discussing issues (Drake & Donohue, 1996; Putnam, 2004b; Putnam & Holmer, 1992). At the beginning of a conflict, disputants define issues through their dominant frames or worldviews. Then they search for common framing to bridge their differences and convergence on a problem definition. Reaching convergence on issue framing is directly related to obtaining agreements on substantive issues in a conflict (Drake & Donohue, 1996). Discussions that shift levels of abstraction from literal to symbolic or from an individual fault to a system problem introduce options for reframing a conflict (Putnam, 2004b, 2010a). Studies of framing also reveal how disputants in intractable conflicts develop primary frameworks that conceal their similar experiences and ways to develop common ground (Brummans et al., 2008) and how discourse discursively constructs low risk, high uncertainty, and loss–gain patterns that close off discussion and influence premature settlements (Putnam, 2010b).

Symbolic Forms: Narratives and Metaphors. Communication scholars also analyzed the symbolic use of discourse through examining conflict narratives and metaphors; that is, researchers deciphered how language functioned symbolically to create norms and social meanings. For example, a narrative analysis of teacher–administrator negotiations revealed that the opposing teams bonded with each

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other through chaining out vivid stories of outsiders who impeded prior negotiations (Putnam et al., 1991). Narrative analyses of social conflicts, such as labor strikes, exemplified how communities and publics played important roles in conflict performances (Fuoss, 1995) and how employees shifted from being warriors in heroic battles to victims and martyrs in reacting to management's control and material power (Cloud, 2005).

Narrative analyses also made significant contributions to the debates on mediator neutrality. Traditional problem-solving approaches cast mediators as neutral third parties who intervened on behalf of both sides. An analysis of disputants' stories, however, revealed that the most coherent and complete narratives often shaped the final agreements, thus calling into question the notion of mediator neutrality (Cobb, 1993, 1994; Cobb & Rifkin, 1991). Discourse studies confirmed these findings by showing how mediators steered disputants to particular outcomes, set up particular frames for agreements, and dismissed some suggestions as illegitimate (Dingwall & Greatbatch, 1991; Greatbatch & Dingwall, 1994). Thus, analyses of story development in mediation indicated that third parties were sometimes implicitly biased in their interactions. Recent approaches, though, encourage mediators to acknowledge dominant stories and to help disputants construct a new narrative that shifts the blame to outside parties or systems (Winslade & Monk, 2001).

Another interpretive approach centers on conflict metaphors. Metaphors expressed through disputants' language reveal motivational, behavioral, and outcome expectations of a conflict (Beisecker, 1988). A metaphor is a way of seeing a thing as if it were something else. That is, metaphors link abstract concepts, such as a conflict, to concrete things, such as a war or a crusade. Even conflict management is a type of metaphor in which fundamental differences exist between the discourse of negotiation and that of litigation (Stutman & Putnam, 1994). First-order metaphors refer to overt behaviors or surface manifestation of a conflict, while second-order metaphors capture the deep-seated meanings that are outside of a disputant's awareness. To illustrate, the use of a drama metaphor among Disney employees during a major strike underscored surface-level economic issues, while references to the family metaphor signified the deep-seated or fundamental conflict about changing relationships between management and employees (Smith & Eisenberg, 1987).

Surveys of the metaphors that organizational members hold about conflict revealed three prototypes: (1) conflict as war/destruction, (2) conflict as impotence/inequality, (3) and conflict as opportunity/resolution (Burrell, Buzzanell, & McMillan, 1992). A comparison of first- and second-order symbols indicated that women adopted metaphors of powerlessness and incompetence in a bureaucratic context, but conflict target moderated this finding (Buzzanell & Burrell, 1997). Specifically, disputants employed war metaphors to depict coworker conflicts, opportunity metaphors for supervisor controversies, and impotence metaphors to represent conflicts with department members.

In descriptions of interpersonal conflicts, negative metaphors surfaced more frequently than did positive ones, and disputants compared their conflicts with animals, for example, "stubborn as a mule," and with natural disasters, for example, "a storm, hurricane, undertow of water" more frequently than with war or violence (McCorkle & Mills, 1992). Overall, metaphors reveal dominant models of conflict that individuals have and ways in which people bundle their experiences to rule out some approaches to conflict management.

Negotiated Orders. Other scholars, who embraced an interpretive perspective, examined how social and moral orders evolved

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from the enactment of conflicts. In this work, communication constituted the microprocess of social interaction as well as the context and immediate settings that impinged on the conflict. Negotiated order referred to the ways in which communication shaped the social orders that enabled and constrained them. Scholars who examined negotiated orders employed a wide array of influences, including Strauss's (1978) theory, social confrontations (Newell & Stutman, 1988), and moral orders (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997).

For example, Donohue and Roberto (1993) employed Strauss's theory of negotiated order to examine how relationship patterns became ordered within a hostage-taking context. They observed that disputants moved back and forth through cooperation and competition in relatively stable relational rhythms. In a conflict regarding organizational change, Geist and Hardesty (1992) studied the conflicts that occurred during the implementation of mandatory state and federal regulations (Diagnosis-Related Groups) in two hospitals. Specifically, organizational members negotiated new ideologies and occupational role requirements through co-constructing meanings about their situation and through establishing new social structures in the midst of their contested terrain.

In a similar way, interpersonal scholars adopted negotiated order approaches to investigate social confrontations as communication episodes (Baxter, 1982). Social confrontations surfaced when one party signaled to another person that the first party had violated a social norm or expected behavior. This confrontation, in turn, triggered a conflict as parties attributed blame in the situation and interacted with each other to negotiate a new social order (Newell & Stutman, 1988). In friendship interactions, three modes of conflict management surfaced in negotiating new orders: (1) suggesting remedial action, (2) confronting and comparing viewpoints, and (3) determining which behaviors to change (Legge & Rawlins, 1992). Interviews with disputants revealed that friends distinguished between behavioral conflicts and disagreements; that is, friends agreed to disagree in idea conflicts, but they had to make decisions and changes in behavioral conflicts (Newell & Stutman, 1988).

Moreover, disputes about the proper course of action often involved value differences or conflicting moral orders (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). Moral orders were value-based assumptions about right, wrong, goodness, and virtue that guided individual and social actions. In social conflicts, deep-rooted moral orders emerged as natural and legitimate until a clash occurred between different subcultures and fostered intense, escalating conflicts. Communication scholars have recommended ways to transcend moral disputes through suspending judgment, creating new categories, talking across differences, and promoting dialogue.

In general, an interpretive approach supports a constitutive relationship between communication and conflict; thus communication is not an input, moderator, or mediator of outcomes, it becomes the conflict itself. Unlike the process approach, however, communication evolves from language and symbols that codevelop the conflict within a historically and contextually based set of social relationships. Discourse approaches focus on question–answers, topic shifts, and turn taking that control conflict development. Narratives and metaphors shape conflicts through symbolically defining disputants' roles, their public performances, and the underlying meanings of events. These meanings also form social orders through shaping ideologies, occupational roles, and the moral fabric of disputes.

Communication and Conflict as Dialectics

An alternative approach to the study of communication and conflict treats the two

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concepts as reflecting on each other. In this way, disputants simultaneously enact both communication and conflict, and their mutual constructions reflect back on the conflict itself. Researchers who embrace this view focus on dialectical tensions, paradoxes, and the push–pulls of conflict as opposite forces (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). In this approach, process becomes continuous change that disputants manage communicatively through making choices between perceived mutually exclusive opposites. Scholars draw inspiration from a variety of theoretical sources, including double binds in family therapy (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967), dialectics (Hegel, 1968), and dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981). Research and theory building cluster into three general arenas: (1) dialectical approaches to mediation, (2) dialectics in organizational conflicts, and (3) relational paradoxes in hostage negotiations.

Dialectical Approaches to Mediation. In a dialectical approach, patterns of mediation emerge from the tensions that both mediators and disputants face. Prescriptive approaches to mediation suggest that mediators must be detached yet proactive, empowering but asserting control, and suppressing feelings while providing emotional support (Cobb & Rifkin, 1991). These contradictions, then, set the stage for developing a reflexive relationship between communication and conflict; namely, navigating the tensions between impartiality and bias, autonomy and connectedness, and openness versus closedness (Jones, 1994).

Although mediators strive to be impartial, they often enact implicit biases, as Cobb's (1993, 1994) research on disputants' narratives illustrated. Autonomy and connectedness referred to tensions between maintaining a unique identity or being interconnected with the parties. In like manner, the tensions between openness and closedness in mediation uncovered trust dilemmas that existed alongside vulnerability. That is, disputants in the mediation process were often hesitant to be open and trusting for fear of being exposed in a negative light (Jones, 1994). The management of these contradictions shaped the relational dynamics between disputants and influenced the outcomes of mediation.

Managing contradictions creatively challenges the reflexive relationship between communication and conflict. A party who made one pole dominant and ignored its opposite intensified the push–pull tensions (Baxter, 1990). For example, feeling a bias toward one party intensified the neutrality dialectic in mediation and increased the prospects of feeling trapped. Mediators also shifted back and forth between bias and neutrality through segmenting agenda items, for example, being neutral on the monetary aspects of a divorce settlement and being biased on child custody issues, or being impartial in joint sessions and showing a bias in caucuses (Jones, 1994). Specifically, mediators might reveal a bias to protect the children during custody discussions through raising topics that were important for the children's needs.

Mediators also chose to neutralize tensions through their indirect actions, such as allowing the disputants to avoid confrontation on the tough issues. Separating and neutralizing dialectical tensions, however, led to problems in managing contradictions effectively. Another approach was to reframe the contradictory poles in ways that made them seem congruent. For instance, mediators might help disputants realize that refusal to be open and exchange ideas often made a person more vulnerable than actually sharing information (Jones, 1994). If parties could see contradictory states as no longer in tension, then they could act in different ways toward each other. In effect, dialectical tension in mediation functioned as a generative force to manage conflict through "both–and" as opposed to "either–or" ways of thinking. In a reflexive way, communication patterns served as responses to dialectical

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tensions through shaping the discourse that imposed on the conflict itself.

Dialectics in Organizational Conflicts. Tensions between opposites, such as cooperation and competition, also shaped organizational conflicts (Kolb & Putnam, 1992). As organizational members worked out the nature of their interdependence, they engaged in dialectical tensions between autonomy and connectedness and control and yielding. In particular, issues of autonomy and connection characterized work group conflicts as members encountered incompatibilities about project priorities, task procedures, and scarce resources (Jameson, 2004). During organizational changes, these dialectics characterized informal conflicts as they surfaced in formal negotiations about authority and responsibility. In a similar way, teachers and administrators in a public sector negotiation embraced the dialectic of control and yielding through shifting the meanings of language used in a labor contract as the parties enacted a formula for reaching an agreement (Putnam, 2004a). This dialectic was also evident in a study of an airline pilot's resistance group who set up opposition tensions through discursive strategies that advocated unity while campaigning for division and upheld an elitist image of the pilot's occupation while advocating for a class system within the profession (Real & Putnam, 2005). Thus, forming dualities and pitting them against each other enabled the resistance group to construct a defense in the absence of any clear attack.

Even though most research on organizational conflict centers on public, formal, and rational disputes, these concepts simultaneously reference their opposites. To avoid making one pole of this dialectic dominant, researchers examine private, informal, and nonrational aspects of organizational conflicts (Kolb & Putnam, 1992). Private and informal conflicts are often fused with other activities, including social events, gossip, and coalition building. These private disputes form the groundwork for public deliberations and official grievances. In contrast to the rational models of conflict, current research centers on emotional reactions and the role of emotional expressions in conflict management (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001; Jones, 2001).

Relational Paradoxes in Hostage Negotiations. Similar to dialectics, a paradox refers to mutually exclusive injunctions that operate simultaneously and often lead to double binds. An injunction is a request or an order, for example, the command to "be spontaneous" is seen as paradoxical in that it is difficult to be spontaneous and act spontaneously at the same time. In hostage negotiations, a crisis situation prevailed in which a paradox could form within the developing relationship between the negotiator and the hostage taker. This paradox stemmed from the mixed messages in verbal immediacy that signaled moving with and moving against each other (Donohue, 2001; Donohue & Roberto, 1993).

Specifically, competitive paradoxes arose from moving against each other through sending verbal immediacy messages that signaled high interdependence but low affiliation, whereas cooperative paradoxes stemmed from immediacy cues that signaled low interdependence but high affiliation or moving with each other (Donohue, Ramesh, & Borchgrevink, 1991). These relational paradoxes evolved dynamically through the incongruent messages that both parties simultaneously sent; thus creating a double bind in which the parties felt trapped. Thus, hostage negotiations involved managing potential paradoxes to create the openness, affiliation, and interdependence necessary to form collaborative agreements.

In essence, scholars who espouse a reflexive approach to communication and conflict investigate how dualities and oppositional tensions codevelop and reflect back on each

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other. This approach is rooted in relational development and how relationships enable or constrain effective conflict management. In mediation, the responses to dialectical tensions shape the management of bias and neutrality and openness and closedness. In organizational conflicts, similar relational dialectics interface with control and yielding to shape responses to organizational change and to move private conflicts into the public arena. In hostage negotiations, these relational dualities intersect to form paradoxes that can entrap parties and position them in binding ways.

The key to conflict management in the reflexive approach is responding to contradictions in ways that capture the energy between opposites, generate new insights, and transform the definition of the conflict itself. Choosing one pole and ignoring the other, separating them, vacillating between them, and neutralizing them may lead to less than optimal responses. Reframing the dualities or embracing them creatively may spawn new approaches that can engender novel solutions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996).

Conclusion and Discussion

From its early game theory roots to contemporary studies on dialectical tensions, communication researchers have made huge strides in understanding the complexities of conflict and conflict management. This section reviews the recommendations of early scholars to see how the field has evolved, how it depicts the communication–conflict relationship, and where it needs to move to enhance theory building and research.

Heeding the Recommendations of Early Scholars

Early communication scholars set forth four recommendations that have influenced research on conflict management. Specifically, they suggested that scholars (a) expand the theories and models of communication and conflict, (b) work from similar definitions and assumptions, (c) broaden research settings and methods, and (d) focus on conflict development over time (Miller, 1974; Mortensen, 1974; Simons, 1974b). In response to the first recommendation, communication scholars have expanded their approaches to include systems interaction models as well as discourse, symbolic, and critical perspectives. Since its early investigations, however, the field has shifted away from social and political conflicts to focus on interpersonal, group, and organizational disputes.

During this time, the field borrowed and adapted conflict models used in other disciplines, specifically ones employed in psychology, management, and labor relations. Disenchanted with these traditional models, however, scholars introduced frameworks from discourse analysis; for example, using language intensity and verbal immediacy to study mediation and negotiation, communication competency for interpersonal disputes, and dialectics to examine hostage negotiations, interpersonal conflicts, and organizational dilemmas. Thus, the field began to develop its own theories and models for studying communication and conflict.

On the second recommendation, a general consensus exists among communication scholars regarding definitions and essential elements of conflict, even though investigators differ in their foci of conflict (i.e., incompatible relationships, incommensurate values, or scarce resources). Researchers highlight similar but diverse features of communication, including messages and interaction analyses, symbolic acts, and subjective or codeveloped meanings. Moreover, most communication scholars treat conflict as normal and inevitable rather than as an aberration, thus, rejecting the idea that conflict is a disruption of harmony. Research

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as a whole, though, focuses on successful versus unsuccessful patterns of conflict management and on ways to avoid destructive cycles rather than on the benefits of conflict. For the most part, then, communication scholars work from similar definitions and assumptions about conflict, even though they vary in how they operationalize key features of it.

Moreover, scholars have now moved away from treating conflict as something objective or outside of people's cognitive realms and social interactions, but almost to a fault. In doing so, they have removed conflict from its material manifestations. In the zeal to embrace interpretive views of social reality, communication scholars have abandoned the way in which conflict cycles and symbolic meanings become rooted in material manifestations of power and control. The limited research on large-scale social conflicts and international disputes may contribute to this neglect.

In response to the third recommendation, communication scholars have clearly broadened research settings and methods. Researchers have analyzed conflicts in naturalistic settings of homes, schools, organizations, and communities; they have observed actual hostage negotiations, teacher–administrator bargaining, labor disputes, community and divorce mediations, team meetings, organizational change processes, and multiparty environmental disputes. In laboratory studies, researchers have developed creative simulations such as buying and selling used textbooks, training for intercultural interactions, and simulations of typical interpersonal conflicts.

Research methods are as diverse as these settings. Investigators have obtained transcripts of actual conflict events, used video- and audiotapes to document interactions, interviewed participants, examined documents and newspaper coverage of conflicts, and conducted ethnographies and participant observation. Systems interaction research and discourse analyses in both laboratory and natural settings have employed laborious coding and tracking of interaction patterns—ones that privilege communication as the focal point of conflict. In addition, researchers have studied highly volatile conflicts, such as hostage negotiations, racial disputes, and multiparty intractable environmental conflicts, thus demonstrating that communication scholars do not have an aversion to uncivil and explosive disputes (Simon, 1974a). In effect, diversity in context and methods clearly adds to the contributions that communication scholars have made to the study of conflict.

In response to the fourth suggestion, communication studies have focused on conflict as a developmental process. Building from the transactional model (Mortensen, 1974), investigators have examined the functions of messages, their sequential and interdependent relationships, and their evolution over time in a variety of conflict situations. Researchers have embraced an array of quantitative and qualitative tracking techniques, including lag sequential, Markov chain analyses, phase mapping, and computer tracking of discourse patterns. Studies of conflict styles have employed scenarios that document changes in style use over time. Communication researchers, thus, have responded positively to the recommendation to focus on conflict dynamics. Overall, research in the field clearly heeded the advice of early scholars to expand theories and models, work from similar definitions of conflict, broaden research settings and methods, and focus on process and conflict development.

Relationships Between Communication and Conflict

Early scholars implied, but did not explicitly recommend, altering the ways in which theorists conceived of the communication–conflict relationship. This review revealed four types of relationships that surfaced in the

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literature—communication (1) as a variable, (2) as a process, (3) as interpretive, and (4) as a dialectical pattern. In the variable approach, communication and conflict emerged as separate constructs, with conflict acting as a structural variable to shape communication or with communication serving as a structural or an interaction variable that influenced conflict. For example, studies that examined how conflict orientations affected the choice of communication strategies illustrated how conflict served as a structural variable that impinged on interaction. Conversely, research on the ways in which different media influenced negotiated settlements cast communication as a structural variable that shaped conflict outcomes. Studies that examined how types of messages influenced conflict outcomes treated communication as an interaction variable. In each of these approaches, communication and conflict surfaced as discrete variables that impinged on each other in different ways.

In the process approach, communication produced conflict through the ways that sequences and phases of interaction determined the direction that conflict took. Patterns of action–reaction formed rhythms that became predictable over time and could influence the formation of conflict spirals. Studies of phases and stages of interaction also showed how particular communication patterns resulted in no-agreement sessions. Also, issue development scholars examined how negotiators shifted levels of abstraction during interactions to reframe issues, bridge differences, and alter conflict definitions.

Interpretive approaches nested the relationship between communication and conflict in jointly constructed meanings. In this way, communication and conflict were codeveloped; that is, communication constituted conflict that in turn shaped language patterns, symbolic meanings, and negotiated orders. For example, verbal immediacy patterns in hostage negotiations formed relationships that, in turn, altered conflict interactions. In the negotiated order perspective, communication functioned as both a microprocess and a way of altering the social context through changing the rules and resources that, in turn, redefined the conflict and its outcomes.

In a similar way, some researchers cast communication and conflict in a dialectical relationship—one that treated the two concepts as not only jointly constituted but also reflecting back on each other. Thus, the relationship between communication and conflict became defined through oppositional tensions that evolved from the continuous interface between conflict and communication. These dialectics infused conflict relationships in mediation, organizational conflicts, and hostage negotiations through tensions between autonomy and connectedness and high and low affiliation that both enabled and constrained the disputants and the conflict process.

Overall, communication is not simply one additional variable in conflict research. Current studies reveal sophisticated approaches to exploring alternative relationships between the two constructs, their codevelopment over time, and the ways in which both concepts shape contexts and outcomes. Context, then, plays a critical role in thinking about the needs for future research.

Directions for Future Research

Context provides a touchstone for discussing future directions in theory development and research in the field. Specifically, studies of communication and conflict fall into highly specialized context domains that limit theory development. To this end, Simons (1974b) questioned whether researchers should aim to make generalizations and ignore subtle differences among types of conflicts or whether they should pitch their studies within context domains and avoid large-scale generalizations.

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In response to this query, researchers have chosen to pitch their investigations toward context domains and avoid large-scale generalizations. In particular, scholars situate their contributions in the contexts of marital conflicts, friendship disagreements, intercultural interactions, team conflicts, labor–management negotiations, community and divorce mediations, organizational disputes, hostage negotiations, and multiparty environmental conflicts. Chapters in this volume reflect these subspecialties in the field. Given that context features directly influence communication patterns, this development seems logical as scholars acknowledge their boundaries and design their research programs to integrate within cognate areas, for example, family studies or labor–management relations.

This pattern of locating research in context domains has made communication and conflict scholarship quite fragmented and, consequently, inhibited theory development. For the most part, then, scholarship exists in isolated camps of interpersonal, group, organizational, intercultural, and media conflict studies. This isolation contributes to a problem-oriented focus that increases specialization and moves scholars away from conducting any broad-based synthesis. With the exception of this *Handbook*, very few texts in communication cross diverse conflict arenas. Thus, future studies need to bridge these isolated camps and explore types of generalizations that scholars can make for building knowledge in the field.

Two suggestions may facilitate this process. First, future studies need to integrate knowledge across different conflict dimensions. For example, research on conflict intensity across context domains could be integrated to reveal similarities and differences in communication patterns. Similar projects could focus on the salience of conflict situations, the importance of issues, and the overall emotion or affect during conflict. One finding in which communication scholars have crossed context domains is the discovery of microprocesses that foster conflict escalation and de-escalation and the role of communication in curtailing destructive conflict cycles (Cupach & Metts, 1994; Donohue, 1991; Putnam & Jones, 1982a; Sillars, 1980b). This type of synthesis in research could also occur on topics such as emotions in conflict (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001; Jones, 2001), value-based disputes (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997), communicative framing of conflicts (Drake & Donohue, 1996; Putnam & Holmer, 1992), and apology and forgiveness in conflict situations (Bean & Johnstone, 1994; Kelley, 1998). Conflict dimensions, then, provide a lens for charting new directions for research and building on knowledge across isolated context arenas.

A second suggestion for integrating context domains across the field is to move dyadic and group research into community and institutional arenas. Studies in the field are beginning to shift in this direction as exemplified by research on hostage negotiations (Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Rogan & Hammer, 1995), community mediations (Conrad & Sinclair-James, 1995), and moral conflicts (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). Yet the majority of communication research on mediation centers on mediator–disputant interactions without attention to their court-oriented contexts, institutional pressures, and cultural processes (Conrad & Sinclair-James, 1995). Raising these issues provides a way to integrate microprocesses of mediation interaction with institutional and societal features of conflict.

Finally, communication researchers need to conduct studies on the productive aspects of conflict. Scholars in the field believe that conflict produces important benefits, including balancing power, promoting change, facilitating diversity, and correcting injustices. They acknowledge that effective conflict management serves therapeutic functions, relieves tensions, and generates creativity.

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Yet investigators simply presume that these benefits accrue from successful or agreement-based outcomes.

Researchers, then, need to unpack the types of benefits that result from different conflict interactions. Specifically, how do communication patterns differ for diverse types of productive outcomes (e.g., facilitating diversity, promoting change)? Research on transformational mediation has shown that communication development differs considerably for problem-solving outcomes versus helping disputants increase recognition and empowerment (Bush & Folger, 1994, 2005). This work raises the question, do the same interaction patterns produce benefits in substantive, relational, and identity areas or does growth in one of these domains influence benefits in the other two? Thus, communication scholars need to focus on different types of outcomes, ones that directly tie to the individual, organizational, and societal benefits of conflict.

Overall, a glimpse of the historical roots of communication and conflict reveals that scholars have adhered to the advice of their predecessors. Researchers have clearly confirmed that communication plays a vital role in shaping conflict issues and outcomes. Scholars have moved away from treating communication as a variable and have adopted complex ways in which communication and conflict codevelop, constitute each other, and enable/constrain through their reflexive relationships.

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2

Quantitative Methods for Conflict Communication Research

Edward L. Fink and Deborah A. Cai, with Qi Wang

This chapter focuses on quantitative methods for the study of conflict communication for several reasons. First, qualitative methods, such as participant observation and unstructured interviews, are often used to determine the following: the universe of meaning (i.e., the full range of connotations in addition to the denotations) of a phenomenon, the types of individuals relevant to a domain of investigation, the operative categories employed by cultural participants (i.e., the emic constructs; see Pike, 1967), and the causal attributions provided by individual participants or observers (for discussion of these methods, see Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). For this chapter, we view the goal of conflict research as the creation of general and abstract social science theory, which entails prediction as well as description. To this end, qualitative investigations, however valuable, serve as precursors to studies that explicitly take into account measurement validity, internal validity, and external validity, or, in short, quantitative investigations. Furthermore, although there exist *naïve theories* that can be well explicated by qualitative methods (see Heider, 1958), quantitative investigations are needed to check the naïve causal attributions made by informants (see, e.g., Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). Finally, the literature on research methods germane to conflict communication research is so extensive that even restricting our focus to quantitative methods leaves us with little opportunity to cover them all (see Jiang & Buzzanell, this volume, for qualitative methods and conflict).

Second, we chose to highlight some methods that are especially relevant to cross-cultural and other group comparisons. Like many areas of investigation, the study of conflict communication began with obvious and important applied questions: How do we avoid war? Can we minimize strife within families? Can labor and management cooperate in the modern corporation? These questions lend themselves to group comparisons: warring versus nonwarring

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countries, conflictual versus nonconflictual families, and companies with cooperative labor–management relations versus those with records of labor–management clashes. In this chapter, we examine how quantitative methods are used to address such comparisons.

Some of the material included here is reprinted, with some revision, from the chapter presented in the first edition of this *Handbook* (Fink, Cai, & Wang, 2006). However, because the previous and current chapters are somewhat different in their emphases, we recommend that both chapters be consulted.

Areas of Quantitative Methods

Quantitative research methods can be considered to consist of five areas:

1. Issues of measurement and observation, which include the assumptions that different measurement systems provide, emic versus etic considerations in measurement (see, e.g., Pike, 1967), measurement reliability, and measurement validity
2. Research design, which includes the distinctions between experimental and nonexperimental designs (see Cook & Campbell, 1979) and between cross-sectional and longitudinal designs (including panel and time-series designs), as well as issues of internal and external validity
3. Sampling, for purposes of exploration, description, and conceptual explication, or for purposes of inference and the enhancement of external validity; this distinction logically leads to the differentiation between probability and nonprobability sampling
4. Data analysis, which includes distributional assumptions and data transformations, descriptive versus inferential statistics, parametric versus nonparametric tests, univariate versus multivariate data structures, and exploratory versus confirmatory investigation
5. Ethics, which consists of two related ideas:

   Internal ethics: Issues designed to protect participants from (a) threats to respecting them as persons, (b) harm in the course of their participation, or (c) injustice in the relation of the benefits versus the burdens that participants bear (see the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1978, also known as the Belmont Report)

   External ethics: Who sponsors the research, and toward what end? Will individuals, or groups to which participants belong, be harmed not by the investigators but by the use to which the investigators' research is put?

Our goal here is to indicate important methodological areas for the scholar studying or engaging in research on conflict communication and to explicate a few of the critical intersections of quantitative methods and the study of conflict communication. Ethics, although crucially important to research on conflict communication, will not be discussed in depth here, but it is suggested that the reader see the following valuable resources on this subject: Kelman (1982, 2001), Sjoberg (1967), and Lewis (1975). For data analysis, we will restrict our discussion to explaining statistical dependence of data, moderation, and mediation. This chapter ends with an excursus on culture, which is important to current trends in cross-cultural research on conflict communication.

Measurement and Observation

A Very Brief Philosophy of Measurement

The first question in the realm of measurement is obviously "What is to be measured?" However, most answers to this question make a serious and fundamental error, assuming that the characteristics of that which is to be measured determine how it should be measured. More straightforwardly, the hidden assumption is that concepts, and particularly

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variables, have intrinsic properties that are independent of their measurement.

Thus, the decisions that we make about how a concept, such as a conflict or conflict behavior, is to be defined and operationalized affect the relationships into which this concept enters. In other words, our definition of the concept reflects what we already know about the concept as well as what we learn; the idea of a definition that is fixed and independent of ongoing research is not theoretically or methodologically sound. Therefore, we reluctantly provide the following definitions:

> *Conflict* [italics added] has three characteristics: incompatibility of goals, incompatibility of actions, and perceived interdependence between the parties (Putnam, 2006; Rahim, 2010). Incompatibility of goals relates to the conflict of interests that causes disagreement between the parties (e.g., De Dreu, Harinck, & Van Vianen, 1999; Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). Incompatibility of actions refers to the behaviors that are used to manage the disagreement (e.g., Deutsch, 1973; Roloff & Wright, 2009; Tjosvold, 2006). Interdependence refers to the relational ties that cause incompatible goals and actions to become issues that need to be managed or resolved. Furthermore, interdependence shapes how these issues will be handled (Deutsch, 1973; Putnam, 2006; Rahim, 2010). (Wang, Fink, & Cai, 2012, p. 223)

Communication has been defined as people's "ability to store, transmit, retrieve, analyze, and interpret information" (Fink, 1998, p. 3) as well as behaviors that incorporate this ability. With these preliminaries taken care of, we now discuss the key measurement issues.

Categorical Versus Continuous Independent Variables

As knowledge of an area of study increases, research that uses categorical independent variables (e.g., group or personality types) is often replaced by research that employs continuous independent variables that represent the distinctions embodied in the categories. For example, differences between the sexes in a given investigation may represent power differences, socialization differences, or physical differences; replacing sex—a dichotomous variable—with a continuous variable, such as empathy or achievement orientation, may help clarify the differences that are expected to be at work (see Wood & Eagly, 2002, for a more complete analysis). Similarly, differences between cultures that are treated as dichotomous variables, such as individualism–collectivism or masculinity–femininity, are more informative when treated as continuous (Cai, Wilson, & Drake, 2000; cf. Hofstede, 1980).

During this transition from categorical to continuous independent variables, both types of variables are likely to be used so that a model that uses the continuous variable can be shown to not be improved by the addition of categorical variables (e.g., Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Yokochi, Masumoto, & Takai, 2000). The study of conflict communication is at the point of this transition; analyses that use group both as a categorical variable and as one or more continuous variables can advance theory by showing that the continuous variables are able to capture the group differences successfully.

Moving from categorical to continuous independent variables is more than a measurement issue: It is a theory construction strategy. The methods used in a study reflect the conceptual definitions and the generality, abstractness, parsimony, and completeness of the theory used to investigate the phenomenon of interest. The concepts and theories in conflict communication research are the foundation on which investigations are constructed, and methods are useful only insofar as they ultimately provide tools to answer questions posed by sound theory. Furthermore, methods and theory are interdependent: Without some specific methods, some theoretical questions

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cannot be posed, and without some specific theory, the choice of methods is arbitrary, or, worse, irrelevant.

For example, to determine whether conflict styles formed a two-dimensional space as proposed by Pruitt and Rubin (1987), Cai and Fink (2002) used multidimensional scaling, and they found that the proposed conflict styles required a space of more than two dimensions: The measures tell us how to advance the theory. On the other hand, Durkheim's (1951) theory of suicide proposed that there were four kinds of suicide: egoistic, altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic. Without this theoretical insight, examining overall suicide rates would reveal very little of the social mechanisms at work: Theory tells us what to measure.

Determination of Qualities and Quantities

Measures may be differentiated based on the assumptions implicitly made about how the magnitude of a phenomenon is assessed. For example, if behaviors are counted, there must be a clear definition of what those behaviors are. Measures that result from these counts are in the form of integers (e.g., 5 or 6 communications, not 5.5), and in principle, the frequency scale starts at 0 and has no upper bound. A study can employ counts of the number of multiple goals in a conflict situation (e.g., psychological data in Samp, 2000), the number of hostility expressions in marital interactions (e.g., interactional data in Gordis, Margolin, & John, 2001), or the number of crimes against the person in a society (e.g., sociological data in Daly & Wilson, 1997).

Measures that are created by comparisons to a standard (e.g., a yardstick) yield magnitudes (amounts) of a different sort. Time and distance are prototypical amounts, but many measures may be constructed by defining a nonmaterial yardstick and having respondents or coders make comparisons to it as in the following example of using a magnitude scale:

> If 0 is not at all feeling hostile, and 100 is the level of hostility you feel when you are cut off in traffic, how hostile do you feel in this negotiation? There is no highest number.

An example of amount (or magnitude) scaling in studying war and conflict is found in Sulfaro and Crislip's (1997) study on Americans' perceptions of foreign policy threats. Participants rated their perceptions of 19 countries' hostility toward the United States with two magnitude scales and one 7-point scale varying from "least hostile" to "most hostile." Results indicated that the two magnitude scales were almost identical in measuring hostility across the 19 countries with an "R^2 for [the logarithmically transformed variables] is .987" (p. 116). The 7-point scale correlated weakly with the magnitude scales; bounded scales (e.g., 7-point scales) deal poorly with extreme values.

Through the use of ratios and differences, counts and amounts can be used to create derivative measures; examples include the ratio of the number of hostile words to the total number of words expressed (ratio of a count to a count), and the acceleration of aggressiveness in interaction, as assessed by the change in the magnitude of expressed aggressiveness over time (a change in an amount divided by an amount). One study in which a ratio is derived and employed (counts over amounts) is Fuller, Murphy, Ridgley, and Ulack's (2000) research on potential conflict in Southeast Asia in which ratios were used to determine "how many times greater (or less) the potential for conflict with one ethnic group is over another" (p. 321). Another example is the use of physiological data of amount-over-time ratios: D. M. Buss, Larsen, Westen, and Semmelroth (1992) measured the acceleration of a negative emotion, jealousy, with physiological

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measurements such as electrodermal activity, pulse rate, and electromyographic activity.

The methods described here (counts, amounts, and their derivatives) allow greater precision, typically evidence high levels of reliability, and assist in determining the functional forms that relate variables of interest to each other when assessing hypotheses (Neuendorf, 2002; Woelfel & Fink, 1980). We realize that the typical investigator employs scales such as a unidimensional 1- to 7-point scale, with response alternatives bounded at both ends (i.e., one cannot go below 1 or above 7). Such scales are generally not examined for their many implicit assumptions: that the distance between adjacent pairs of scale units is equal for all pairs; that the number of response alternatives is adequate for the variable being scaled; that the boundedness of the scale does not cause scale distortions due to floor or ceiling effects; that the vectors emanating from the scale's neutral point to the end points are separated by 180° (i.e., the end points are indeed polar opposites; see Torgerson, 1958, for a discussion of some of these issues). For example, Woelfel and Fink (1980, p. 235) showed that *good* and *evil* were not polar opposites, although a unidimensional scale would force *good* and *evil* to be polar opposites by using them as scale anchors (i.e., "rate X on a 1 to 7 scale, where 1 = *good* and 7 = *evil*"). Thus, results based on the 1 to 7 scale would likely distort and thereby invalidate the respondents' evaluations. Conflict research, like all social science research, would benefit from greater consideration of measurement options in terms of response scales and their assumptions.

Levels of Analysis

Conflict communication research uses data of a psychological, interactional, or sociological sort. Psychological data are descriptive of individuals and include emotional states and traits, personality states and traits, level and type of motivation, and types and degree of knowledge. Examples of such data are measures of hostility (A. H. Buss & Durkee, 1957), propensity for abusiveness (Dutton, Landolt, Starzomski, & Bodnarchuk, 2001), and ethnocentrism (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997). Interactional data include attributes of verbal and nonverbal communicative behavior of people in simulated or actual interaction. Examples of such data are integrative and distributive behaviors in negotiation (Cai et al., 2000; Donohue & Roberto, 1996), emotion change between interactants (Rogan & Hammer, 1995a), and coded linguistic measures (Cook-Gumperz & Szymanski, 2001; Scarry, 1985). Finally, sociological data involve attributes of groups, organizations, states, and cultures. Examples are Cashman's (1993) review of national attributes and international conflict (see also Diehl, 2004; Speer, 1986) and Doreian's (1981) analysis of network data to predict the mobilization of individuals taking sides in a conflict.

The typical methods used to gather these three types of data differ. However, all three types of data require evidence of validity. For theoretical concepts, validity is typically assessed by construct validation methods (or by related techniques, such as the multitrait–multimethod matrix approach, as found in Campbell & Fiske, 1959, and more recent methods using similar ideas, as found in Maruyama, 1997). It is quite common for measurement validity to be ignored prior to data collection, because a measure of a theoretical variable may be validated by finding support for a set of hypotheses in which the theoretical variable is measured by an operationalized version of the variable. This strategy is risky: Without independent evidence of measurement validity, we cannot determine if failure to find support for a set of hypotheses is due to poor measurement, inadequate theory, or both.

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Psychological Variables and Multi-Item Scales

For psychological variables, the typical data-gathering tool is a multi-item scale completed by the respondent. For such data, we generally require evidence of reliability, especially internal consistency reliability as assessed, for example, by Cronbach's α. In addition, the dimensional structure of such scales may be investigated by using principal components analysis (PCA), exploratory factor analysis (EFA; e.g., Lee & Rogan, 1991, assessed Putnam & Wilson's, 1982, Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA; e.g., Oetzel et al., 2000, examined a typology of facework behaviors), or a full-blown structural equation model (SEM; Loehlin, 2004; e.g., Reese-Weber & Bartle-Haring, 1998, investigated Rubenstein & Feldman's, 1993, three-factor conflict resolution structure).

If using PCA or EFA, the investigator attempts to create a set of measures, with all the measures in the set being indicators of one or more scale dimensions. Then the investigator may (a) eliminate items that do not load on a particular factor of interest by some criteria and then add or average the resulting items, or (b) compute component or factor scores for the one or more dimensions that the researcher deems to be interpretable (e.g., Vangelisti & Crumley's, 1998, study of underlying factors of hurtful messages). For the second method, Serlin and Kaiser (1976) have demonstrated how to easily compute Cronbach's α from a PCA (see also Hancock & Mueller, 2001, for a maximal reliability coefficient, *H*, which is used to estimate the information captured by the indicators in a measurement model).

Measurement models consist of indicators (e.g., items from a multi-item scale or scores by coders or judges) and the unobserved factors that are considered to be the causes of the indicators and that are supposed to account for the correlations among them. The simplest such models assume that a set of indicators for one conceptual variable is caused by a single common factor that represents that variable; each indicator also contains random error. The structure of that factor—the theoretical or latent variable—may be investigated using CFA or a full SEM consisting of a measurement model and a theoretical model.

There are a number of theoretical and analytical advantages of a CFA or SEM over EFA and PCA, although all these techniques may be used in a single study. Although EFA and PCA reveal the dimensionality of the measures as well as their loadings on the dimensions, they do not actually test the structure imposed by the investigator. Typically, an investigator using EFA or PCA finds that there is likely to be more than one dimension for a scale that was hypothesized to be unidimensional and that a given item may be associated with more than one dimension, but there is no overall hypothesis that tests these findings.

There are two broad options for conducting a CFA: First, one may impose a specific model on the set of items (e.g., they are unidimensional) for each multi-item construct included in the study and test the model for each construct. Second, one may include all multi-item measures and simultaneously test them all. A third option, SEM, includes each CFA measurement model within an overall model that also includes the predicted relations among the theoretical (latent) variables. The advantage of SEM and of both options of CFA is in the word *test*: With the causal relations specified among the measures and their factors (meeting the necessary statistical assumptions, and with enough items per factor and a reasonable sample size), CFA and SEM test a null hypothesis that the population model imposed by the investigator accounts for the estimated covariances (or correlations) among the items. In addition, CFA and SEM have various measures of goodness of fit and are rigorous ways of assessing the structure

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of sets of measures or sets of measures plus their theoretical relationships (see Fink, 1980; Hayduk, 1987; for an SEM example for conflict resolution, see O'Connell-Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000).

Unobtrusive Measures, Content Analysis, and Systematic Observation

An *unobtrusive measure* reflects data that are gathered in a way that cannot be affected by the originator's (or communicator's) knowledge that they are being used for research purposes. This approach typically means that the originator of the data is unaware that a study is or will be conducted with the information that becomes data for the researcher. Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and Sechrest (1966) provided the first detailed analysis of such measures, and they indicated the advantages of such measures over the more traditional measures that rely on self-reports gathered by questionnaires and interviews. Unobtrusive data are nonreactive: Because the individuals are unaware that they are being studied, they cannot try to (a) impress the investigator by displaying positive qualities (a social desirability effect) or (b) guess the hypothesis that is being tested and act either to confirm it (the "good" participant) or to disconfirm it (the "bad" participant).

Unobtrusive measures include archival data and records generated from individuals, companies, and governments; trace evidence (by accretion, such as nose prints on an exhibit's glass enclosure or trash in a backyard, or by erosion, such as worn-down steps); and hidden observation of behavior, such as blogs monitored for conflict interactions. In his book on methods for studying conflict, Druckman (2005) indicated the benefits of this kind of measure: This type of measure "avoids subject reactivity." It "can capture trails (or traces) not recoverable by asking questions," and it provides "indicators of activities not known by other methods, as in archaeology" (p. 345). On the down side, Druckman indicated that there is a "lack of control over the data production" and that "interpretations [of these data] may be ambiguous, especially when other data are not available." These data are also "subject to observer biases" (p. 345).

If one studies interpersonal conflict, the problems of using reactive measures may loom large: People want to put their best face forward, and therefore their behavior in the presence of the investigator or their verbal responses to the investigator may be different from those behaviors or responses without the participant's awareness of the investigator. Although not perfect, unobtrusive measures may be invaluable here.

Content analysis, which can fall under the rubric of unobtrusive measures depending on what content is analyzed, has been used to study conflict. Starting with Bales (1950a, 1950b), content analysis of communication has been used to examine conflict in small-group interaction, including during negotiation and mediation. Bales (1950b) assigned the communicative possibilities exhibited by interactants into 12 categories. A communication by an interactant may (1) show solidarity, (2) show tension release, (3) agree, (4) give a suggestion, (5) give an opinion, (6) give orienting information, (7) ask for orienting information, (8) ask for an opinion, (9) ask for a suggestion, (10) disagree, (11) show tension, or (12) show antagonism (p. 258). In any observed interaction, there may be conflict, as indicated by messages of type (10), (11), or (12). However, the coding system is not restricted to interactions that necessarily involve conflict. Negotiation research often looks at the unfolding of interaction, with some level of conflict inherent within the interaction because of the competing goals of the interactants.

Content analyses based on interaction coding schemes were developed from the mid-1980s to

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the mid-1990s, reflecting a continued interest in interaction during conflicts. Hostage negotiation, business negotiation, and marital mediation were studied using the methods of conversation analysis, which can be a form of content analysis. For example, lag-sequential analysis was used to study interaction patterns during simulated negotiation (e.g., Cai & Donohue, 1996), and phase mapping was used to study conflict phases during interaction (e.g., Holmes, 1997). These approaches should have created opportunities for conflict communication research; however, such investigations have declined over the past several years. Indeed, interaction analysis of conflict has been largely abandoned. A notable exception to this trend was a collection of articles in a 2003 issue of the *International Journal of Conflict Management* (Parks, 2003). A more elaborate discussion of content analysis for studying conflict communication may be found in Druckman (2005) and Roberts (1997), and detailed guides to the general issues associated with content analysis may be found in Krippendorff (2004) and Neuendorf (2002).

Interactional data typically result from content analyses based on systematic observation. Coders (judges, observers, or raters) are given coding rules and then code or rate the behaviors that are observed. If the behaviors are to be counted, then rules are needed to unitize the behaviors (i.e., determine where one behavior ends and another begins). For example, in a study regarding the interaction between hostage takers and negotiators, Taylor (2002a) analyzed transcripts of nine hostage incidents. A rhetorical structure analysis was conducted to divide each transcript into separate episodes, or dialogue movements, based on changing themes. In addition, thought units were unitized from each episode before they were coded and subjected to data analysis. Other examples of creating rules to unitize data may be found in Gordis, Margolin, and Garcia (1996) and Gordis et al. (2001), both of which examine family conflict.

A great deal of literature is available on the factors that affect the unitization of behavior as assessed by actors and observers; the process of unitization should not be thought of as without difficulties (see, e.g., Girbau, 2002; Lemus, Seibold, Flanigan, & Metzger, 2004; an elaborate discussion of this issue is found in Krippendorff, 2004). In addition to creating rules for unitization, the results of the unitization must be assessed for reliability; as Krippendorff (2004) indicated, there must be agreement not only on the total number of units but also on what the actual units are that are observed. Typical reliability measures for this type of analysis include Guetzkow's *U*, which assesses whether coders agree reliably about unitizing the content, and κ (either Cohen's or Krippendorf's), which assesses whether coders are using the coding scheme with reliable agreement on how the codes apply (see Folger, Hewes, & Poole, 1984; Krippendorff, 2004, for how to compute these measures).

If observational data are quantitative ratings rather than frequency counts, reliability is typically assessed by intercoder reliability, most commonly in the form of one or more bivariate correlations. For scores derived from multiple coders, Cronbach's α may also be reported. Additional examples of unitization and reliability assessment in interactional conflict data may be found in research on hostage negotiation (Donohue, Ramesh, & Borchgrevink, 1991; Donohue & Roberto, 1993, 1996; Rogan & Hammer, 1995a; Taylor, 2002b), family conflict (Gottman, Levenson, & Wooden, 2001; Smetana, Yau, & Hanson, 1991), interethnic conflict (Collier, 1996), and third-party mediated conflict (Jones, 1988).

Research Design

Studies can be differentiated by whether they employ cross-sectional data, such as surveys

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at one point in time; panel data that employ at least two points in time; and time-series data, based on many points in time. These studies may be experimental or nonexperimental. Next, we discuss how the conception of conflict interacts with the type of design employed.

Causal Analysis, Internal Validity, and External Validity

Studies that test models or theories seek to establish the causes and effects at work. When several variables are involved, we may also try to know which variables may be mediators (intervening variables) and which may be moderators (interacting variables). The difficulty involved in establishing causality arises because of the three *canons of causality* that must be met. The first canon involves *covariation*, which means that the predictor variable and the predicted variable have a relationship that is something other than a flat line: As the level of the predictor variable changes, the level of the predicted variable changes systematically. The second canon concerns *correct temporal order*, which means that changes in the predicted variable do not occur before changes in the predictor variable. The third canon refers to *nonspuriousness*, which means that there is no other variable that can fully account for the covariation between the predicted and predictor variables.

Internal validity is concerned with whether the causal conclusions that an investigator may make are nonspurious. When our claims about causality are false, the study lacks internal validity. (Note that the discussion here differs from that of Cook & Campbell, 1979, with regard to distinctions and terminology.) The catalog for sources of invalidity—other explanations for the predicted outcome than the variable predicted to cause it—was begun by Campbell and Stanley (1963) and continued by Cook and Campbell (1979) and Campbell and Russo (1999). The list of possible sources of internal invalidity includes *history* (events that occur between the observation of the independent variable and the dependent variable), *selection* (a variable that determines who receives which level of the independent variable because of enrollment not under the control of the investigator), *mortality* (a variable that determines who receives which level of the independent variable because of disenrollment not under the control of the investigator), *regression* (effects due to the study's focus on those who are extreme on the independent variable or a variable correlated with the independent variable), *testing* (the effect on the dependent variable due to being pretested on it), and *instrument decay* (systematic change in the measuring instrument; the instrument could refer to coders, physiological measures, or self-report scales).

External validity is concerned with our ability to generalize the results of a study to other populations, times, settings, and manipulations or measures of the variables. To generalize, we first need something *to* generalize: We must have internally valid results. The usual criticism about laboratory experiments is that they lack external validity because they are conducted in artificial settings, and participants know that they are being studied. Aronson and Carlsmith (1968) and Aronson, Wilson, and Akert (1994) introduced three concepts to clarify these issues: (1) *mundane realism*, the extent to which the activities in the experiment are similar to activities that the participant generally engages in outside of the experimental setting; (2) *experimental realism*, the extent to which the participant takes the experiment seriously and feels involved in it; and (3) *psychological realism*, the extent to which the participant uses the same psychological processes within the experimental setting that the participant generally uses outside of this setting.

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Common Threats to Internal and External Validity

Conflict communication research poses many challenges to internal and external validity. For example, role-playing research has been examined for its problems relating to both internal and external validity; see Spencer (1978; see Duffy & Kavanagh, 1983; Geller, 1978, for related role-playing issues). It seems that role-playing research is often dismissed as invalid because of an alleged lack of realism—mundane, experimental, or psychological. However, regarding research concerned with interpersonal violations, Gonzales, Pederson, Manning, and Wetter (1990) pointed out that

> it is difficult to create comparable manifestations of accidental and volitional offenses in the laboratory, and judgment or role-playing studies may be the best vehicles for presenting subjects with numerous offenses that vary in terms of both the nature of the offense itself . . . and the objective severity of the consequence of the offense. (pp. 619–620)

Thus, research that employs role playing may be useful if the investigators can show that the study is realistic in the meanings relevant to the study.

Another potential threat to validity of conflict research is the use of college students as research subjects. For testing theoretical relationships, data gleaned from using college students may provide sufficient support for the theory, and if the theory is supported among college students, so the argument goes, the theory may be valid with other participants as well. This issue concerns both internal and external validity. There is evidence that the kinds of individuals who sign up for particular experiments are not representative even of the class of students who are sought to participate in such studies (Jackson, Procidano, & Cohen, 1989). Nonetheless, for the purposes of convenience sampling—as well as for theory testing—students are likely to continue to be used as participants.

Some scholars view external validity as a limitation of laboratory studies, but Berkowitz and Donnerstein (1982) discussed this matter at length and concluded that

> experimental results *may* tell us something about the conduct of a broad range of people in natural situations even though the subjects and laboratory settings are not physically representative of this population or the real-world situations in which they are embedded. (p. 255; cf. Tebes, 2000)

Shapiro (2002), agreeing with this view, commented that external validity requires more than simple representativeness: "The surface representativeness of a study is usually not a good indicator of contribution to theory" (p. 491; see also Mook, 1983).

Experimental Versus Nonexperimental Research

A between-participant *experiment* requires that at least one independent variable is manipulated, and participants must be randomly assigned to the levels of the experimental independent variable. Random assignment helps ensure that sources of internal invalidity are minimized. As an example of an experiment, Wang et al. (2012) randomly assigned participants to conditions that considered context (school or work), relationship (close friend, peer, or rival), and time (short term or long term) to assess the avoidance and nonavoidance strategies that were most likely to be used to pursue different conflict goals. This experiment was used to test two systematically developed typologies: one of conflict goals and one of avoidance strategies.

Experiments in which conflict is the independent variable typically involve one of the following procedures used to manipulate the

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incompatibility of goals, the incompatibility of actions, or the interdependence of the parties:

- In a group, creating some level or type of conflict and observing the resulting communication
- Providing individuals with a hypothetical scenario involving some level or type of conflict and then having them respond to a questionnaire
- Having individuals play particular roles (e.g., employer vs. employee; partners working on a school project) and observing the resulting communication

Note that conflict is generally not used as a dependent variable; instead it is represented by variables that indicate how the conflict is managed (the process at work). Variables that may be independent or dependent include conflict styles (e.g., Cai & Fink, 2002; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003), and variables that indicate the outcome of a conflict include satisfaction with the other party, negotiated outcomes such as profits, and the degree to which there has developed an impasse in the relationship (e.g., Cai et al., 2000; see the discussion of outcome and process variables below).

In their book on processes of social conflict, Pruitt and Carnevale (1993) noted the difficulties in studying conflict. Experimental studies provide control of extraneous variables but in a simulated setting. On the other hand, manipulating conflict in laboratory or field experiments raises other concerns: If the manipulation is effective, the ethics of the investigation may be problematic; if the manipulation is ineffective, the lack of internal validity means that the investigation cannot inform us about conflict processes. Naturalistic studies are hard to come by and, when available, have their own problems of internal and external validity. Furthermore, in everyday settings, individuals and organizations are often hesitant to allow researchers to observe sensitive, confidential, or private interactions associated with conflict.

Laboratory experiments and field experiments differ in the location of the data collection, and this factor has implications for external validity. In addition to random assignment, other issues that are relevant to experiments include the following: (a) whether the study is double blind, meaning that neither the experimenter nor the participant is aware of the conditions to which the participant is assigned; this approach can counter any expectancy effects; and (b) whether the manipulations are effective in bringing about the states or conditions associated with the manipulations. For example, we should determine whether our attempt to create a conflict condition and no-conflict condition in small groups actually creates groups that differ in level of conflict. Two methods for determining the effectiveness of the manipulations are the use of pilot studies prior to the main research and the use of manipulation checks during the main research (but see O'Keefe, 2003). Conflict research often either assumes or requires that the parties to the conflict experience or express some level of emotion, such as anger, hostility, or jealousy. Manipulating these emotions can be quite challenging, both because they are difficult to elicit in a laboratory setting and because ethically the researcher must be careful regarding the potential risks to the participants in eliciting such emotions.

And of course culture can play a role in the validity of the research. Attributions, behaviors, and expectations about conflict may not be relevant to certain cultures. Assuming a shared understanding across cultures about what a conflict is, how it should be managed, and what emotions are likely to be involved can lead to incorrect conclusions about the culture and about how people communicate about conflict.

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Conflict Outcome Versus Conflict Process

We differentiate studies in their emphasis on conflict outcomes versus the process that leads to the outcomes. Most conflict studies examine either a sample of conflicts (e.g., Holmes & Sykes, 1993; Poole & Roth, 1989) or a sample of individuals experiencing, anticipating, imagining, or recalling conflict (e.g., Cai & Fink, 2002; Maoz & Ellis, 2001; Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, & Yee-Jung, 2001). The use of samples of individuals, as opposed to a sample of conflicts, has been associated with outcome-oriented research rather than research that focuses on the relational process between actors (e.g., individuals, groups, organizations, states, and cultures) that may result in conflict. The data examined for outcome-oriented investigations are likely to be cross-sectional—measured at one time—and even when attributes of conflict are included or predicted, there is not likely to be a *no-conflict* group—a control group—that would enable the conflict-generating or conflict-resolving process to be adequately evaluated and understood. This type of research (i.e., research without a no-conflict group) is used to explain the management of conflict once an interaction event has reached a threshold that justifies the label *conflict*.

We can contrast the outcome approach with that of the process approach to understanding conflict, the latter of which entails a trajectory of variables that indicates conflict, disinterest, and accord between parties. Although most process-oriented conflict studies tend to focus on contexts or relationships that are conflictual, trajectories of conflict variables represent time courses of cooperation just as well as time courses of conflict (for studies over time see, e.g., Donohue & Druckman, 2009; Holmes, 1997; Holmes & Sykes, 1993; Poole & Roth, 1989; Rogan & Hammer, 1995a, 1995b). Over-time data allow for the explanation of conflict trajectories, whether they refer to dyads or to states. Considering conflict in this way makes it *normal*, in the sense that we are not viewing conflict as an aberrant segment of a relationship or as a pathological event but rather as a dynamic generated by ordinary sequences and magnitudes of activity. Both Freud and Festinger represent scholars for whom conflict was part of the normal process of emoting, thinking, interacting, and behaving; in a word—living. A *normal conflict approach* considers conflict to be ordinary and normative (in an actuarial sense) within the everyday actions of people, groups, communities, states, and cultures.

There are methodological implications of such a normal conflict approach. With this approach, conflict is likely to be examined as a continuous variable (e.g., degree, level, intensity, or breadth of conflict), and over-time investigations of the causes and consequences of conflict (e.g., panel and time-series investigations) are more likely. When conflict is examined experimentally, a control group is more likely to represent a state of no conflict or of cooperation rather than of a different type of conflict or of a low level of conflict.

Process-oriented approaches typically do not use exclusively cross-sectional data, although such an approach is not impossible. However, as illustrated in the examples above, it is typically the case that different conceptions—conflict as outcome versus conflict as process—result in different kinds of data employing different analytic methods.

Conducting Research Online

Although not much research regarding conflict communication has used data gathered online, it is very likely that this data-gathering technique will be used much more frequently in the future. All the issues of measurement validity, internal validity, and external validity are relevant and need to be considered carefully for this type of research. In online research, we may not know the following:

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who is actually receiving our stimuli and responding to the questions that are posed; the media use, interruptions, and other extraneous activities that the respondent may be engaged in while completing the research; the respondent's level of attention and involvement; and other factors that we might be able to control in laboratory settings or in structured interviews. Even telephone surveys are likely to have more control than that found in online research. On the other hand, the ability to gather a great deal of data from a large sample in a short period of time makes online research attractive. Sources that are helpful in understanding the benefits and pitfalls of online research include Birnbaum (2000), Gaiser and Schreiner (2009), Miller (2006), and Paolacci, Chandler, and Ipeirotis (2010).

Sampling

Although the following issues about sampling apply to all social science research, there are some particular concerns for research on conflict.

Nonprobability Sampling for Conflict Communication Research

Sampling in conflict research poses particular challenges. At the interpersonal level, including dyadic and small-group interactions, the level of intimacy between interactants may range from low (e.g., strangers) to moderate (e.g., coworkers) to high (e.g., friends) to very high (e.g., romantic partners and family members). The predominant sampling strategy for studies at the psychological and interactional levels is nonprobability sampling, which is often a convenience sample of undergraduates. So what's new? Researchers implicitly rely on the notion that, although the mean levels of the variables under investigation may not represent the theoretical population's mean levels, the covariances among the variables are not biased and are, therefore, informative about the process. The discussion and references cited above regarding external validity are relevant here.

To study conflict, we must assume that it is possible to sample not only people but also situations that vary in the magnitude or type of conflict and that the sample of conflicts is reasonable in terms of its range on a variety of variables (e.g., intensity, duration, and theoretical cause of the conflict). This assumption is not met if the conflicts that we may need to know most about are inaccessible or have limited accessibility. For example, because of business secrets, we may not be able to sample representative negotiations between employers and employees; because of security issues, we may not be able to sample representative hostage negotiations. In these cases, we face a selection bias (Berk, 1983): Our conclusions are likely to be, at best, incomplete, or at worst, biased and misleading. For example, suppose that the only hostage negotiation transcripts that we have are those made available to us by negotiators for the government. Suppose further that this subset of transcripts is available because the government agents used significantly fewer threats—or threats of a lower magnitude—in these cases than in the other transcripts, which are unavailable to us. Finally, suppose that as level of threat severity increases, hostage takers from ethnic group A become more confrontational, whereas hostage takers from ethnic group B become less confrontational. In other words, threat level and ethnicity interact in predicting confrontational behavior. Given that we have only low-threat cases, our conclusions will be wrong about the two ethnic groups. Although the sample is biased, it is more important to note that the analysis is likely to be inaccurate or incomplete.

Another example based on hostage negotiation research illustrates a different problem. Suppose we have transcripts from all or from

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a representative (even if not random) sample of such negotiations; we thereby avoid a selection bias. Thus, these transcripts, although difficult to obtain, provide very useful information about high-intensity conflicts. To complete the picture and create appropriate theoretical models of conflict processes that include processes that vary in intensity, we need our sample to contain a range of conflict intensities. Thus, we would need transcripts of low- to high-intensity conflict that fall within the domain being investigated, but it may be hard to imagine low-intensity conflicts when we are considering hostage negotiations. Thus, even a good sample may not allow some aspects of a theory of conflict processes to be adequately investigated.

If a theory of conflict is to be developed, we may require samples that represent the universe of conflict situations, even if the sampling of such situations is a convenience sample. The interplay of these demands means that we need a theory that explains across the range of conflict situations, and we need a representative sample of situations to generate the theory. In the absence of such a theory, we can look to theories in neighboring domains to consider this sampling problem. For example, Foa and Foa (1974) described six types of resource exchanges: exchanges over love, status, information, money, services, and goods. We may identify conflict situations based on the resources primarily involved, thus generating a *resource-exchange universe* from which to sample conflict situations. Similarly, Marwell and Hage (1970) organized role relationships by differentiating them in terms of their intimacy, visibility, and regulation. If we examine how individuals in different roles create, resolve, escalate, maintain, or define conflict, we can use the three role relationship dimensions (intimacy, visibility, and regulation) to generate a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ typology of role relationships from which we can purposively sample (see also Seeman, 1997). Thus, even in the absence of a strong theory, we may improve our sampling strategy so that it is defined by a theoretical universe and thereby enhances our ability to make theoretical discoveries.

Sample Size and Statistical Power

Even if we generate an appropriate sampling strategy, we need to consider the sample size that is necessary for the proposed analyses. Sample sizes vary greatly across studies: In some of the studies reviewed for this chapter, sample sizes were inadequate for the methods used; for example, some studies attempted to estimate many parameters via analysis of variance (ANOVA) or multiple regression on samples with as few as 20 participants. The difficulty in obtaining appropriately sized samples should not be used as an excuse to do analyses that lack statistical power.

Sampling for Group Comparisons

Samples for the purpose of comparing groups may be generated in different ways: Samples of university students may rely on convenience, whereas samples of friends and friends of friends may be generated by snowball sampling. Regardless of the method, the groups that we wish to compare may differ in many ways, including in various socioeconomic aspects. For intercultural research, most good articles or books discuss this issue (see, e.g., Johnson & Tuttle, 1989; Tafoya, 1984; van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Social class, ethnicity, and other demographic differences are likely to affect the social norms people use for creating, responding to, managing, and interpreting conflict.

Controls for Group Differences

We typically create statistical models that employ variables that are causally related and that correspond to our conflict structure and

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process. For example, think of a few variables that could be used in an SEM. But variables also may be used to establish boundary conditions for the conflict system to be investigated or to control for unwanted or extraneous sources of variability. To conduct research comparing groups or cultures, we should measure and then attempt to control for these kinds of variables, which typically include socioeconomic factors such as education level, income relative to the per capita income of the nation the sample is from, occupational prestige, and the like (see, e.g., Massett, 1999). If these factors are not controlled, they may mask effects, making it difficult to know whether the empirical relationships among variables reflect the causal relations of interest.

In cross-cultural investigations, controlling for these factors allows researchers to at least attempt to differentiate cross-cultural from within-culture factors, thereby improving the ability to make valid cross-cultural comparisons. If such controls are not employed, claims about culture are likely to be masking the influence of class, population density of one's geographic area (urban vs. suburban vs. rural), education, and so on.

This methodological discussion has significant implications for theory development. If we are concerned with belief and behavior systems of a population (e.g., the norms for handling conflict in the workplace, in the family, or among friends; the sanctions for transgressors of these norms; and the conditions under which specific requests are appropriate), then many factors make a difference, but which of these factors do we classify as *cultural*? Because developmental effects (e.g., worldwide urbanization, increased participation in formal education) modify cultures, any differentiation between cultural and noncultural factors is a snapshot of one point in time. We try to get a handle on this differentiation by two methods: (1) using comparable samples, which are difficult to obtain and even more difficult to define, or (2) relying on statistical controls. The former involves using samples that may be unrepresentative of the larger population but similar in some characteristics to the other culture with which its members are compared. The latter is likely to "over control" by removing effects that are or will be tied to cultural differences. This conundrum requires not better methods but better theory to investigate processes and attribute effects to their appropriate sources.

Using Samples to Compare Conflict Communication Processes

Once conflict situations are determined to be comparable across cultures in terms of the severity of the conflict, the relationship between the parties, the level of emotion involved, or other such considerations, researchers can begin to determine whether the processes involved in managing the conflict are comparable. However, relatively equal variable means do not suggest that the processes that generated these means are the same, or that the means reflect the same point in the process, or that the process has equilibrated. Answering these questions involves determining the *functional form* of relationships between variables. The same functional form means employing the same equation (statistical or mathematical), with the same variables, with (for statistical models) the error term entering into the equation in the same way (e.g., additively vs. multiplicatively), and, finally, with the same estimate of parameter values.

Differences in functional form may be approached as a theoretical question, a measurement question, or an analysis question. (This issue is dealt with in a detailed way in Fink et al., 2006.) As a theoretical question, functional form concerns whether the variables used in the analyses are sufficiently general and sufficiently interdependent. As a

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measurement question, functional form concerns how variables are measured. Zetterberg (1965) showed how conceptual and operational definitions of variables may overlap to different degrees; the metric for a variable—the numbers that correspond to the level of a continuous variable—is arbitrary in communication research (see Torgerson's, 1958, notion of *measurement by fiat*). This arbitrariness in how variables are measured may result in different researchers reporting different functional forms relating the same theoretical variables. For example, conflict styles are measured with different instruments (Wilson, Cai, Campbell, Donohue, & Drake, 1995). To deal with this issue, either all researchers need to use the same measures (unlikely in the social sciences), or researchers need to provide the rules that relate (translate) their measures to standard ones. In this way, measures may be calibrated against the standard and, thus, to each other. If such measurement procedures are adopted, debates over differences in functional form become debates over differences in measurement rules.

As an analysis question, functional form addresses whether the relationships between the variables are analyzed so that we can determine that the processes are the same across groups. This discussion goes beyond the scope of this chapter. For an in-depth discussion of this issue, see Fink (2009).

Data Analysis

Statistical Dependence

Statistical analyses make assumptions about the distribution and association between residual (error) terms. For example, significance testing of parameter estimates within ordinary least squares linear regression or ANOVA assumes that population errors are homoscedastic (i.e., have equal variance across the cells of the ANOVA or above and below the regression line at any point on the *X*-axis), nonautocorrelated (i.e., the order of the errors across time or space has no pattern or effect), and normal (i.e., have a normal distribution within each cell of the ANOVA or above and below the regression line at any point on the *X*-axis). The dependence among sample members (e.g., sampling pairs of husband–wife dyads rather than sampling individuals who happen to be husbands and wives, but not of each other) will likely cause correlation among error terms in our statistical model, violating the ordinary least-squares assumptions mentioned above. Some violations of statistical assumptions may be corrected by nonlinear data transformation (Bauer & Fink, 1983; Fink, 2009) and some by appropriate statistical modeling (Hibbs, 1974).

Many conflict situations are posed as two-sided situations: employer–employee, buyer–seller, hostage taker and hostage, aggressor nation and target nation, and violent domestic partner and violated domestic partner. Such dyadic interactions involve interdependence between the parties. These samples have dependent (in the statistical sense) units, and the data analysis needs to account for this dependence. SEM is one way that statistical dependence can be represented (see, e.g., Duncan, 1969; Duncan, Haller, & Portes, 1968).

Imagine pairs of variables such as husband's level of anger and wife's level of anger, and husband's level of verbal aggression and wife's level of verbal aggression. A model that has parallel sets of variables for each interactant can be created that takes into account the dependence among the variables due to the dependence among the interactants; if the wife's verbal aggression rises *because of* the rise in her husband's verbal aggression, and vice versa, this situation can be represented by including the appropriate variables and causal effects. Representing this interdependence has effects on the sample size needed for the investigation: One guideline is that a model should

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have a sample size that is 10 to 20 times the number of variables in the model (Mitchell, 1993; see Bentler & Chou, 1987, for other guidelines for setting SEM sample size). In other words, the sample size (i.e., the number of participants, not the number of dyads) for a model that includes interdependent participants will need to be greater than a sample that includes independent actors.

Kenny and Kashy (1991; see also Kashy & Kenny, 2000) described two types of interdependence that may exist in dyadic data sets: within-dyad interdependence and between-dyad interdependence. *Within-dyad interdependence* reflects systematic changes over time within a single dyad, such as the changes over time in uncertainty reduction within a dating couple. In this case, the errors in the equations will correlate over time if the causes of the time-based interdependence are not included in the model. *Between-dyad interdependence* results from cross-sectional dependence in dyads at a single point in time due to an omitted factor that effects more than one dependent variable. In this case, we should expect that the errors in the equations will correlate across variables if the causes of the cross-sectional interdependence are omitted. Kenny, Kashy, and Cook's (2006) book on this subject is an excellent source that shows the general strategies that may be used to analyze dyadic dependence in data.

If we have data with interdependence, analyses need to test for and take into account the interdependence. The two basic strategies, regardless of the specific analytical method employed, are to hypothesize the absence of these effects and examine how well the model fits under this constraint or to hypothesize the presence of these effects and to test the significance of the statistics that represent the interdependence (see, e.g., Hanushek & Jackson, 1977).

In studies of groups larger than dyads that use multilevel sampling, the same issues appear. For example, in studies in which families are sampled, and in which each family unit includes several family members, there is interdependence among the sampled units. Analytical methods that deal with multiple levels (with or without multiple time points within the data set) include hierarchical linear models (HLM); repeated-measures, multivariate, and other nested models in the ANOVA framework; and multiple group (or multisample) analysis in SEM. Of the three methods mentioned above, HLM is probably used least by scholars studying communication and conflict, but there are several exemplary studies: Julien, Chartrand, Simard, Bouthillier, and Bégin's (2003) study of positive and negative communication during conflict in heterosexual, gay, and lesbian couples (with partners nested within couples); Karney and Bradbury's (1997) analysis of trajectories of marital satisfaction; Rhoades, Arnold, and Jay's (2001) investigation of affective traits and mood on organizational conflict over time; Sanford's (2003) investigation of "topic difficulty and communication behavior across multiple problem-solving conversations" among married couples (p. 99); and Smith and Zautra's (2001) piece on the effect of spousal conflict, interpersonal sensitivity, and neuroticism on affect in a sample of older women.

Conflict communication research typically involves interdependent participants, and therefore scholars studying in this area need to be aware of the statistical problems—and, once understood, the statistical opportunities—that such data provide. Using a sophisticated analytic method such as SEM or HLM encourages the researcher to think about the ways that units relate and to represent this interdependence in the statistical models employed.

Moderation and Mediation

In model testing, *moderation* refers to the interaction of two or more independent

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variables in predicting a dependent variable. (For more details on moderation, see Kenny, 2011b.) An interaction means that the effect of one independent variable on a dependent variable differs according to the level of one or more other independent variables. Sometimes such moderation is predicted, in which case the data analysis needs to test for the presence of the predicted interaction. This test may be easily done using ANOVA and may also be done using regression or related techniques, such as SEM.

An example of an interaction is found in Cai, Fink, and Xie (2012): Chinese and American participants were asked, in one condition, about the likelihood of spending money to assist another, or, in another condition, the likelihood of spending time to assist another. In addition, participants responded with regard to the kind of relationship involved: a close other, an acquaintance, an other known through a close friend, or an other known through an acquaintance. Among other findings, Chinese were more likely than Americans to spend money to assist someone who was a close other or an acquaintance, which is a two-way interaction of Country × Relationship Type. On the other hand, Americans were more likely to spend time talking with someone who was known through a close friend or someone who was known through an acquaintance, which is also a Country × Relationship Type interaction.

Mediation refers to a variable that is predicted by at least one variable and also predicts at least one other variable in a statistical model. One current description of the issues involved in evaluating mediation is found in Kenny (2011a).

Most conflict communication theories specify processes, which are often best understood by determining the possible mediators that account for the relationship between an exogenous variable and the variable that represents its ultimate effect. For example, Yao, Fink, and Cai (2010) examined how a person who offends someone in an interaction accounts for his or her behavior through various interactional strategies. From the perspective of the offender, it was found that the perception of the offense's outcome severity had a direct positive effect on the expected defensiveness of the account selected by the offender; in addition to this direct effect, there was an indirect effect in that the perception of the offense's outcome severity caused an increase in the expected responsibility for the offense, which caused an increase in the expectation of anger on the part of the offended person, which then caused a decrease in the expected defensiveness of the account selected:

> Thus, perceived outcome severity is a double-edged sword: To understand its effects, the relative magnitudes of the direct and indirect paths need to be considered. Furthermore, this complexity may explain the contradictory results reported in the literature for the effect of outcome severity. (p. 27)

Understanding mediation and moderation clarifies the way communication and conflict relate in an elaborated theoretical model.

An Excursus on Culture

Conflict studies incorporating culture differ in whether the individual is the unit of analysis and culture is a contextual variable versus those in which the unit of analysis is culture (or nation) and the sample includes a set number of cultures. Almost all conflict communication studies use the former approach. (Some quantitative studies and mathematical models of the causes of war are exceptions; see Cashman, 1993, and the chapters within Diehl, 2004). Because of the way culture enters into conflict communication research, it is treated as static by necessity: It is an exogenous variable that is considered to vary over people or over space but not over time. However, culture does change over time, sometimes even over relatively short periods. Effects due to cultural change are almost

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always excluded from conflict communication research.

Many studies examine such static cultural differences in conflict styles (for reviews of these studies, see Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Wilson et al., 1995). These studies are mixed in their results, some find members of East Asian cultures to be more avoidant or yielding and people from the United States to be more dominating (e.g., Lee & Rogan, 1991; Trubisky, Ting-Toomey, & Lin, 1991). Other studies find members of both cultural groups to prefer integrating styles (e.g., Cai & Fink, 2002). The typical method used to investigate conflict styles across cultures is to provide a hypothetical conflict scenario, ask participants to consider a conflict with someone (e.g., a friend, colleague, or stranger), and, based on that imagined conflict, to complete instruments such as the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II; Rahim, 1983) or the Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument (OCCI; Putnam & Wilson, 1982) to measure the individual's approach to the conflict. However, to draw conclusions about how cultures compare in conflict behavior, researchers need to answer three questions about the sample and the conflict. First, is the meaning of conflict and the variables representing the conflict process comparable across the cultures being investigated? Second, are the samples comparable (see pp. 54–56)? And third, are the cultures at the same place in the process under investigation? (Note that the discussion that follows can be made for comparing conflict across organizations, ethnic groups, or any other categorical variable, as well as culture.)

Is the Meaning of Conflict and the Variables Representing the Conflict Process Comparable Across the Cultures Being Investigated?

Consider the example of conflict styles for this question. The *etic* approach seeks to determine theoretical factors based on a scientific (here, transcultural or universal) analysis of variables (see Pike, 1967). An *imposed etic* approach involves taking theories or hypotheses applicable to one culture and imposing them on other cultures without knowing if the theory or the related measures are appropriate for the other cultures studied. In the area of conflict research, an imposed etic (Berry, 1989) is often relied on, assuming that the meaning of conflict is similar across cultures.

Based on the etic research of Blake and Mouton (1964), Pruitt and Rubin (1987), and Thomas (1976), five basic conflict styles have been generated. That the ROCI-II and OCCI measures were derived from Western theories and imposed on Eastern cultures exemplifies the typical approach to cross-cultural conflict research, which depends on imposed rather than derived etic analysis (Berry, 1989; see below). As a result, we do not know from this approach to studying conflict styles whether other (non-Western) styles exist for managing and resolving conflict. For example, Wall and Blum's (1991) idea of third parties having a role in dealing with conflict is not reflected in these measures, yet these researchers found the use of third parties to be a socially appropriate means for managing some conflicts among Chinese.

A *derived etic* approach reflects careful observation and analysis of a variety of cultures to determine all the relevant variables that should be considered when studying a phenomenon across a variety of cultures. A derived etic approach is needed to determine the meaning of conflict and conflict situations within each culture so that comparable situations within the cultures—ones that have similar meaning to the participants, involve similar relationships, and evoke the same kinds of cognitive and emotional responses—can be employed in testing theory.

In studies that ask participants to recall a conflict situation, the participants from different cultures are rarely asked to describe the recalled situation in sufficient depth so that comparability across the cultures can be

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determined; the participants are also not asked about the relevant state variables that define the situation, such as the level of emotion among the participants. As a result, conflict may involve qualities of anger and confrontation in one culture, whereas, in another culture, conflict may involve a rift in the relationships such that participants avoid rather than confront or communicate with each other; in these cultures, emotion may not be salient because of the lack of contact between the parties. Cai et al. (2012) used the derived etic approach for developing a measure of intimacy by assessing the meaning of intimacy for Chinese and Americans separately and then deriving an instrument for measuring intimacy that is useful within both cultures.

To determine whether the meaning of conflict and the variables representing the conflict process are comparable across the cultures, we need to do more than back-translate scales measuring the constructs (see van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). The process of back-translation often involves having one party translate versions of a questionnaire from the language in which the original study was prepared into the language of the target culture and then having a second person retranslate the new version back into the original language. Even careful translation and back-translation can result in distortion of meaning (see Barnett, Palmer, & Al-Deen, 1984). Under the rubrics of bias and equivalency, van de Vijver and Leung (1997) discussed the issues involved in reducing distortion in translation. To do this task well requires more effort, more resources, and more time than most scholars anticipate.

An alternative way of considering the problem of comparability in meaning is to use variables of sufficient abstraction so that they conceivably may apply cross-culturally. Then and only then can we examine whether there are cross-cultural process differences. In other words, the research task requires cycling from theory couched in abstract variables, to in-depth interviews with cultural informants, to creation of measures that may involve culturally specific operationalizations, to statistical analyses, and finally to revamping theory.

Are Cultures at the Same Place in the Process Under Investigation?

In most of the studies on culture and conflict, we do not know if different groups are at the same place in the trajectory of the conflict process. To analyze where a group is in a process, we must first establish that the process is stable. Statistical analysis of any process must assume that there is stability to the process, either in terms of the original variables and time points being used or in terms of transformations of those variables or time points. Such assumptions are labeled differently in different analytic techniques, with terms like *stationarity* and *invertibility* in time-series models or the term *equilibrium* as used more generally. But it should be noted that a system whose variables do not appear to be in equilibrium—and whose trajectory appears to be unbounded—may still, with appropriate treatment, be used to represent a system in equilibrium.

Once we create a stable process for each culture, we can determine whether the key variables relate differently within the cultures. Differences in results, even dramatic differences, do not necessarily mean that the conflict process is different between cultures. Cultures may be thought to manage or respond to conflict differently merely because, when assessed, the conflict system is at a different point in the process in different cultures.

For example, the relation between conflict and dissatisfaction may be weak in the early stages of conflict, but as the conflict progresses, the relation may become stronger; in other words, the process exhibits phases. Aligning the phases might reveal that a particular

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process is cross-culturally valid. To assess possible phase differences, we almost always require data at many points in time to create (by transformation) or to examine equilibrium among the variables of interest (by, e.g., differencing time-series data; see Hibbs, 1974). If the points in time are equally spaced but reveal cross-cultural differences, we may still be able to determine if the processes are the same (Coleman, 1968), assuming that the points are sufficiently frequent in time to avoid the problem of *aliasing*, which arises because the data are not sampled at a sufficient number of time points (see MacKenzie, 2012, for a demonstration of aliasing); Arundale (1980) applies this concept to communication.

Summary

This section points out specific aspects of doing conflict communication research as it relates to the study of culture, taking into consideration issues related to meaning, process, and analysis. Conflict can be especially likely in communication across cultures because of the differences in how people communicate, manage relationships, and handle processes associated with incompatible goals and meanings. Understanding how to assess the underlying causes of conflict in ways that provide comparable treatment of cultures is essential to building theory that explains these processes.

Conclusion

This chapter is a focused presentation of a number of issues important for studying conflict using quantitative methods and for understanding previous research. We have focused on various issues related to measurement and observation, research design, sampling, data analysis, and specific issues related to cross-cultural conflict research. We are aware of many issues not dealt with here, and some of the advanced methods for studying conflict are mentioned but not addressed in depth; most important, we have not discussed research ethics. We hope the issues addressed in this chapter will stimulate careful thinking about quantitative methods, which will result in research that contributes sound theoretical insights about conflict and communication.

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3

Qualitative Research on Communication and Conflict

Min Jiang and Patrice M. Buzzanell

Conflict is ubiquitous in human affairs. It is the quality that makes stories, movies and other media productions, relationships, and workplaces interesting, daunting at times, problematic, and open for change. In most situations, conflict can be defined as "a particular type of social interaction, characterized by opposite goals, interests, or values," although one party's perception of the situation as incompatible is enough to give rise to conflict even when parties are not truly in opposition (Putnam, 2009, p. 211). Conflict stems from misunderstandings and disagreements over perceived and actual resource allocations (Putnam & Poole, 1987) that are not resolved easily because of parties' interdependences and struggles. Scholars have offered different theories and strategies to understand, predict, explain, and resolve conflict (see Deutsch, Coleman, & Marcus, 2006). However, conflicts that are prolonged, detrimental, and self-sustaining—namely, intractable conflicts—defy usual interventions (see Gray, Coleman, & Putnam, 2007; Vallacher, Coleman, Nowak, & Bui-Wrzosinska, 2010).

In quantitative research, scholars design and test theories by establishing scales and observational experiments with precise conceptual and operational definitions and hypotheses. The goal of conflict research in this tradition has been to create "general and abstract social science theory, which entails prediction as well as prescription" (Fink, Cai, & Wang, 2006, p. 34). Much quantitative research in conflict has used approaches such as game, social exchange, and system theories with topics ranging from intrapersonal conflicts involving anger, jealousy, and aggressiveness; to family and marital conflicts related to relational maintenance, sibling hostility, and divorce; to interpersonal conflicts such as interpersonal conflict style and management; to hostage negotiation and organizational disputes; and to interethnic and cross-cultural conflicts (for overviews, see Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2006, and this *Handbook*). Indeed,

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this methodological research tradition on conflict has expanded communication scholars' knowledge on analyses of and findings about conflict within and across communication contexts (Fink et al., 2006). These studies have provided theoretical understandings of and productive strategies for conflict resolution. However, as Figure 3.1 displays, many of the associations on the concept map of conflict communication scholarship captured by the Communication Institute for Online Scholarship's (CIOS) Visual Communication

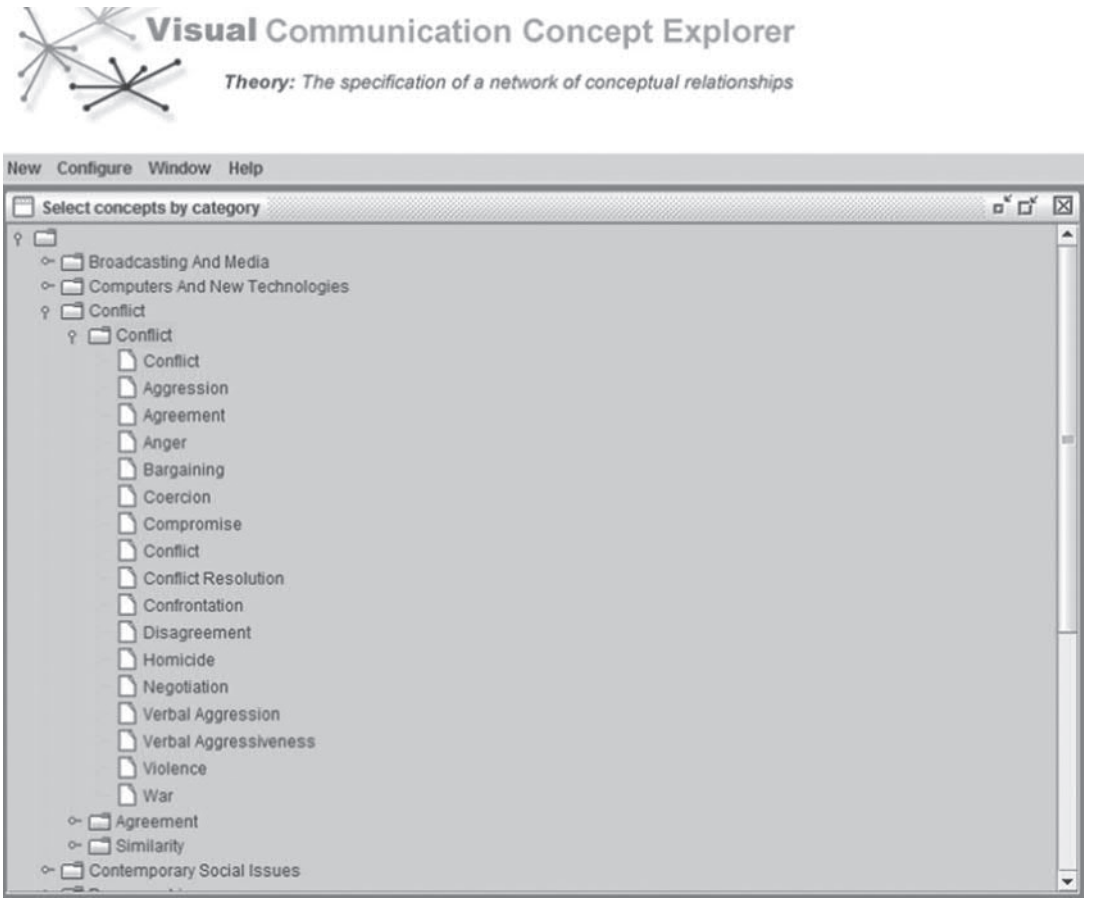

Figure 3.1 The Communication Concept Explorer for "Conflict" in ComAbstracts[a]

NOTE: This figure displays concepts most related to conflict. Once the visual explorer opens up, "conflict" is listed as the third major category. A click on the "conflict" folder icon brings up a list of the most frequently researched concepts related to "conflict."

a. Visual Communication Concept Explorer is a free visualization tool provided by the Communication Institute for Online Scholarship (CIOS), accessible at http://www.cios.org. This interactive tool helps visualize relationships between various communication-related concepts. For specific details about how the Visual Communication Concept Explorer works, please visit the CIOS's website for the Explorer's user guide. According to the user guide for the Explorer (as of April 15, 2011), concepts were identified through a statistical analysis of the frequency of occurrence and co-occurrence of core terms appearing in the titles of 37,000 articles from the primary scholarly journals of the communication discipline. These data are provided by the CIOS's ComIndex database.

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Concept Explorer are negative: aggression, anger, coercion, confrontation, disagreement, verbal aggressiveness, violence, and war.

Similarly, qualitative research on communication and conflict also aims to provide understandings and potentially transferrable strategies for resolution in many of the same contexts and topics. Here, researchers often consider how conflict associations are both negative and simultaneously beneficial or productive. Perhaps, one reason for this difference is, as we have found, that much qualitative communication scholarship about conflict is not named as such by researchers. They may not label their studies as conflict per se because their theoretical, epistemological, ontological, and methodological bases for qualitative inquiry presume contradictions, tensions, and social interactions predicated by misunderstanding and resource allocation disagreements. Questions they ask would examine what was happening in different venues when people "do," perform, and talk about or within conflict exchanges or contexts. Qualitative conflict researchers may invoke metaphorical schema, fantasy themes, and cultural formations to more fully account for the deep and rich processes of everyday conflict. Their findings both dovetail with and can be quite different from what and how scholars traditionally examine conflict. For instance, in Bormann, Pratt, and Putnam's (1978) classic fantasy theme analysis of mixed-gender small-group communication, the evidence and intensity of conflict between class members could be ascertained readily by using conflict scales or other measures. However, the deep and abiding fear of powerful women ("black widow spiders") would only have come about with examination of discourse chaining through fantasy theme analysis. Similarly, Ellingson's (2005) multiyear ethnography of an oncology unit might not be characterized as a conflict study, in the traditional sense, but the power differentials and their communicative consequences among health care professionals provide insight into professional and gendered hierarchies as well as difficulties in multidisciplinary teamwork. Misunderstandings, status, and resources differences based on titles and interactions indicating differing opinions about treatment protocols might ensue. When qualitative research, such as these examples, probes into the bases and manifestations of conflict, it often delves into the diverse social constructions that make people so interesting, creative, and resilient. Qualitative research uncovers human conflict processes in particular times and places and for specific individuals and collectivities with potentially transferrable findings. It pulls researchers and practitioners into the world of participants to uncover the ways and extent to which conflict figures into their lives. Findings provide insight into the communicative construction of different kinds of conflict processes and possible interventions or conflict management strategies, such as changing linguistic choices, shifting levels of abstraction and stories, framing and reframing issues, and developing collective memories that can transform the nature of conflict (see Putnam, 2009, 2010).

With these thoughts in mind, we focus on the following areas to organize our chapter: (a) qualitative approaches used in conflict research and (b) building on the unique contributions of qualitative communication inquiry for the study of conflict. We devote most attention to the first question but incorporate different contexts and levels into our responses for both. Not surprisingly, for the field of communication, the contexts range from interpersonal to groups or organizational to global. This means that conflict research covers micro, meso (organizational and institutional), and macro contexts. We note that scholars such as Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2006) point out the benefits of multilevel theorizing and social ecological frameworks of analyses as ways of uncovering productive communication processes and outcomes.

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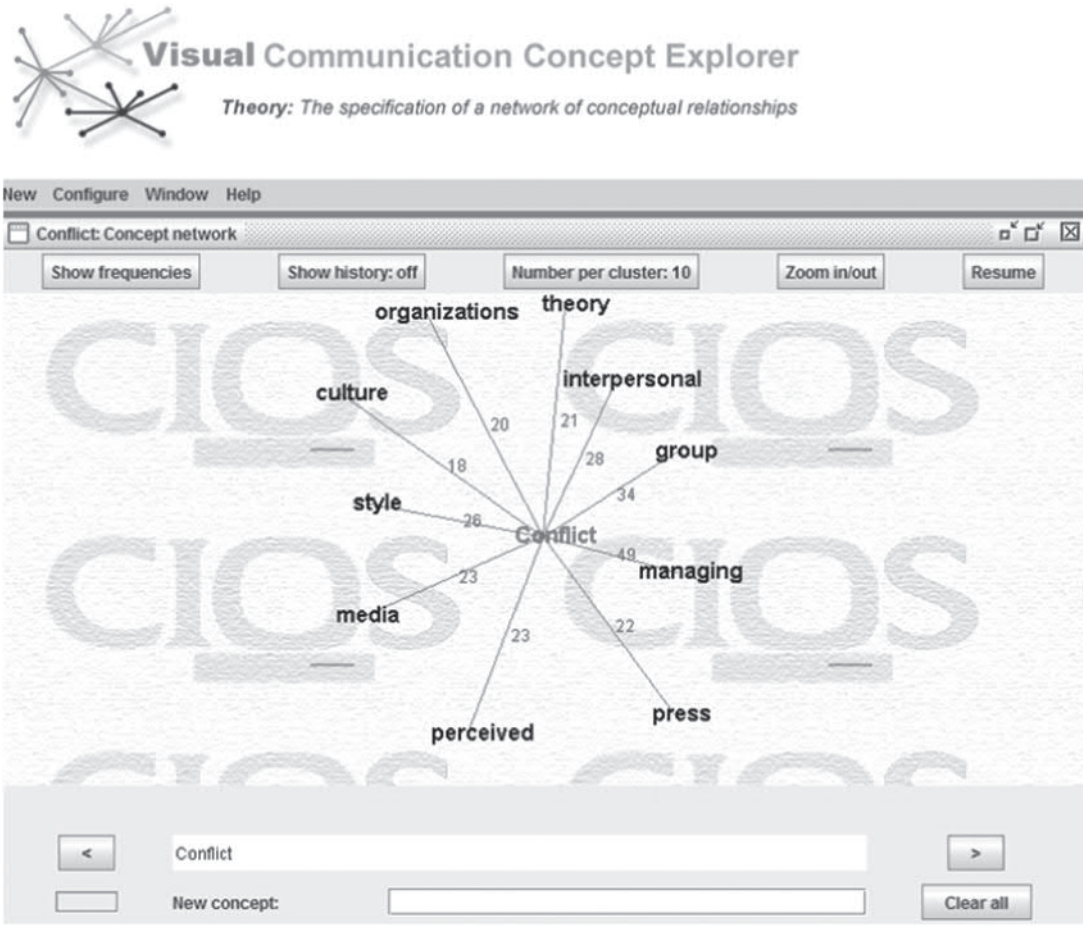

Figure 3.2 How Conflict Concurs With Other Key Concepts With Frequency Counts

NOTE: According to the user guide provided for the Visual Communication Concept Explorer, orbiting the central concept ("conflict") are other concepts from the communication literature that co-occur most frequently with the concept featured at the center. The shorter the link, the more often the two concepts co-occur (e.g., "conflict" and "managing" had co-occurred 49 times when we captured the graph on April 15, 2011).

Multilevel and ecological frameworks as well as attention to modes of inquiry can transcend contexts and lessen the unequal emphases on particular contexts (e.g., interpersonal and organizational) and research programs (e.g., styles), which are displayed in Figures 3.2 and 3.3, from CIOS's Visual Communication Concept Explorer (2012).

We also note that there are varied metatheoretical traditions and theories in communication, such as phenomenological, interpretive, cultural, critical, feminist, postmodern, postcolonial, and endless combinations, that could be utilized to organize this review (for overviews, see Carbaugh & Buzzanell, 2010; Craig, 1999). Many of these traditions and theories align with particular methods. Methods surveyed in different qualitative handbooks include narrative, ethnography, case studies, grounded theory, fantasy themes,

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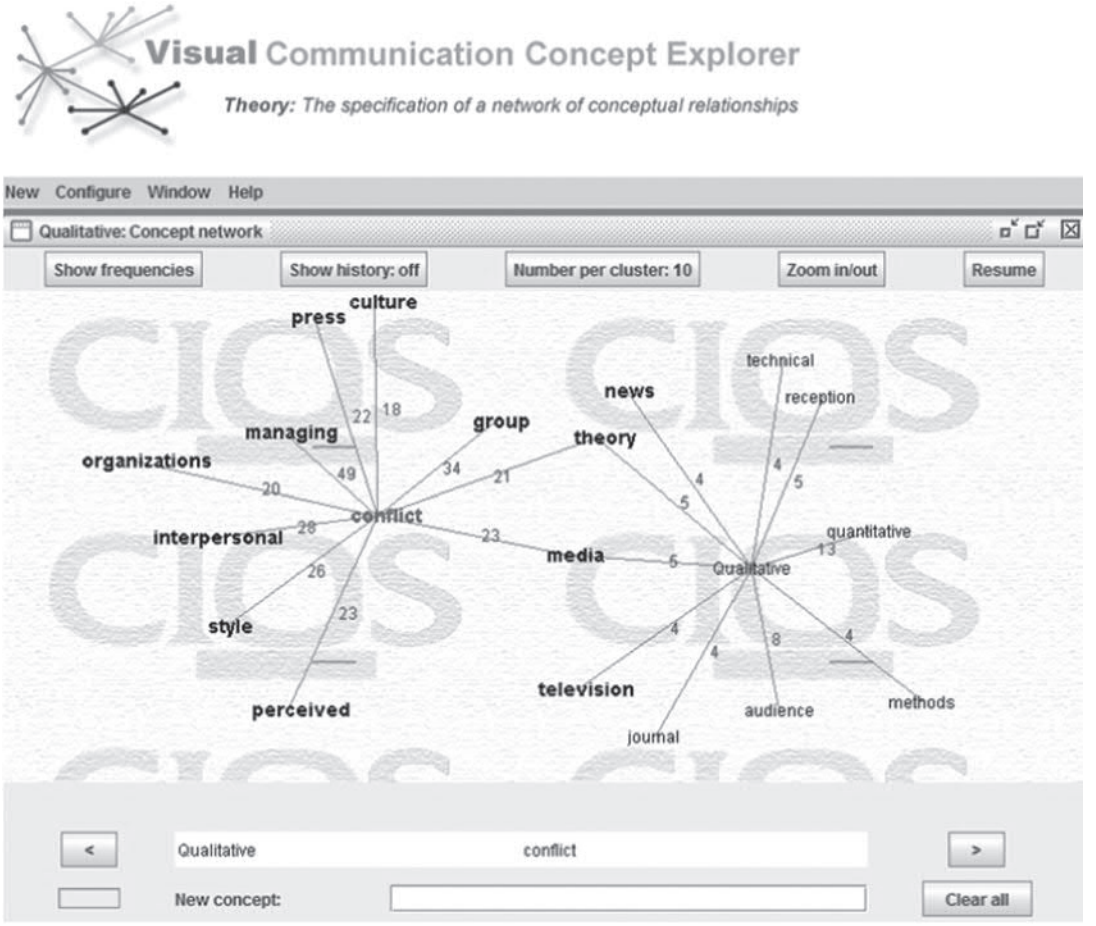

Figure 3.3 The Concurrence of "Conflict" and "Qualitative" as Concepts in Communication

NOTE: This graph is rendered when "conflict" is imported as a new concept into the Concept Explorer for the concept "qualitative." The two concepts do not seem to have a lot of overlapping except through "theory" and "media."

life history, and crystallized lenses that integrate and/or layer (mostly) different qualitative approaches (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Ellingson, 2009).

Given this vast array, we employed the following decision criteria to narrow our scope. First, because we emphasize communication, we focus on discourse, interaction, and macro discourses—not personality variables or intrapsychic processes—with the caveat that we sometimes include studies that report recollected interaction such as in narrative, autoethnography, and textual accounts. Following Fink et al. (2006), we emphasize the data collection and interaction angle to exclude studies that are solely or primarily rhetorical. Second, we include mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) investigations. We stipulate that these studies need to fully incorporate qualitative inquiry into the design, implementation, and findings rather than simply analyze

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open-ended survey questions to supplement quantitative findings. To this end, we take issue with Fink et al.'s (2006) reference to qualitative research only as "precursors" to, and lacking the rigor of, quantitative studies (p. 34). Third, we do not provide an overview of theoretical or "think pieces" that develop conceptual frameworks and advance theorizing about conflict in our corpus of studies for examination in this chapter. Fourth, we did not include models of practice (see Deutsch et al., 2006) but note that pragmatic implementations as derived from qualitative studies are important contributions of such work. Finally, we include both classic conflict studies and new studies that emerged around 2005 to 2006 when the last edition of this *Handbook* was being finalized. Where possible, we focus attention on studies published since 2005. This cutoff date aligns with the publication of Putnam's (2006) chapter in the first edition of this *Handbook* outlining different approaches, data gathering and analytic techniques, and agendas for future research.

To adhere to our decision criteria, we searched databases on multiple occasions and delved into individual communication journals, as well as interdisciplinary publications featuring communication scholarship, for appropriate materials. Specifically, we used ComAbstracts, Communication & Mass Media Complete, Academic Search Complete, search capabilities associated with publishers of International Communication Association and National Communication Association journals, and Sage Journals Online.[1] Despite these searches and the need for more qualitative inquiry in conflict communication studies, there still is relatively little conflict research driven by communication and using primarily qualitative methods (see Figure 3.3). As a result, we present representative studies with emphasis on more recent publications when available.

Qualitative Approaches Used in Conflict Research

In conflict situations, communication can be considered as a variable, a process, an interpretation or meaning, and a dialectical relationship (Putnam, 2006). As noted earlier, it is through qualitative inquiry that scholars seek to understand those processes, meanings, and relationships deeply. Of importance is that these modes of inquiry transcend contexts to focus on communicative processes throughout conflicts, particularly how conflict is communicatively constituted and manifested through language, that is, how conflict is recognizable as such and brought into being through communication, rather than how conflict is reflected in communication exchanges or regarded as an indicator of conflict style or management strategy. As such, communication is the site of meaning and realities construction in conflict on micro-, meso-, and macrolevels. In qualitative conflict research, dynamics are often both positive and detrimental with functional, dysfunctional, unintended, and ironic consequences situated and politicized in human conditions. In this chapter, then, we define qualitative conflict communication research as that form of inquiry that delves into the gathering and analysis of rich data about how communicators construct and label phenomena as conflict and constitute conflict discursively and performatively and with what consequences. True to the benefits of rich qualitative inquiry, we seek to uncover aspects about human actions and their consequences that might otherwise go unnoticed during conflicts. We adhere to the bases of conflict in interdependent interaction and discourse but note that struggles are socially constructed and materially rooted. Despite our relatively simple definition of qualitative conflict communication research, much about qualitative research is still actively and productively debated, as researchers attempt to locate optimal ways of

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categorizing and enriching (a) paradigms and metatheoretical traditions and (b) methods.

Paradigms and Metatheoretical Traditions

Over a decade after Denzin and Lincoln (2000) introduced a list of key paradigms in qualitative research (i.e., interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism), the latest edition of Denzin and Lincoln's handbook on qualitative research (2011) expanded these classic areas by adding "paradigms and perspectives in contention," displaying tensions found in critical ethnography and race theory scholarships, cultural studies, and critical humanism and queer theory. Paradigms overlap with and differ from phenomenological, sociocultural (e.g., ethnomethodological, symbolic interactionist, social constructionist, ethnographic, structurational, actor network theoretical inquiry), and critical (e.g., feminist, postcolonialist, critical race, and cultural studies) traditions and theories espoused by Lindlof and Taylor (2010). In the following sections, we rely on the work of Denzin and Lincoln (2000, 2011), Craig (1999), and Lindlof and Taylor (2010) for our overviews. Table 3.1 summarizes all the major theoretical paradigms adopted in qualitative research on

Table 3.1 Summary of Selected Qualitative Research on Communication and Conflict

Paradigm	*Overview*	*Methods Used*	*Contexts Considered*	*Examples*
Phenomenological	Conflict is rooted in conflict of meaning. This paradigm focuses on individuals' unique experience, emotions, and interpretations of conflict.	Phenomenology	Interpersonal, organizational	Krider and Ross (1997) and Oduro-Frimpong (2007)
Sociocultural/ social construction	Conflict is constructed by participants through group, community, and cultural interactions. Norms of conflict (macrolevel) are worked out through communication (microlevel). Conflict occurs when there is a lack of shared rules, rituals, or expectations among members.	Ethnography, narrative, grounded theory, case study, and mixed methods	Interpersonal, organizational, community, public relations, interethnic/ intercultural, international and geopolitical, and online	Aakhus and Rumsey (2010), Barak (2007), Brummans et al. (2008), Coleman, Hacking, Stover, Fisher-Yoshida, and Nowak (2008), Daiute and Turniski, (2005), D. Ellis (2012), Goodwin (2008), Moriizumi (2011), Papa, Mapendere, and Dillon (2010), and Smith-Sanders and Harter (2007)

(Continued)

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Table 3.1 (Continued)

Paradigm	*Overview*	*Methods Used*	*Contexts Considered*	*Examples*
Critical/cultural studies	Conflict is embedded in a society's power structures, be it economic, social, cultural, or ideological. Conflict is a locale for investigating how power is constituted and normalized. Praxis and social change start with awareness of and resistance to power imbalance.	Ethnography, narrative, grounded theory, case study, and mixed methods	Interpersonal, organizational, community, and interethnic/ intercultural conflict	Buzzanell and Liu (2007), Cloud (2005), D'Enbeau and Buzzanell (2011), Eckman and Lindlof (2003), Goldberg (2009), Jameson (2003), Lambert and Dollahite (2006), Palmeri (2009), Plowman (2008), Roscigno and Hodson (2004), and Wieland (2010)
Poststructuralist/ postmodernist	Conflict is nonlinear, emergent, unstable, and unpredictable. Multiple emergent realities, rooted in historical and cultural contexts, can give rise to ambiguities, ironies, and identity considerations in and about conflict.	Narrative, grounded theory, and case study	Interpersonal, organizational, and public relations	Buzzanell and Liu (2005), Faulkner and Hecht (2011), Ney, Blank, and Blank (2007), Watts (2009), and Weaver (2010)

NOTE: Qualitative conflict studies featured in this table are referenced in alphabetic order.

conflict communication as well as the methods, specific communicative contexts, and key publications for each paradigm.

Hermeneutic/ Phenomenological Tradition

This approach toward conflict focuses on the discovery, description, and interpretation of conflict. It views conflict primarily as conflict of meaning. Conflict management, hence, becomes a process of elucidating discordant interpretations, clarifying misunderstandings, and restoring dialogue. Whereas hermeneutics emphasizes crafting the art of interpretation, phenomenology is primarily concerned with the individual's unique experience and interpretations of conflict. Theorized as dialogue or experience of otherness, communication is seen as central to overcoming differences in identity and experience so that authentic human relationships become possible. The

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primary difficulty of resolving conflict is thus located in intersubjective understanding, experiencing the other, and sustaining dialogue.

This paradigm implies that conflict cannot be adequately understood or resolved by measuring and analyzing causal relationships between variables but rather through detailed explication of the agent's unique experiences, emotions, and perspectives. To borrow Hawes's (1977) analogy, if the communicative phenomenon of conflict can be likened to a stream, the hermeneutic phenomenologist might attempt to bring along appropriate gears, enter into the stream, and develop an intimate understanding of the stream. A rigorous interpretation of conflict requires deep immersion in the conflictual context itself and a critical examination of the often taken-for-granted presuppositions and previously hidden features of conflict. Through a vivid account of lived experience, the researcher/interpreter may produce something "that we can nod to, recognizing it as an experience that we have had or could have had" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 27).

For instance, Krider and Ross (1997) used a phenomenological lens to depict the often conflictual lived experience of women in a public relations (PR) firm during the feminization of the profession. Instead of relying on statistical surveys, the study opted to describe and interpret the everyday life of a PR woman so that "an understanding of the essence of a phenomenon can emerge" (p. 451). In this case, a PR woman entered the workplace "being, first, a woman, and second, a daughter" (p. 437) with a heightened awareness of her new identity as one of the "women in public relations." Career woman, daughter, and family caregiver were depicted as conflicting societal roles and individual enactments with which participants struggle. As one woman stated: "I think the minute you get married, you are written off. If you have kids you are written off" (p. 445).

In another study, Oduro-Frimpong (2007) adopted a phenomenological approach to study the use of silence as a conflict management strategy in married couples. The intent was not to uncover universal rules governing married couples' behavior during conflicts, but rather to describe, condense, and interpret the unique ways silence was experienced and understood by both parties so that deeper understandings of the feelings and experiences of conflict and silence could be ascertained.

Sociocultural/Social Construction Tradition

This approach takes the view that conflict is constructed by participants who also produce and reproduce societal norms of conflict through their interaction within groups, communities, and cultures. Conflict is seen neither as objective sets of arrangements outside people nor as confined to the realm of individual characteristics and mental models. Rather, the meanings, norms, roles, and rules of conflict are worked out interactively through communication. Following Carey's (1989) definition of communication as "a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (p. 23), researchers in the sociocultural/social construction approach toward conflict emphasize how the norms of conflict (macrolevel phenomena) are created, maintained, and transformed through microlevel interactions and processes. Conflict occurs when there is a lack of shared rules, rituals, or expectations among members (see Craig, 1999). Variations on this approach include symbolic interactionism, social constructionism, sociolinguistics, ethnography, and ethnomethodology.

Given the sociocultural/social construction assumption that conflict is constructed interactively and socially, the methods employed to study conflict are often interpretive. Differing from the interpretive lens used in hermeneutic/phenomenological studies of conflict, the sociocultural/social construction focus is

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placed on everyday practice of metadiscourse that may give rise to, or transform the nature of, conflict. Researchers embrace holistic, reflexive approaches, such as ethnography, interviews, focus groups, various forms of discourse analysis, and multimethodologies.

In their classic study of teachers' collective bargaining, Putnam, Van Hoeven, and Bullis (1991) treated conflict processes as social constructions of reality. They focused on rituals and fantasy themes invoked by bargainers and team members during the bargaining process. They demonstrated how the meanings, norms, roles, and rules of conflict were worked out interactively in two school districts and between the labor management teams. Bargaining produced and reproduced social reality through rituals, narratives, and myths as well as individual and collective meaning making.

A more recent study that focused on myth, narrative, and individual and collective sensemaking is Lucas's (2011) examination of discourse from 62 interviews with people having working class ties. As she describes her grounded theory approach, she notes that she "sensitized myself to issues of social class as I analyzed participants' words. What does the term working class mean to them? How are they talking about class even when they are not being specifically queried about it?" (p. 367). She uncovered "deep-seated ambivalences [that] arise from the paradoxical conflict between two ubiquitous macro-level discourses: the American Dream and the Working Class Promise" (p. 348). These conflicts play out in everyday decision making, interactions with family members and others, and associated action about mobility and careers.

Critical/Cultural Studies

Power is central to the critical/cultural approach toward conflict. In this perspective, conflict is seen as embedded in the power structures of the societies in which it occurs, whether the nature of the conflict is economic, political, social, cultural, or ideological. As an integral part of the construction of those power structures, conflict becomes a locale for investigating how power is constituted and normalized, which greatly influences how researchers and practitioners understand social structures, interpret cultural symbols, and ideologies, and might potentially reshape them. Whether rooted in political economy, critical theory, cultural studies, feminism, postcolonialism, critical race theory, or queer theory, a critical/cultural approach toward conflict is interested in examining how material and ideological forces prevent or distort discursive reflection on the part of conflict participants. A commitment to confronting and revealing power structures and social inequalities in conflict so that wrongs can be righted, social justice can be restored, and the state of human affairs can be improved is generally shared among researchers of this paradigm.

Critical conflict researchers are concerned that communication perceived only as a conduit (see Axley, 1984; see also Putnam & Boys, 2006) is flawed and incomplete. In examining multiple axes of power, oppression, domination, and resistance, critical/cultural scholars often emphasize interdisciplinarity and multiple identities; they defy clear-cut boundaries between communicative contexts and social identities, such as race, gender, sexuality, nationality, and ability (Ono, 2009). Different from other approaches, critical research also subscribes to praxis or reflective social action for social change.

As one example, Cloud's (2005) narrative analysis of newsletters by locked-out workers during an industrial conflict calls attention to the limits of symbolic agency in the labor movement and questions the overemphasis on discursive power and lack of focus on materiality in organizational communication

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and social movement research. The conflict between employer and union is viewed as both economic and discursive that manifests itself on the ground of power in the workers' narratives. Workers discursively positioned themselves in conflict scenarios as warriors and heroes and later as victims, refugees, and martyrs as the movement faltered. Power is construed in this case not only discursively but also alternatively as economic and repressive force wielded by capitalists. Organizational dialogue and workplace democracy, the study implies, is impossible if one does not question the underlying unjust economic arrangements in capitalist organizations and the coercive power they hold.

Although prominent in analyses and findings, "conflict" may not be explicitly used as a key word or even mentioned in texts consistent with the critical/cultural studies tradition. For instance, D'Enbeau and Buzzanell (2011) utilized a grounded theory approach to analyze field notes, 38 interview transcripts, and documents from "Moxie," a cutting-edge independent media organization that also sponsors community events to promote social change. Inherent tensions between and within feminist ideology and viability are articulated throughout individual, group, and organizational discourses and embodied by members in their self-presentations and everyday practices. Participants worked through their ideological and financial viability tensions and reported workplace conflicts by equating viability with ideology or by submitting to the force of viability (economic feasibility). For instance, staff members expressed disagreement over advertisements for some products that they considered unhealthy and not aligned with principles that they equated with feminism. They sometimes discussed contradictions but, as Gwen said in her capacity as the expert on marketing and advertisement: "I think it's directly in opposition to the way that I look at my place in society. And what I believe in. I fucking hate it. . . . it's consumerism, but it has to be paid for" D'Enbeau & Buzzanell, 2011, p. 41).

Gwen reflects on voiced conflicts and the unresolved tensions that reemerge because of defaults to viability arguments. In this and other investigations in the critical/cultural studies, tradition, ideological, and material resource conflicts are intertwined but not necessarily labeled as such.

Poststructuralist/Postmodernist

Adherents of this tradition tend to pursue the multiple and emergent realities formed by the ambiguities, ironies, identity, and identification considerations in and about conflict. Researchers adopting this approach tend to see conflict as nonlinear, emergent, unstable, and unpredictable. By denaturalizing self-evident claims to truth about conflict and critiquing their presuppositions and implications, this approach could open up "possibilities of thinking and acting differently" (Foucault, 1985, p. 9). A poststructuralist or postmodernist conflict researcher sees the meanings surrounding conflict as inherently unstable and embraces pluralism, complexity, and contradiction rather than rationality and elitism.

Methodologically, poststructuralists/postmodernists problematize conflict in its historical and cultural context. Researchers themselves are also "demystified" as bearers of racial, gender, class, and professional markers in their knowledge claims about conflict. A favored methodology in the poststructuralist, postmodern tradition is deconstruction, whereby conflict and its underlying structures can be read as "texts" open to multiple interpretations. Just as all texts are inherently ambiguous, a final and complete reading of a text of conflict is not deemed possible. Instead, competing interpretations are inevitable. What emerges from deconstruction are reinterpretations of the conflict with awareness of the hierarchies and ideologies implicit in truth claims about conflict.

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For instance, Buzzanell and Liu's (2005) poststructuralist critique of 15 women's maternity leave discourses focused on the constitutive power of discourse in identity and meaning with potential material consequences. Their analysis revealed that workplace pregnancy and maternity leave discourses are "replete with gendered conflicts, ironies, shifting identity constructions, and discourses of simultaneous resistance and complicity" (p. 8). These women struggled to "fix meaning and identities" toward their own interests in negotiations with organizational members, but policies "suppress[ed] alternative ways of thinking about and constructing women's identities, individuals' leaves, organizational policies, and governmental laws" (p. 19).

Similarly, Watts (2009) adopted a feminist poststructuralist framework to study the conflict experienced by increasing numbers of women civil engineers within the U.K. construction industry who try to achieve work–life balance. Not only do these women struggle to negotiate their personal and professional time, their roles as caregivers and nurturers are often seen to unsettle male work practices in this highly gendered profession. They try to fit in to the dominant masculine culture of long working hours and the male pub gathering. The inherent complexity and contradictions of these women's multiple social identities are in direct conflict with a professional culture that glorifies prolonged work hours and that silences those who question personal life needs of caring.

Methods

In this section, we talk about methods and incorporate some commentary on data gathering and analysis techniques. First, qualitative methods typically include narrative, ethnography, case studies, grounded theory, life history, performance ethnography, and mixed methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2011). Largely absent from conflict communication literature are studies using life history and performance ethnography. In the following section, we discuss each qualitative method proceeding from methodological orientation to illustrative examples of conflict communication research. Although some studies may use combinations of qualitative (and sometimes qualitative and quantitative) methods, a given qualitative approach must be featured as the main method of investigation for inclusion in our review. Despite a wide range of qualitative methods available (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), we focus here on narrative, ethnography, grounded theory, and case studies, as they are the most popularly used qualitative methods in conflict studies. Mixed-methods research has gained importance as an alternative method in many social science disciplines as well as in conflict studies over the past decades. Studies reviewed here are meant to be "samplers" for each methodological approach.

Narrative

By definition, narrative centers on the emergence of some conflict that reaches a climax or point, whereby some resolution must take place, and the resulting denouement. This sequencing, the storytelling process, or the ways in which humans account for past and present action while also making sense of and crafting their futures is so fundamental in human life that humans are sometimes called "homo narrans," and narrative is considered paradigmatic (Fisher, 1984, 1985). As a subset of qualitative methodology, narrative inquiry centers on "an interest in life experiences as narrated by those who live them" (Chase, 2011, p. 421). Consequently, narratives of conflict are seen as meaning-making processes through which individuals make sense of their

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conflict experience and reach understandings of their own and/or others' actions as well as the consequences of those actions in social and historical contexts.

Narrative researchers use various sources of data, such as diaries, newsletters, autobiographies, field notes, and interviews. In-depth interviews are the most common source of narrative data. Since narrative researchers work closely with individuals and their stories, narrative research invariably involves a particular set of issues such as research relationships, ethics, interpretation, and validity (see Adams, 2008; Chase, 2011; C. Ellis, 2007). Narrators may feel vulnerable or exposed by such work. Permission from narrators to present, publish, or perform work that exposes conflictual behaviors or recalled conflict interactions and participants' sensemaking about these episodes is of particular importance to ethical considerations in our review. As a result, we note that narrative interviewing also requires emotional maturity, sensitivity, and life experience, all of which may take years to develop yet are key to understanding, documenting, and interpreting conflict situations. Indeed, narrative interviewing may require an embodied approach in all phases of qualitative inquiry, particularly in empirical research that involves face-to-face interaction, to dissolve the mind/body split (see Ellingson, in press) and uncover aspects of conflict that have not yet been studied.

With regard to research validity, it is true that narrators are selective in storytelling and that which is expressed is shaped by context and audience. However, researchers do not claim that their interpretations are the only possibilities, but they demonstrate and argue coherently that their interpretation is viable and grounded in data. Moreover, narrative researchers strengthen their interpretations by discussing cases contrary to their claims and by considering alternative interpretations (e.g., Chase, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

As a method, narrative has been employed in a variety of conflict contexts. Some researchers focus on plots, characters, and structures or sequencing of conflict narratives. Others emphasize the construction of and tensions within personal identities and social realities through conflict narratives, rendering narrative more intrapersonally oriented. Still others focus specifically on the relationship between people's narratives of recalled conflict in their local narrative environments (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). In general, researchers are interested in how narrators make sense of their personal experience in relation to larger social discourses. In this approach, narratives are seen as a window to the conflict parties' social world. Although there is much narrative work embedded in qualitative conflict studies, there are not many recent investigations that focus primarily on, and use keywords of, narrative and conflict in interpersonal, organizational, and interethnic/intercultural communication.

In *interpersonal conflict*, narrative is often embedded within interview data meaning that stories and their analyses as narratives are not as prominent as thematic, dialectic, and other methods. In one specific case, researchers have used narrative methodology to encourage preteens to narrate their experiences and views of interpersonal conflicts, particularly as they relate to romance and friendship (Walton, Weatherall, & Jackson, 2002). In the dominant interpretive repertoire, children are shown to construct "romance as contest" and a source of conflicts between friends. Narratives here become a lens through which children negotiate meanings of conflict and construct their own identity.

Similarly, narrated conflicts in mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationships in the Taiwanese culture demonstrate cross-generational strains and constraints (Sandel, 2004) that are evident through the retrospective and contextualized sensemaking that narrative

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offers. Underlying a facade of social harmony can lay relational turbulence expressed in clever language and verbal barbs that "work under the table" (p. 370). Findings from 16 relational pairs show that such conflicts are grounded not simply in interpersonal displeasures but, more important, in generational differences in upholding or rejecting Confucian hierarchical values. Moral order (e.g., deference and respect for the elder) is both rooted in and maintained by the community that watches how daughter-in-laws treat their elders. The younger generation's expression of dissatisfaction is often more indirect than direct to preserve harmony with tumultuous undercurrents.

More recently, Faulkner and Hecht (2011) used identity narratives to examine the "doubly other" experience of lesbian gay bisexual transgendered queer (LBGTQ) Jewish Americans whose "closetable," or concealable, identities involve intricate and conflicting negotiations with others. Drawing from 31 interviews with this stigmatized minority group, the authors provided vivid accounts about how research participants experience and manage their identities and relations given negative attitudes toward both LBGTQ within Judaism and anti-Semitism within the larger society. Besides experiencing the "shifting" labels of themselves at the personal identity level, participants are also confronted with relational problems derived from conflicts in close relationships. Alienation is common within this group who feel "too othered" to reveal or enact their stigmatized identities. At the communal level, conflicts centered on not feeling "Jewish enough" or "queer enough" in respective communities. Such identity and value-based interpersonal conflict is so deeply entrenched that it requires more than simply coping by stigmatized individuals.

In current *organizational conflict* contexts, conflict often is portrayed as control and resistance, constraints and agency, work and personal life, and change and status quo dynamics. Wieland (2010, 2011) described how workers in a Swedish research institute perceive interpersonal and organizational conflicts in the application of national (Sweden) and regional (Scandinavian and European Union) policies, and accompanying cultural mind-sets and practices, about work and well-being. Through examination of notes from participant observations as well as semi-structured interviews with 59 organizational members, Wieland (2011) detailed an inductive methodology that moved between first- and second-order concepts. Ultimately, she focused on one participant's story to display, in depth, how "Julia" ruptured cultural norms and negotiated with colleagues, bosses, policy, and cultural constructions of moderation and well-being. Her research portrays workers' attempts to reconcile their struggles centering on needs to accomplish job tasks and to demonstrate that they are not engaged in such tasks when they are supposed to be off work. Moreover, these workers' experience conflict between their ideal selves who embrace productivity and well-being (Wieland, 2010).

Regarding *interethnic/intercultural conflict*, narrative figures prominently in studies of ethnic and cultural conflicts. In "Warring Stories in the Night," Collins and Clark (1991) captured the Israeli–Palestinian conflict through children's narratives, focusing on plotlines and characters. A polarized narrative of victims versus villains, or the archetypal David versus Goliath, shows how language, assumptions, and behaviors on both sides condition responses of people in conflict, much as Smith and Eisenberg (1987) displayed in their classic interpretive study of first- and second-order root metaphors woven into adversarial workers versus management dynamics in Disney organizational culture.

In other compelling conflict narratives, young people in postwar Croatia and former Yugoslavia were shown to express identities

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and knowledge of the war period and reason beyond ideological and emotional war legacies (Daiute & Turniski, 2005). They characterized themselves as collaborative, wise, and resourceful and their parents' generation as divided, bitter, and socially impotent. Collective memory and ongoing discursive and material reconstructions of multiple community narratives were also shown to shift and collide for a Lebanon that recalls war conflicts even as it presents itself in peace (Barak, 2007).

Apart from interethnic conflict, narratives have been used to explore intercultural communication conflict between U.S.-born husbands and Japan-born wives in five couples interviewed about their family communication and child rearing in which their stories revealed their struggles with cultural stereotypes, societal structures, and personal experiences (Moriizumi, 2011). As Moriizumi argued,

> Examining discourses of childrearing practices may be fruitful in observing conflicts and tensions among the couples because the birth of a child may reactivate each parent's own childhood experiences, which may be underscored by their respective cultural beliefs about childrearing. (p. 91)

In examining participants' narratives, the author "paid close attention to agreement, disagreement, tensions, and contradictions among couples and/or between couples and other members including their parents, relatives, coworkers, and neighbors to look for possible themes" (p. 93) informed by cultural identity negotiation theories, contextual factors, and participants' agreement that findings reflected their lived experience. Participants narrated the ways in which past and present aligned in their families (e.g., Japanese American internment camps during World War II), others would say that there was something wrong with people who married out of their race, and their feelings of being caught between two cultural worlds. As "Fumi" said,

> I am *chuuto hampa*. I feel I am neither Japanese nor American. I am living in the States, but I am not an American. I am a person who is caught in between. . . . I have no choice because I chose to marry an American and to live in the United States. I cannot be an American because I have a green card, but I am not an American citizen and do not know the American systems including politics. When I go back to Japan, I may not get accustomed to the Japanese society again. . . . I feel *chuuto hampa*. (p. 97)

In a different study, Goldberg (2009) demonstrated the effect of a conflict resolution practitioner's worldview on practice through a narrative and metaphor analysis of 43 interviews with intercultural and environmental conflict resolvers. While "realistic" conflict resolvers tend to focus on objective factors and prioritize task over relationship, "constructive" practitioners tend to focus on subjective factors and prioritize relationship building. In practice, "realistic" conflict resolvers are more likely to be the Sheriff (focus on individual consequences), the Alchemist (focus on the objective right answer), the Captain (focus on better opportunities for individuals), the Pastor (focus on individual transformation), and the Thinker (focus on best theory). "Constructive" practitioners are more likely to be the Radical (focus on social justice) and emphasize the Family (focus on relationships and community building). Narratives, the way people tell their stories, Goldberg remarks, "reveal how they consciously organize and construct their understandings, what they value, what they exclude, and taken-for-granted practices of power" (p. 411).

Ethnography

Ethnography, literarily, refers to the description (-graphy) of people (ethno-). It typically

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involves describing social practices and interpreting associated systems of meaning in particular cultural settings (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). Conflict researchers using this method are interested in achieving holistic understandings and careful descriptions of conflict, privileging specific communicative contexts of conflict. The hallmark of ethnography is "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) that gives meaningful contextual significance to participants' actions. The more and nuanced the detail that ethnographers provide through their accounts, the richer the understanding of conflict and the culture that gives rise to conflict.

Whereas in anthropology, ethnography tends to imply "living intimately and for a prolonged period of time within a single native community whose language [the researcher] has mastered" (Wax, 1972, p. 7), in sociology as well as in communication, ethnographic practice is more commonly described as "participant observation" that requires deep, long-term immersion in a social setting. Conflict researchers may not involve themselves with foreign cultures but focus instead on domestic locales, urban subcultures, and other lifeworlds where conflict takes place and reflects specific humanistic, social, political, and economic circumstances. Regardless of the research foci, prolonged engagement by the researcher within a social setting is expected to produce a detailed account of the theoretical significance of the ethnographic fieldwork.

Ethnography does not imply a single strategy of data collection or analysis, although participant observation is used by nearly all ethnographers. Nor are quantitative data collection and analysis abandoned by all ethnographers as long as such data contribute to the contextual understanding of the given culture and its meaning system (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). So it is not unusual to combine ethnography with other methods to triangulate findings. How to best study the cultural phenomenon of conflict in question, what perspectives to draw on to elucidate a particular social world's meaning system that gives rise to conflict, and how to best depict the social life are considerations ultimately determined with (not for) cultural members involved in conflict. Ethnography has been employed in varied contexts from interpersonal to organizational, intercultural/interethnic, and international and geopolitical conflicts.

As one example of interpersonal conflict, Boxer (2002) studied nagging as a sociolinguistic speech behavior. Boxer found that nagging becomes a source of familial conflict influenced by variables such as gender, power/status, and social distance. On-site observations not only provided a heightened consciousness of such face-threatening acts but, more important, the conditions that led to such speech behavior. Furthermore, in an ethnographic study of conflicts between young men and the manifestations of male values during their evenings out in Northern England, Benson and Archer (2002) followed the group in two phases, facilitated by interviews afterward: the first, more general, included 10 evening observations; the second, more focused, included 5 evening observations. Participant observation yielded details about the provoking situations, the sequence leading to aggressive verbal exchange and to fights, the role of alcohol, the perception of challenge or insults, and the values attached to them.

In their study of organizational conflict between advertorialists and journalists at a daily paper of more than 400 employees, Eckman and Lindlof (2003) depicted the tension in the organization serving distinctly oppositional interests—advertising and news. Advertorials are advertisement "posing as news," which were at the center of the debate between marketing and news departments. To understand how the two sides compete for control over their symbolic goods, Eckman and Lindlof utilized ethnography, specifically

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participant observation and interviews to access and contextualize advertorial production. Eckman, as a member of the service division that produced the advertorial products, observed the subtle power wielded by advertisers over the advertorial content. While news editors tried to maintain the separation between advertising and news, the paper also wanted to stop the erosion of advertising and "the key decisions that led to the classified redesign were nearly all market driven" (p. 75). The value-based conflict depicted the deep-seated contentions within news organizations that are advertising funded.

Community conflict also has been explored ethnographically in online contexts. Goodwin (2008) used online participant observation, archived online discussion threads, semistructured interviewing, and documentary analysis to explore conflict between two rival virtual communities—Moseley Egroup and Moseley Free Egroup—developed by two oppositional groups in the same geographical community Moseley, Birmingham (the United Kingdom). When the Moseley Egroup's founder/moderator announced his run for local office yet refused to hand over control of the online group to a neutral moderator, a "flame war" broke. Internal conflict led to the creation of Moseley Free Egroup.

Goodwin's study displayed the two online groups' deep disagreements over the meaning of online space and interactions. Whereas Moseley Egroup conceptualized and used online space instrumentally to support the "real" offline locality and relationships, Moseley Free Egroup reconceptualized the online space as a "real" public space in its own right. Moseley Free space was less embedded in locality, with members encouraged to develop new relationships to "regenerate" the local community. Conflict not only was rooted in divergent values and power struggles but also in how technology was appropriated in community life.

Interethnic/intercultural conflict operates as the centerpiece of Kochman's (1981) classic, *Black and White Styles in Conflict*. Kochman explores interethnic conflict using an ethnographic approach by collecting and analyzing patterns of language and culture that affect interracial communication. He examines the cultural factors that shape patterns and attitudes that blacks and whites bring to communication situations as well as ramifications of interracial conflict in diverse settings including schools and workplaces.

In their ethnographic study of cultural norms in conflict communication among Mexicans and U.S. Americans working in maquiladoras (American-owned assembly plants in Mexico), Lindsley and Braithwaite (1996) gathered ethnographic interviews and utilized participant observations in seven plants. Their study surfaces deep cultural divides at the plants where widely held Mexican cultural norms are violated by U.S. Americans that led to decreased organizational effectiveness. One Mexican manager for instance expressed his puzzlement over how his U.S. American colleagues expressed disagreement at management meetings:

> When we are in a meeting together, the U.S. Americans will tell another manager, "I didn't like what you did . . . ." Mexicans interpret this as a personal insult. They have a difficult time understanding that U.S. Americans can insult each other in this way and then go off and play golf together. . . . Mexicans would be polite, perhaps tell the person in private, or make a suggestion, rather than confronting. (p. 208)

In a recent ethnographic study of conflict at an ethnoracially divided California high school, Bocholtz (2011) revealed how race talk reproduces racial binaries while also perpetuating gender ideologies. White youth see themselves disadvantaged by their black peers with references to "reverse discrimination,"

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narratives of racialized fear, and fight stories. Claire, a European American girl, said in the interview: "I'm really bitter about [that class]" (p. 388), referring to the multiculturalism class at the school. The word "multiculturalism" was mentioned in a whisper. White boys' narratives also highlighted racial differences. Discourses of the "Big Black Man Syndrome" and "the little Asian fools" (i.e., fools as in guys and dudes) tend to reproduce and reinforce racial identities and ideologies.

An area of communication research that examines peace and conflict processes can be labeled as *international and geopolitical conflict*. As one early communication example, Fetherston and Nordstrom (1995) interrogated the appropriateness of traditional conflict management techniques used to ameliorate violent conflict in war zones. Drawing from ethnographic experience with United Nations peacekeeping on the ground level, the study shows that application of traditional conflict management techniques is conditioned by both policymakers' and interveners' own life experiences and cultures, which in turn limits the range of alternatives "perceived" to be available for managing conflict. More recently, Ellis's research program on geopolitical or ethnopolitical conflict has delved into observations of interactions and profound complexities between Israeli Jews and Palestinians. Conflicts revolve around religion, economics, supporters, goals, strategies, and cultures as depicted in *Transforming Conflict: Communication and Ethnopolitical Conflict* (D. Ellis, 2006) and *Deliberative Communication and Ethnopolitical Conflict* (D. Ellis, 2012).

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was introduced by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967 as a qualitative response to the positivistic approach that dominated sociological research at the time. Although there exist different versions of this method (e.g., constructivist, objectivist, and postpositivist), these approaches share a mode of inquiry that uses inductive logic and emergent and iterative strategies in data collection and analysis. Grounded theory is understood both as method and theory developed from the conceptual analysis of data. As a method for studying conflict, grounded theory consists of a set of flexible analytic guidelines that emphasize field study of conflict, simultaneous data collection and analysis, and a constant comparative procedure between and among data, codes, tentative categories, and concepts. The process of coding often involves open coding (initial, unrestricted coding), in vivo coding (enlightening terms used by participants themselves), and axial coding (coding that makes connections between categories) (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010). In the process, researchers fragment the data through coding and construct abstract categories that fit the data and offer conceptual analyses (Charmaz, 2011). Data collection and analysis are not mutually exclusive but reinforcing.

Grounded theory encourages conflict researchers to be engaged analysts with participants, data, and emergent theories. Researchers may use a variety of data collection methods such as interviewing, archiving, and ethnography. Excerpts and summaries of data are expected to demonstrate connections between data and category and offer evidence for the robustness of categories and subsequent construction of theory built through the approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory recognizes inherent historical, social, and situational constraints placed on research actions.

The grounded theoretical approach has been used often in communication for theory building, including in conflict studies. For this review, the constant comparative method is folded under grounded theory as they are often used interchangeably. However, the

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constant comparative rationale is comparison of newly collected data with previous ones so theories can be formed, confirmed, or even rejected based on the introduction of new data. Grounded theory develops new empirically driven theory. Research has employed both approaches in various communicative settings, including interpersonal, community, and international conflict.

In interpersonal conflict, a continuing line of research uses a grounded theory approach, and increasingly in other communication contexts. An earlier study by Newell and Stutman (1988), for instance, used role-playing episodes to generate data. Using the grounded theory method, they built a theoretical model of social confrontation based on confrontational episodes where rules or expectations for appropriate conduct were perceived to be violated. Five aspects were highlighted: the legitimacy of the invoked rule, the legitimacy of any superseding rules, whether the person actually performed the behavior in question, whether the behavior constitutes a violation of the rule, and whether the accused accepts responsibility. Such an episodic, grounded theory approach was also used by Alberts and Driscoll (1992) for studying complaints between conflict couples. Based on 40 recorded episodes, they found that couples typically enact one of six complaint episodes: ignoring the complaint, changing the focus of the complaint, mitigating the severity of the complaint, validating the partner's complaint, denying the validity of the partner's complaint, or escalating complaint interaction.

The grounded theory approach also has been used retrospectively to collect and analyze qualitative data. In their study of the "First Big Fight" (FBF), a turning point event that defines a close relationship, Siegert and Stamp (1994) collected 50 participants' retrospective accounts of their FBFs and found four conditions leading up to the FBF (uncertainty over commitment, jealousy, violation of expectations, and personality differences), three effects of the FBF (clarification of feelings, awareness of interdependence, and introduction of thematic conflict), and three differences between the "nonsurvivors" and the "survivors" (increasing vs. decreasing uncertainty in the relationship, different beliefs regarding communication and conflict, and differences in attributions regarding the FBF).

Not only has the grounded theory method been used in relationships, but it also has been used in interpersonal health settings to study intractable conflict specifically between anesthesiologists and certified registered nurse anesthetists (Jameson, 2003). More recently, it has also been used by Lambert and Dollahite (2006) to investigate the role of religion to mediate marital conflict. Based on in-depth interviews with 57 highly religious, middle-aged married couples of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic faiths, the authors construct a phase model (conflict prevention, resolution, and reconciliation) to theorize the role religiosity plays in marital conflict. The model emerged from open, in vivo, and axial coding of interview data with participants. For instance, for the thematic category of "shared sacred vision and purpose" in problem prevention, Debby, a Baptist social worker remarks that

> I think that the more shared perspective on life that you have, the less inherent conflicts are to begin with. So, I think having a shared faith is important in that sense, in both the big picture, and hopefully, the smaller picture. But, I think for me, somehow, my faith affects how I view conflict. (p. 442)

Whereas organizational conflict can take varied forms, Buzzanell and Liu (2007) theorize maternity leave as a gendered conflict management process. To investigate women's perceptions of such experiences and their conflict negotiation strategies, Buzzanell and Liu analyzed interview data from 26 women using grounded theory. They perceived their

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leave processes as incompatibilities among individual and organizational goals accompanied by increased stress and structural interdependencies. Negotiations with superiors were most successful when "give and take" was acknowledged by both parties. Women who used integrative negotiation strategies based on compromise, mutual interests, and assertiveness were more likely to manage such conflicts productively and achieve work–life balance.

In recent years, conflict studies have attended to community conflict. For instance, Smith-Sanders and Harter's (2007) study looks at a conflict resolution program in a U.S. junior high school. Based on data collected through participant observation, field notes, school artifacts such as class decorations, as well as in-depth interviews with 25 students at the school, their study reveals through the constant comparative method how conflict is negotiated and mediated by students and teachers who try to resist the traditional binary of reason and emotion and to foster respect and responsibility. Renee, a ninth grader, reflected that

> I remember when me and my friends were in this fight a while back and we kinda used a peer mediation thing. We came in here [a meeting room in the guidance office] and we all talked and told each other what we didn't like and how to fix it. So that helped for a while then we started fighting again and this time we worked it out on our own. . . . This time we didn't have the people [mediators or counselor], we just did it ourselves. (p. 115)

As part of the conflict mediation program implemented at the school community, students learned to develop more complex conflict resolution, social, and emotional skills.

In a role-playing study analyzed by use of the grounded theory method, Plowman (2008) engaged 15 graduate students in a simulated multiparty negotiation over the local hot waste issue in Utah. Eleven graduate students role-played 11 preidentified real-life stakeholder groups, such as governor, legislators for nuclear waste, lobbyist, local paper *The Salt Lake Tribune*, and other interest groups. A total of 10 role-play sessions were tape-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using the constant comparative method with assistance of Nvivo qualitative coding software. The study reveals that the strategy most often used was contention followed by avoidance if contentious strategies were not successful. When students used cooperation and compromise strategies, role players were more inclined to discuss alternatives. The most useful strategy, however, was mediation where a mediator with regulatory power enforced a deadline.

In addition, grounded theory has been employed to examine intractable **international conflict**. Coleman, Hacking, Stover, Fisher-Yoshida, and Nowak (2008), in an attempt to understand "what moves people to work with each other rather than against each other when locked into destructive, long-term conflicts" (p. 3), reconstructs ripeness theory for intractable conflict, with "ripeness" understood as willingness to engage positively with the other. Researchers developed a 10-question semistructured interview protocol to explore the implicit theories, motivational assumptions, and strategies and tactics used by expert practitioners working in protracted conflicts. A trained team of interviewers led private audio-taped interviews with 17 expert-scholar-practitioners who worked with protracted conflicts in a range of conflict setting at local, domestic, and global levels. Using grounded theory to analyze data, focusing particularly on five aspects of the data (i.e., stated explanations of actions, unstated assumptions, intentions, effects on others, and other consequences), researchers identified 39 coding categories, such as the role and dimensions of trust, learning versus action (interaction), and intervener skills. Overall,

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the study revealed eight dimensions of constructive engagement in systems of protracted conflict: (1) complex stakeholder networks; (2) volatility and stability; (3) complementary, competing, and contradictory motives among stakeholders; (4) a variety of constraints at several levels; (5) a series of experience, decisions, and actions over various conflict stages; (6) openness to change; (7) top-down and bottom-up processes of engagement; and (8) beyond negation: a multitude of constructive objectives and process.

Case Study

Yin (1984) defined the case study method as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (p. 23). The characteristics of this method have a number of implications for conflict studies. First, a case study focuses on a "bounded system" (Stake, 2008), defined by the choice of the unit of study and its boundaries. Thus, central to conducting a case study of conflict is to decide what to study. Second, a case study is characterized by its intensity. Compared with cross-unit analysis, a case study of conflict can offer more details, completeness, and variance in a single unit of analysis. Third, case studies are developmental, well suited for the evolving nature of most conflicts. Fourth, case studies pay great attention to context and produce concrete, context-dependent knowledge. Finally, given its "boundedness," case studies draw boundaries between the case and context (Flyvbjerg, 2011).

Central to the method is the selection of cases to answer the research question and the use of varied information sources to develop a holistic picture of the conflict. Single or multiple cases may be chosen by conflict researchers who consider both the uniqueness and representativeness of these cases that ultimately have to satisfy the purpose of the study and address the research question posed. However, the selection of different conflict cases may increase the complexity of data collection and analysis, as does a single case that employs different levels of analysis. Furthermore, Yin (1984) stipulates that this methodology relies on multiple sources of evidence to gain breadth, depth, and richness of a given case. Through triangulation of multiple data sources, it is possible to achieve understanding of conflict phenomena. Varied information sources can be used, including documentation, interviews, and archives. Consequently, case studies can combine a number of methods of data collection and analysis, including qualitative and quantitative, analytical and hermeneutic, or mixed methods. The case study method has been used often in interpersonal, organizational, PR, community, and international conflict situations.

Although case studies have not been commonly used in *interpersonal conflict* research, some scholars have adopted this methodology because "[sometimes] one artifact can reveal a great deal about the whole culture" (Ney, Blank, & Blank, 2007, p. 312) in interpersonal dynamics. In their study of a child custody case involving a separated couple, the authors analyzed the style, structure, and content of argument in the affidavits. Adopting "meta-critical Foucauldian theories of knowledge, power, and discourse," the study understands affidavits as "a technology in high-conflict custody and access divorce cases, [that] can contribute to or construct conflict they intend to resolve" (p. 305). Affidavits, legal documents sent to court under oath, are shown to be constructed with "the rhetoric of ownership and nonpersonal form of address" that depersonalizes involved parties and transforms them into a "nonparent" and "litigant" (p. 320). Moreover, the language used in affidavits enables and sustains conflict instead of resolving it: "With each response, there is an increased incidence and intensity of labeling, blaming and defending" (p. 320).

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To explore organizational conflict, case studies have been utilized to research conflict in for-profit, not-for-profit, third sector, and institutional settings. For instance, case studies describe the clash of discourse during interprofessional collaborative writing among attorneys, nurse consultants, and writers in a law firm (Palmeri, 2009). Palmeri, who was once an employee writer at the firm, recruited and interviewed seven individuals in interprofessional collaboration: Three writers, two attorneys, and two nurse consultants answered 11 open-ended questions. Through data analysis from a grounded theory approach, this study reveals the varied layers of conflicts at a medical-oriented law firm where discursive conflicts and epistemological conflicts are intertwined with differences in professional affiliations and complex power relations. For instance, nurse consultants, who were in an inferior power position institutionally compared with lawyers, struggled to assert power although they managed to do so by claiming their nursing expertise. He shows, however, that while these conflicts can decrease efficiency, they can also productively ensure the diversity of input from different professional group members (legal, medical, and corporate) who act as discourse mediators to produce dialogic, persuasive narratives. In one incident, praising the objective review of a medical record by a nurse consultant, an attorney remarked that "we really were able to . . . point out that the nursing home was not doing what it was supposed to do . . . based on the information that was in [your report]" (p. 54).

The case study method has often been used in *public relations* to investigate conflicts between organizations and their publics. A study by Reber, Cropp, and Cameron (2003) analyzed the case of a hostile business takeover. The case was constructed through extensive review of news, company PR materials, court records, legal analyses, and in-depth interviews with members of the company's PR and legal staff and outside PR counsel. Taking into account such contingent factors as moral conviction, multiple publics, regulatory constraints, management pressure, jurisdictional issues, and legal constraints, the study argues that conflict management should be a key component in PR scholarship. Conceived of as such, the realm of PR could be "an antecedent condition to alternative dispute resolution, as well as a factor in dispute solutions" (p. 21).

A rising body of PR scholarship drawing from activism research has enabled scholars to examine how activist strategies can be deployed by groups lacking political and economic power to "create conflict with, and encourage resistance to, dominant social discourses and institutions" (Weaver, 2010, p. 40). A case study of the New Zealand group Mothers Against Genetic Engineering by Weaver (2010) illustrates how carnivalesque protests by the "lower stratum," communicated symbolically through pleasurable emotions, particularly humor, challenged the rational "higher stratum" composed of government, corporate, and regulatory bodies. In this case, not only did female protesters wear cow masks outside the Auckland's High Court, they also staged provocative billboards depicting a naked four-breasted woman on her hands and knees with a milking machine attached to her breasts. Drawing on newsletters, press releases, campaign websites, and news reports, the author showed how the women-centered campaign intentionally provoked conflict and presented the activism as stylish, sexy, and fashionable.

The case study method has been more popularly used in community conflict research. In an early study of community conflict via competing information campaigns conducted by environmental and timber industry groups in the Pacific Northwest, Lange (1993) explored the cocreation of conflict within a system of necessity and constraints. The campaigns are shown to progress in a synchronous, spiral-like pattern of interaction as opposing

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parties match their rhetorical and communication strategies. Research data are gathered through qualitative fieldwork comprising participant observation, extensive interviewing, and examination of written materials such as newsletters, press releases, and miscellaneous publications on both sides.

Recently, the case study approach toward community conflict research has migrated to the realm of online communities. For instance, Aakhus and Rumsey (2010) investigated the making and maintenance of supportive communication by analyzing an episode of conflict in an online cancer support community. Drawing on approaches of communication design, grounded practical theory, and pragmatic theories of argumentation, the authors analyzed a 5-day conflict episode based on archived online exchanges composed of 96 of the 217 contributions that directly involved 30 of the 42 participants in the online support group. Three distinct clusters were identified by a natural history approach to transcription that mapped senders and receivers of messages. Conflict, the researchers showed, developed over "the right to criticize," "the role of venting," and "the value of disagreement in communicating support" (p. 65). As an example of how members struggled over the right to vent, Sue addressed Karen: "Karen, You OBVIOUSLY have no idea what having a child with cancer mean. IT MEANS EVERYONE IN THE FAMILY SUFFERS WITH CANCER!!!!!!!" (p. 74). Hostile exchanges as such revealed the difficulty the community had about what constitutes "supportive communication." Unlike prior online conflict research focusing on how media features lead to flaming, the authors argued that interaction norms "were both a source of conflict, and a resource for its management" (p. 80).

Situated often in specific historical and cultural contexts, the case study approach can also contribute to a deeper understanding of conflict and conflict resolution in international environments. In a recent study of the diplomatic activities led by the Carter Center (TCC) from 2000 to 2004 to end decades of protracted military conflict between Sudan and Uganda, Papa, Mapendere, and Dillon (2010) focused on the communicative approach of "planned improvisations" in peacemaking and organizational actions. Much like jazz improvisation that involves the spontaneous and creative expressions within the context of formal jazz theories, planned improvisation, the authors argue, "is always based on some minimal communicative structure" (p. 359). Drawing on TCC documents, U.S. archival records as well as 26 interviews with top-level leaders from the TCC, international NGOs, Sudanese and Ugandan government officials, and former military rebels, the study conducted thematic data analysis by a team of six trained coders. It was revealed that at times in the peacemaking process, negotiators themselves, like Dr. Ben Hoffman, Director of the Conflict Resolution Program at TCC, felt that

> there was no strategic compass anymore, that we are flying blind at times, that the parties were just fading into the fog and you didn't know where you were going because who could you trust? Was there double-speak? And who was really committed to peace, if anybody? Kony, Yahia, Museveni—who gave a damn about peace really? (p. 361)

Despite such moments, rivals and rebels were brought to the negotiation table by mediators such as Hoffman whose improvisational freedom could not have been orchestrated without prior rich experience of mediation, strong relationship building, and simple yet sophisticated rules for communication.

Mixed Methods

Although the variety of qualitative methods popularly used in conflict studies—narrative, ethnography, grounded theory, and case

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studies—are rooted in different methodological orientations, they have demonstrated great flexibility, or "methodological eclecticism" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011), in data collection and analyses. Individually, each method offers unique contributions to the study of conflict at different levels and in different communicative contexts. However when methods are considered equally important to understanding communication phenomena, mixed-methods approaches to conflict communication provide different lenses on conflict and offer more nuanced strategies for the paradoxical and sometimes destructive ways in which conflict is manifest. Often, these qualitative methods are useful for mixed-methods approaches.

With the linguistic or discursive turn in the 1980s, more humanistic, interpretive, critical, postmodern, contextualized, and culture-centered approaches took root impacting conflict research as well as other areas of our field. As a new generation of scholars trained in quantitative and qualitative social scientific methods emerged, the old and often antagonistic division between "quants and qualts" began to lose ground (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 313). In addition to quantitative and qualitative or qualitative (or quantitative) and rhetorical mixed methods, there also are genre-breaking ways to incorporate different qualitative and autoethnographic methodologies called crystallization (see Ellingson, 2009).

The interest in mixed methods has been prominent in communication research for a couple of decades, if not more, but only recently has there been a deep and abiding interest in mixed-methodological studies. Called the "third methodological movement," following quantitative and qualitative development (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011), mixed methods provides greater generalizability with rich findings that are attractive to investigators examining complex and global conflict issues as well as those on multidisciplinary teams and funded projects, and from different theoretical orientations, with different questions, and for engaged scholarship (see Carbaugh & Buzzanell, 2010). Despite the multiple and contested definitions of mixed-methods research, this alternative methodology places emphasis on the eclectic yet synergistic use of multiple methods (Charmaz, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011). Fundamentally, mixed-methods approaches acknowledge the different ways in which humans discover, learn about, and relate to a complex world.

Mixed-methods researchers tend to argue that the quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches are compatible and can be fruitfully used. For mixed-methods scholars, research is problem rather than methodology driven. Researchers of this pragmatic orientation often choose a combination of methods that can best help answer the research question and solve a complex problem, such as when conflictual situations are shaped by multiple forces, factors, contingencies, and provisionalities. To understand complex phenomena, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2011) argue that qualitative methods such as narratives can be very effective in unraveling the "complexity of evolving contextual and behavioral patterns in those institutions much more thoroughly than statistical summaries of numeric indicators" (p. 286).

Researchers use mixed methods for a variety of purposes: to construct instruments, to corroborate findings, to address research participants' experience, to reduce cultural and investigator bias, to increase generalizability, and to inform professional practice and/or public policy (Charmaz, 2011). Regardless of the specific purposes, a mixed-methods project expects the end product to be more than the sum of the individual parts achieved by quantitative or qualitative research methods alone. While some qualitative researchers are concerned that a mixed-methods research project could be dominated by a quantitatively

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oriented methodology where qualitative research is only nominally used to supplement quantitative research, it is nevertheless possible to give the qualitative approach priority, if not of equal importance, in conflict research projects.

We review here a few studies that have combined both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in data collection and analysis, where qualitative methods are adopted as an integral, not just a supplementary part, to a given research project. Whereas a broader definition of mixed methods may include the use of multiple qualitative methods or quantitative methods (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011), we have chosen to focus on projects employing both. It is also worth noting that before "mixed methods" becomes a widely accepted lingo, researchers have also used "multiple methods," "multimethod," "mixed methodology," and other similar expressions in articles and reports, which we review here in interpersonal, organizational, community, and social conflict.

In a study of *interparental conflict* and children, Sturge-Apple, Davies, Winter, Cummings, and Schermerhorn (2008) showed that children's insecure internal representations of interparental and parent–child relationships could help explain interparental conflict, parental emotional unavailability, and the children's emotional and classroom difficulties. They used a combination of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, including lab observations, recorded interparental discussions, as well as child narratives of family relations to study the linkages between multiple factors. The narrative storytelling technique was adopted to allow children to depict mother–father, mother–child, and father–child relationships using various toy figures and props. This qualitative method enabled researchers to capture data in a more sensitive manner from children that form an integral part of the study that also used quantitative questionnaires to collect data from parents and teachers at multiple time points within a 2-year period.

In organizational conflict research, Buzzanell and Burrell (1997) collected 620 metaphorical conflict expressions from 169 participants regarding their family and workplace conflict experience. Metaphors were sorted into first-order metaphoric families such as conflict between coworkers and intensity of conflict as well as second-order metaphoric characteristics focusing on linguistic features. Quantitatively, statistical analysis revealed no gender differences in metaphorical conflict. Gender differentiations in conflict, the authors argued, may have to be revealed through participants' daily construction of their identities and other work/family activities. Qualitative analyses of metaphors, on the other hand, enabled us to see the emotional depth of participants' vivid language with such metaphorical entailments as "the One-Hundred Year War," "the clash of the Titans," and "fighting cats and dogs" (p. 124).

In their 2004 study, Roscigno and Hodson inquired whether organizational attributes and interpersonal relations in the workplace, in concert with union presence and collective action history, may influence worker resistance. Adopting qualitative comparative analysis, the authors coded 82 book-length workplace organizational ethnographies in the United States and England, yielding rich information about industry, occupations, the presence of collective resistance (striking) and individual resistance (e.g., social sabotage and work avoidance), and macro/historical elements (e.g., union legacy). Through statistical analysis, the study identified three broad workplace types based on forms of resistance: contentious, cohesive, and unorganized. While collective resistance was shown to vary depending on social relations on the shop floor, individual resistance was characterized by poor organization and a lack of collective action legacy.

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In a more recent study utilizing mixed methods to study organizational conflict, Brinkert (2011) evaluated the comprehensive conflict coaching model for improving nurses' conflict resolution skills in a hospital environment. Research data were gathered through both interviews and questionnaires at different study intervals: pretraining, training, posttraining (1 month, 3 months, and 6 months). Results show that conflict coaching was a practical and efficient means of developing conflict communication competencies of nurse managers and supervisees (also see Putnam, 1994, for productive conflict).

To study community conflict, Brummans and colleagues (2008) used mixed methods to make sense of intractable multiparty conflict, particularly the role of framing through analyses of four environmental disputes in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and Texas. Researchers collected 153 semistructured interviews, each 1 to 2 hours in length, with a wide range of disputants: 12 farmers, 29 business and industry people, 28 environmentalists, 10 citizen activists, 18 elected political officials, 46 government agency officials, 5 media affiliates, and 5 mediators or other neutral third parties (p. 31). Using grounded theory (qualitative) and content analysis (quantitative) of interview transcripts and archival data (news articles, meetings and court records, memos, and technical reports), the study identified four disputant clusters (victimhood, dispassion, optimism and hope, and power and powerlessness). Different framing repertoires were shown to have fueled the intractability of each dispute. The authors concluded that a mixed-methods approach produces a more holistic picture of the four disputes: proceeding from qualitative interviews (first-level interpretation), to constant comparative method (second-level interpretation), to quantitative content analysis (third-level interpretation), and finally to cluster framing (fourth-level interpretation).

In the context of *social conflict*, adopting a mixed-methods approach, Stewart, Pitts, and Osborne (2011) examined how a Virginia newspaper discursively constructs the "illegal immigrant" as a substitute for Latino immigrants. The study used quantitative lexical analysis to trace the newspaper's discourse about illegal immigrants from 1994 to 2006. It also used critical discourse analysis to show how two local news events and local immigration policies are influenced by such perceptions of Latinos. Lexical items are demonstrated to be low in optimism and commonality, yet consistent with outgroup negativity. The qualitative part of the study shows how the two events involving "illegal immigrants" were linked to negative stereotypes.

Ways to Build On the Unique Contributions of Qualitative Communication Inquiry for the Study of Conflict

Two questions guide our concluding section: (1) How might we characterize the state of affairs in conflict communication qualitative inquiry? and (2) How might we build on this review to further develop qualitative conflict research and findings? To begin, conflict communication scholarship has undergone many changes over the past few decades as qualitative research has taken hold in, and broadened the breadth and depth of, conflict conceptualizations, research, and management with regard to training, education, and interventions. Despite the growth and promise of qualitative conflict inquiry, there is decreasing emphasis on conflict per se in communication publications using primarily a qualitative approach. In other words, conflict communication may be suffused throughout the processes and behaviors being investigated, but conflict is not surfaced as the primary process under consideration. This

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trend has consequences for the recognition of conflict communication scholarship insofar as keywords do not evidence the healthy amount of relevant scholarship in the area. Moreover, implications for conflict per se may go unrecognized if this trend continues.

In addition, our review shows that new areas have emerged for qualitative conflict research in communication. Although prominent in other fields, it has been only fairly recently that scholarship on conflict in contexts such as communities, international, intercultural and cross-cultural, and global communication as well as peace and intractable conflict has taken hold among qualitative communication researchers. In part, this trend aligns with communication's emphasis on engaged scholarship. However, this trend also coincides with greater attention to identity negotiations in contexts such as family and organizational communication (e.g., see Rooney, McKenna, & Barker, 2011) as individuals and collectivities work through the classic conflict issues of misunderstandings and resource distribution.

Furthermore, the move from conduit metaphors of communication has resulted in increased emphasis on the ways conflict as a communication process is understood, felt emotionally, embodied, constituted, and integral to individuals' and groups' or collectivities' development at present and across the life span. There is also communication research specifically focused on conflict communication on the Internet, on social network sites, and in new interactive media that rely on metaphors other than conduit for their assumptional bases (e.g., Aakhus & Rumsey, 2010). As our review indicates, current communication conflict research in the qualitative tradition centers on sensemaking, performance, and talk in interaction and its relationship to and invocation of societal (and global) discourses. Finally, conflict communication has emerged as a site and consequence of individuals' and collectivities' struggles to live out their ideological and cultural beliefs within political economies that emphasize hypercompetitiveness, commodification, privitization, and economic sustainability. In short, qualitative conflict research utilizes a number of different communicative metatheoretical and theoretical approaches. Consequently, we find an array of qualitative methods being used of which we covered only the most prominent.

Our review would be inadequate if we simply recounted the variety of methods being used in qualitative conflict communication research and different kinds of findings that resulted. Therefore, we also discuss the generative value of such approaches. Certainly one of the primary functions of good quality research is to generate theory. Qualitative research in conflict communication is no exception. But the origins of theory development differ in qualitative inquiry from more traditional social science. Specifically, theory is developed from research participants and texts themselves and from a problem-oriented, engaged scholarship impetus. Qualitative research primarily operates from an inductive model, whereby researchers sort through empirical and textual data in multiple iterations, winnowing down the variations into findings that are trustworthy and valid because of the care researchers take in data collection and analysis as well as in conceptualizing, implementing, and reporting their studies. This primarily inductive approach changes during the research process. It becomes deductive as researchers challenge their emerging findings to look for support and negative cases.

Beyond theoretical and analytic frameworks, qualitative conflict research also begins with excitement as well as unease and feelings of vulnerability on the part of qualitative researchers. Quite simply, there are unforeseen twists in participants' conflict stories, metaphors, recalled incidents, interviews, observed behaviors, and so on that may not be easily accounted for or imagined based on extant

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theory, research, and practice. In qualitative conflict research, the conduct and findings of such investigations have changed the ways in which communication researchers access and consider how individuals and collectivities constitute and are involved in conflict. Rather than focusing primarily on conflict reduction, styles, and generalizable intervention strategies, qualitative conflict researchers probe into the underlying communicative dynamics throughout conflicts in context. In this sense, the fullness of the communicative constitution of conflict is realized.

For the selected research projects in our review, we note how qualitative research contributes insights and conducts research in ways that are different from, but can be complimentary to, more traditional quantitative research. The reasons for these contributions have been that qualitative methodology accesses different aspects of human communication and spans lifetimes of individuals and communities through ability to collect retrospective accounts and consider possibilities for the future. Furthermore, qualitative research data gathering, conduct, and analysis can bridge mind–body divides by enabling researchers to be more attuned to the ways in which emotions assist in understanding and, as such, enrich findings. As we have shown, the effort to ground conflict research in communication takes many forms, following interpretive, critical, postmodern, and other paradigmatic approaches, as well as mixed methods with corresponding traditions put into conversations with each other toward understanding and resolving some problem or need. Indeed, further research that surfaces "conflict" specifically in all of these approaches and contributes explicitly to conflict communication agendas is much needed.

These research agendas in qualitative conflict communication might develop more fully the possibilities inherent in underrepresented qualitative methods in our review, namely, life histories, performance ethnographies, and postmodern critiques based on empirical research. Furthermore, case studies and layered or crystallized approaches might prove productive in rendering conflict accounts from intersectionalities and multiple communication paradigms or traditions. These studies might delve into the ways in which race, class, ethnicities, sexual social orientations, culture, nationality, and other differences are built into conflict interactions and structures. These everyday structures that seem so normal reproduce the discontent that erupts into overt conflict and simmers as intractable conflict remains without resolution.

Finally, studies on hidden and taboo conflicts and struggles can do much to reorient participants and scholars toward research on conflict communication that disenfranchises and privileges some parties. Uncovering and examining such conflicts would require varied qualitative approaches. In closing, the appeal of qualitative conflict communication research today is that it challenges accepted practices and understandings of a process that is essential to human behavior. Our review indicates the importance of qualitative work and of further investigating conflict communication in innovative, even transformative, ways.

Note

1. We used a combination of keywords in "Advanced Search" functions in these databases. For example, to locate research articles on conflict that employed "mixed methods," we would enter the keyword "conflict" in the keyword search box and choose the option for it to appear either in the title of the article or in the article abstract. We would also choose the default Boolean function "AND" and enter the keyword "mixed methods" in the keyword search box right below and pick the option for it to appear in the title of the article, in the article abstract, or in the full text of the article depending on the number

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of results we got. Since other keywords such as "multimethod" and "multiple methods" are used often interchangeably with "mixed methods," we would repeat the same process by altering the keyword combinations. After search results were returned, we would read through the article abstracts, and often the methods section of actual articles, before retrieving appropriate articles for our analyses and save them in a folder in our computers labeled "mixed methods." Where possible, we gave preference to articles and authors published in the communication discipline although we included articles from such journals as *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*.

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SECTION 1

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Introduction to Interpersonal Conflict

Stella Ting-Toomey and John G. Oetzel

Interpersonal conflict, when managed competently, can bring about positive changes in a relationship. It allows the conflict partners to use the conflict opportunity to reassess the state of the relationship. It opens doors for the individuals in conflict to discuss their wants, needs, fears, and hopes in a relationship. Constructive conflict management profoundly affects the quality of social and personal relationships. On the other hand, interpersonal conflict, when managed incompetently or mindlessly, affects physical, psychological, emotional, and mental health and various relationship processes and outcomes.

In this section, we opt for a broad definition of "interpersonal" conflict. We define the "interpersonal aspect" of conflict as any interpersonal conflict situation or interpersonal conflict relationship in which some of the following features exist: (a) some subtle or overt signals of conflict messages or behaviors are being exchanged, and meanings are inferred; (b) one or both conflict parties perceive that they seek different goals, and they perceive their own goals as being blocked; (c) some degree of emotional frustrations or threats is experienced or felt; (d) the two or more individuals in the relational system are interdependent and oriented toward each other in a social or personalized relationship direction; (e) there exists some degree of reciprocal, mutual influencing process; (f) the conflict scene can take place in a public or private setting; and (g) the conflict episode is framed within multiple embedded contexts (see also Knapp & Daly, 2011). In fact, Cupach, Canary, and Spitzberg (2010) identified the four property approaches to the study of interpersonal conflict as (1) pervasive, (2) explicit disagreement, (3) a hostile episode, and (4) disagreement in particular episodes.

The study of interpersonal conflict also encompasses the complex range of conflict from physiological to emotional arousal processes, the actual emotional experience and expressions, social cognition and appraisal processes, particular conflict interaction styles and tactics, and the exchange of hurtful or hostile messages. Interpersonal conflict contexts can include the study of conflicts in

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acquaintanceship, friendship, dating, marital relationship, family socialization, health care, workplace, life span, and/or intercultural context. Diverse meaning constructions, intentions, contexts, relational histories, values, and ideologies are being framed or reframed in an antagonistic conflict episode. An interpersonal conflict situation basically involves the study of how two or more individuals approach and manage the message exchange process and the meaning construction process due to incompatible goals, scarce resources, and the perceived interferences from others in achieving his or her goals in a multilayered, sociocultural system (Wilmot & Hocker, 2011).

In Chapter 4 of this *Handbook*, Guerrero argues that interpersonal conflict episodes are often filled with arousing emotions, both in terms of the negative affect connected to the interruption of goals and in terms of reactions to the partner's communication. The chapter highlights the important role that emotion plays in interpersonal conflict via four sections: (1) emotion is conceptualized with an emphasis on the similarities between emotion and conflict; (2) six categories of conflict-related emotion—hostile, vulnerable, flat, positive, self-conscious, and fearful—and the ways each of these types of emotion are communicated during conflict are discussed; (3) the cascade model and the expectancy violations theory (EVT) are described as exemplar theories for further understanding of the role of emotion within conflict interaction; and (4) the chapter ends with recommendations for future theorizing and researching in the area of conflict and emotion. The author argues that emotion acts as both a cause and consequence of conflict communication and may ultimately guide behavior and determine outcomes.

In Chapter 5 of this *Handbook*, Roloff and Wright focus their discussion on the social cognitive aspects of interpersonal conflict. According to the authors, social cognition research focuses on how people make sense of themselves, others, and their social activities. Such sense making is guided by knowledge content structures that are defined as organized sets of interrelated information about a person's conflict experience. The authors review six types of social knowledge in relation to interpersonal conflict: (1) beliefs, (2) scripts, (3) partner memories, (4) rules, (5) frames, and (6) problem appraisals. They also examine how the process of thinking or social cognitive processes might be related to conflict behaviors (e.g., imagining a conflict influences how individuals try to resolve it). The authors update their chapter in this second edition *Handbook* with a strong focus on (a) reviewing research studies that examine the relationship between social knowledge and interpersonal conflict; (b) analyzing interpersonal scholarship that informs the relationship between social cognitive processes and conflict, especially with an eye toward integrating new perspectives; and (c) offering an overall critique and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the study of social cognition and conflict. They also note that although the bulk of the research on this topic continues to use U.S. samples, there has been some moderate increase in the study of intercultural-interpersonal conflict. There have also been many more longitudinal studies and also relationship conflict studies that analyze both members' viewpoints of the conflict dyad. They conclude that recent research work has linked attribution making in conflict, and that there is also a growing research area in investigating the role of self-regulation in interpersonal conflict communication.

In Chapter 6 of this *Handbook*, Caughlin, Vangelisti, and Mikucki-Enyart comment that the study of dating and marital conflict has a voluminous research data base. To organize their analytical literature review in a coherent fashion, they use a social ecological framework to explain the complexity of romantic relationship conflict. One important aspect of this framework is that it highlights the

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dynamic nature of the individuals, relationship, and environment, including the conflict behaviors and patterns in that relationship. They consider three interconnected levels of analysis in romantic unions: (1) the environment, which ranges from broad societal influences to a couple's specific social and physical context; (2) the individuals, including the characteristics that people bring to their relationship and beliefs and attitudes they develop during the relationship; and (3) the relational processes, which are composed partly of relational conflict behaviors and conflict patterns. They present ample research evidence on the interdependent connections between conflict behaviors and relational outcomes such as relationship satisfaction or stability. For instance, there is clear research evidence that negativity predicts dissatisfaction and divorce. Moreover, systematic studies of interventions based on the problem-solving paradigm demonstrate that teaching couples to enact constructive communication strategies and avoid excessively negative ones can improve strained relationships. The authors conclude with promising directions for future research concerning the importance of time frame and environmental-level analysis and their impact on the study of dating and martial conflict interactions.

In Chapter 7 of this *Handbook*, Spitzberg reviews and analyzes the complex landscape of intimate partner violence (IPV). The author considers aggression and violence in the intimate partner context, with an eye to their nature, scope, functions, processes, and effects. According to the author, IPV refers to any acts of physical violence that occur in the context of a relationship in which romantic or courtship objectives are being pursued by one or both of the interactants. There are at least two broad typologies of motives in enacting violence. *Instrumental* motives represent the more traditional power and control objective, in which a particular, discrete goal is being pursued by the violence. *Expressive* motives reflect internal cognitive and/or affective states (e.g., anger, jealousy, rage, frustration, and aggravation), or even personality disorders or traits that reinforce such states. According to the author, the three key ideas to understand IPV are that (1) it is almost always embedded in a larger interactional context of conflict and psychological abuse—most arguments do not result in violence, but violence rarely occurs "out of the blue"; (2) it generally co-occurs with communicative aggression (defined by the author as any recurring message patterns that function to impair a person's preferred self-image)—for example, IPV victimization is strongly associated with expressed anger, hostility, negative affect, and communicative aggression; and (3) together with communicative aggression, it is highly reciprocal—according to research, high percentages of individuals who report experiencing IPV also report perpetrating it. Research also generally indicates that problem-solving skills, anger management skills, argumentativeness, and tendencies to engage in more positive affectionate or collaborative behaviors are critical IPV circumventive communication strategies.

In Chapter 8 of this *Handbook*, Koerner addresses family conflict issues and observes that families that manage their conflicts competently have more satisfied parents and children, and that children perform better in school and in peer relationships. The focus of the chapter centers primarily on parent–child interpersonal conflict communication patterns. The author conceptualizes family conflict from a communication standpoint as observable behavior that expresses family members' perceptions of goal incompatibility and with its associated negative affect that has high probability to influence the behavior and the psychological well-being of family members. The conflict communication behaviors acquired in families are among the most important behaviors learned that affect children's subsequent interpersonal relationships. The chapter is organized along two motifs: (1) compare the

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various conceptualizations of family conflict and review some of the consistent findings that broadly describe the phenomenon of family conflict communication and its outcomes; (2) identify some of the properties of family relationships that distinguish family conflict communication from other interpersonal conflict communication and discuss how future research might address these issues. The author believes that family conflict is but one part of the larger process of family communication and is best understood in relation to the larger family communication schemata framework.

In Chapter 9 Bolton Oetzel discusses the intricate relationship between mental health disorder issues and family interaction patterns. Individuals with mental illness are oftentimes not able to articulate the extent of their isolation, fears, and needs, which then leads to conflict within families and other interpersonal relationships. To begin, the author offers clear conceptualizations of the following four mental health disorders: (1) depression, (2) anxiety, (3) substance abuse and dependence, and (4) schizophrenia. She then explores the role of race and ethnicity on mental health, the relationship between mental health disorders and family conflict, as well as practical suggestions for providers and families. Two areas where culture factors in are within the presentation of symptoms and also in the seeking of services. Culturalbound syndromes are clusters of symptoms that appear to be more prevalent in one culture than another. In addition, the majority of research studies have demonstrated that people from underrepresented minority groups utilize mental health services less than Whites and are less satisfied with those services. The author advocates the importance of using a "Biopsychosocial Model of Disease" framework to understand the complex relationship among biology, parenting, communication, marital discord, culture, levels of stress, and environment on mental health issues. The chapter concludes with the notion that family does matter in the treatment or intervention of mental health disorders. For example, evidence suggests that high levels of warmth displayed by family members can circumvent the chances of relapse in individuals with schizophrenia. In addition, family-based psycho-educational models have been shown to be more effective than either individual treatment or medication alone.

In the concluding chapter (Chapter 10) of the Interpersonal Conflict section, Canary, Lakey, and Sillars focus their attention on how individuals can gain greater control of their conflict interactions by managing various conflict events competently. The chapter emphasizes a competence-based mindful approach in negotiating important personal conflict goals in close, interpersonal relationships. The chapter is developed in three sections: (1) the authors present a brief rationale for the competence-based conceptual lens and then examine what is meant by competence in conflict management; (2) they then present a model of strategic conflict that locates events where people can mindfully establish objectives for their management of conflict, following the explanation of each event (i.e., episodic control, personal control, attribution control, goal control, strategy control, and interaction control), and they also offer implications for the mindful management of conflict; and (3) they advocate for the important role of personal ethics in the execution of a competence-based approach to interpersonal conflict management; as both parties pursue their goals in the conflict process, neither person should exploit the other, harm the other, or even ignore the other. In other words, a competence-based approach suggests that people treat each other in an ethical manner. They conclude with the critical role of partner assessment of the other person's competence in managing conflict and how the appraisal process affects the use of cooperative versus

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competitive conflict strategies and, in turn, affects relational outcomes.

Some of the emergent themes of the interpersonal conflict section include the centrality of studying conflict communication messages in shaping relationship outcomes, the importance of family socialization in shaping interpersonal conflict, the importance of studying the reciprocal effect of conflict relationship, and the premium role of social cognition and emotion in navigating the interpersonal conflict trajectory. Interpersonal conflict researchers also advocate for the importance of studying the embedded contexts and the sociocultural ideologies in which conflict occurs. They also examine the role of mindfulness as a facilitating bridge in developing competent interpersonal conflict practice.

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4

Emotion and Communication in Conflict Interaction

Laura K. Guerrero

Kate comes home after a long tiring day at work to find the house messy, her daughter crying, and her son covered in mud while her husband, Kevin, is watching television. Her hopes of spending a relaxing evening at home suddenly vanish and she feels frustrated and angry. She immediately lashes out at Kevin, "What kind of father are you? Don't you hear and see your own children?" Kevin becomes defensive, "What kind of mother are you, coming home from work late every night this week?" Hurt by Kevin's comment, Kate strikes back, "Well, at least I don't sit around watching TV and ignoring my kids." When Kevin doesn't answer and continues to look at the screen, Kate becomes exasperated and turns the TV off to get his attention. Now Kevin is even angrier. "Hey," he exclaims, "I was only watching until the weather came on. I need to know if it's going to rain since I'm coaching tomorrow. You have to control everything, don't you?" The conversation carries on this way for a few more minutes until they realize that their daughter has stopped crying but is watching them with an anxious face, while their son has retreated to sit alone in a corner, mud and all.

As the above scenario illustrates, "To be in conflict is to be emotionally charged" (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001, p. 260). Indeed, scholars have argued that people define conflict episodes based on the emotions they experience (Jones, 2000). Serious conflicts are characterized by high levels of emotional activation, whereas destructive conflicts are marked by both negative affect and aggressive behavior. Conflict entails an expressed struggle between two or more interdependent people who perceive that they have incompatible goals (Cahn, 1992). This struggle is most likely when resources are scarce, when each person attaches importance to her or his goals, and when those goals are hard to obtain (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Conflict episodes are often filled with emotion, both in terms of the negative affect connected to the interruption of goals and in terms of reactions to the partner's communication. Although conflict episodes can end with satisfying results, negative emotion and destructive communication often sabotage people's chances for a successful outcome.

This chapter highlights the important role that emotion plays in interpersonal conflict.

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First, emotion is conceptualized, with similarities between emotion and conflict emphasized. Second, six categories of conflict-related emotion—(1) hostile, (2) vulnerable, (3) flat, (4) positive, (5) self-conscious, and (6) fearful—and the ways each of these types of emotion are communicated during conflict are discussed. Third, John Gottman's (1994) cascade model and Judee Burgoon's (Burgoon & Hale, 1988) expectancy violations theory (EVT) are described as exemplar theories for further understanding emotion within conflict interaction. Finally, the chapter ends with a description of critical issues that need exploration in future research.

Conceptual Similarities Between Emotion and Conflict

Conflict and emotion share several conceptual similarities. Although the term *emotion* has been defined in various ways, the following ideas are central in most conceptualizations: (a) emotions occur in reaction to stimuli that threaten to interrupt, impede, or enhance one's goals; (b) affect is the most fundamental component of emotional experience; (c) emotional reactions are usually accompanied by physiological changes; (d) cognition frames and helps people interpret emotional reactions; and (e) specific action tendencies are associated with various emotions (Planalp, 1999; Scherer, 1994). Conflict has been described in similar terms, as is shown in Figure 4.1. As the information in this figure shows, conflict and emotion share several features, which suggests that they involve similar cognitions and communication patterns. This is not surprising given that conflict is often emotion laden.

Emotion and Conflict Are Goal Related

Emotions occur in reaction to a specific stimulus or precipitating event that interrupts, prevents, or facilitates an individual's ability to reach desired goals (Berscheid, 1983; Frijda, 1987). Positive emotions, such as joy and love, occur in response to goal-enhancing events (e.g., Kevin wants a baby and finds out that Kate is pregnant). Negative emotions, such as anger or sadness, typically occur in response to goal-impeding events. For example, Kate might become angry if Kevin calls her "forgetful" and "disorganized" because she wants to be seen as capable.

The fact that conflict involves incompatible goals necessitates that emotions are part

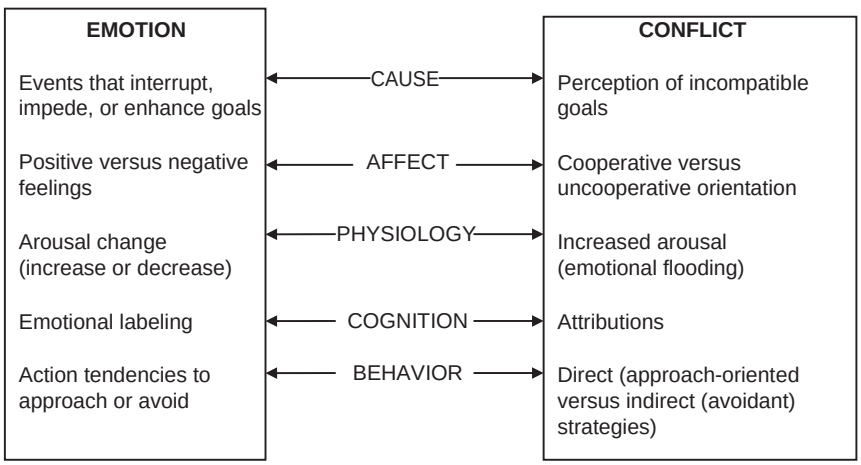

Figure 4.1 Similarities Between Components Related to Emotion and Conflict

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of the conflict process. Indeed, incompatible goals lead to conflict because two people are at cross-purposes, but they also lead to emotion because they impede or interrupt one's progress toward getting what one wants (see Figure 4.1). Jones (2000) took this argument further by suggesting that the event that triggers conflict also triggers emotion and that people do not realize they are in conflict until they react emotionally. So Kate may do more than the majority of housework for several weeks without complaining. However, when she notices Kevin watching television all day, she may feel frustrated because she never has any free time for herself. A conflict over the seemingly unfair division of labor may then ensue as a result of Kate's frustration.

Goals are also a defining feature in many conceptualizations of conflict styles. For example, Rahim (1986) identified concern for self versus others as a primary dimension distinguishing between conflict styles. Concern for self involves trying to reach one's own goals, whereas concern for others entails considering the partner's goals. When people are concerned about the needs and feelings of other disputants, they are more cooperative. In contrast, when people are focused exclusively on their own goals, they are more competitive.

Affect Is Central to Emotion and Conflict

Many scholars regard affect to be the most basic and irreducible component underlying emotion (Frijda, 1986; Ortony, Clore, & Foss, 1987). Baumeister, Vohs, DeWall, and Zhang (2007) described affect as a conscious or nonconscious automatic response that is "no more than a quick twinge of feeling that something is good or bad, of liking or disliking for something" (p. 169). Thus, as shown in Figure 4.1, affect is rooted in valence or the extent to which a reaction is positive or negative (Winkielman, Knutson, Paulus, & Trujillo, 2007).

During conflict situations, affect may translate into a positive or negative orientation toward the partner and the conflict situation. Various scholars have described conflict behavior in terms of how cooperative (or constructive) versus uncooperative (or destructive) people act (e.g., Canary, Cupach, & Messman, 1995; Klein & Johnson, 1997). Such behaviors may reflect an overall orientation toward the conflict situation that is influenced by the affect a person is experiencing. When intense negative affect is present, it may be more difficult to approach conflict in an optimistic, cooperative manner. Indeed, considerable research has confirmed that positive affect is associated with cooperative conflict behavior, whereas negative affect is associated with more competitive conflict behavior (see Bell & Song, 2005, for a review).

Arousal Is Central to Emotion and Conflict

Although affect is the most fundamental component defining emotion, changes in arousal levels, which are manifest in physiological reactions such as increased heart rate, blushing, and relaxed muscles, are also important. Russell (2003) used the term *core affect* to describe the feeling that emerges based on both valence and the degree of arousal experienced. Scholars (e.g., Daly, Lancee, & Polivy, 1983; Russell, 1980) have also categorized emotions based on their affective valence (e.g., pleasant vs. unpleasant), their level of arousal change or activity (e.g., low arousal vs. high arousal or passive vs. active), and their intensity level (e.g., strong vs. weak). Emotions such as anger and fear are classified as unpleasant and active, sadness is classified as unpleasant and passive, joy is classified as pleasant and active, and contentment is classified as pleasant and passive. Within each category, emotions vary in terms of intensity.

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For instance, depression is more intense than sadness, rage is more intense than annoyance, and elation is more intense than happiness.

Conflict provides a context that often intensifies negative emotion, thereby making cooperation more difficult. According to Gottman (1994), when conflict contains especially high levels of negative affect and emotional intensity, people are likely to become so overwhelmed with emotion that they cannot react constructively. Instead, they either lash out at their partner or become defensive and withdraw as a way to cope with the high level of arousal they are experiencing. As shown in Figure 4.1, Gottman labeled this process *emotional flooding*. When partners are frequently flooded with negative emotion during conflict episodes, they are likely to be lonely and distant from each other, in addition to being more likely to divorce (Gottman, 1994).

Cognitive Appraisals and Attributions Are Part of Emotion- and Conflict-Related Processes

Cognition is vital in the interpretation of emotion-eliciting events (Omdahl, 1995), including conflict. People make sense of emotion-inducing events by making primary appraisals that involve assessing affective valence and relevancy (e.g., How does the event influence one's personal goals and one's identity? Does the event make it easier or more difficult to obtain those goals?) and secondary appraisals that involve labeling emotions, determining their causes, and developing effective coping strategies (Lazarus, 1991). Similarly, people make appraisals about relevance and attributions regarding blame during conflict situations. In terms of relevance, people are unlikely to engage in conflict unless they perceive something is at stake, such as maintaining a desired relationship, protecting one's personal safety, or presenting a positive self-image. In terms of attributions about blame, both emotions and conflicts are fundamentally evaluative (Jones, 2000). When people experience negative emotion during conflict, they are more likely to attribute blame to their partner and to engage in destructive communication such as withdrawing or demanding (Tashiro & Frazier, 2007).

Attributions about the source of conflict and the partner's behavior also influence communication. According to Sillars (1980), people make communicative decisions during conflict based on attributions in three areas: the cause of the conflict, the intentions or personality traits of their partner, and the stability of the conflict. These attributions then influence the behaviors and strategies people enact during a conflict episode. In addition, people tend to make more positive attributions about their own behavior than their partner's behavior during conflict (Sillars, 1980; Sillars, Roberts, Leonard, & Dun, 2000), which contributes to misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Not surprisingly, people in dissatisfying relationships generally experience more misperception, misunderstanding, and negative emotion during conflict than do people in satisfying relationships (Sillars et al., 2000; Sillars & Scott, 1983). Specifically, Sillars et al. (2000) found that angry, frustrated, and blaming thoughts were more prevalent during severe conflicts and in unhappy relationships.

Action Tendencies Are Activated in Response to Emotion and Conflict

Appraisal theorists also believe that emotions are accompanied by certain action tendencies (Frijda, 1987; Lazarus, 1991; Scherer, 1994). Action tendencies are biologically rooted behavioral responses that help individuals cope with emotion and adapt to their environment. According to Lazarus (1991), action tendencies are based on three characteristics that underlie a particular emotional experience: (1) affect, or the positive or negative

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feeling state, (2) the level and type of physiological arousal change, and (3) the core theme related to the emotion-eliciting stimulus or event (e.g., relational harm stemming from discovery of a partner's betrayal or relational benefit stemming from receiving an unexpectedly nice gift). Different emotions are associated with various action tendencies. For example, anger is associated with attack, fear with moving away from harm, and guilt with making amends (Lazarus, 1991). To the extent that such emotions are experienced during conflict situations, various action tendencies are likely to be operative.

At their foundation, action tendencies are related to whether people approach or avoid an emotion-evoking stimulus. Given that conflict is emotion laden, it is not surprising that approach and avoidance tendencies are also a prevalent dimension defining conflict styles, as shown in Figure 4.1. Typologies developed by organizational scholars (e.g., Rahim, 1986), psychologists (Klein & Johnson, 1997), and communication scholars (Sillars, Canary, & Tafoya, 2004) all include a dimension that encompasses how direct versus indirect conflict styles are, as well as how cooperative versus uncooperative they are. While the cooperativeness dimension reflects affective valence to some extent (as discussed earlier), the directness dimension captures the idea of approach versus avoid tendencies.

Conflict-Related Emotions

Scholars have proposed at least two typologies of conflict-related emotions. Within each of these typologies, emotions are classified based on key dimensions that underlie both conflict and emotion, including affect, arousal level, goal-related motives, and action tendencies related to approach and avoidance.

The first of these typologies distinguishes between hard, soft, and flat emotions. *Hard emotions*, which include anger, frustration, and contempt, are characterized by negative affect, high levels of arousal, and selfish motives (Christensen, Jacobson, & Babcock, 1995; Dimidjian, Martell, & Christensen, 2002). These emotions are associated with using more aggressive and controlling forms of communication, such as criticism and defensiveness, as well as less positive forms of communication, such as active listening and calm discussion (Maldonado, 2009; Sanford, 2007b). *Soft emotions*, such as hurt and sadness, reflect vulnerability and prosocial motives (e.g., Christensen et al., 1995) and stem from feeling loss or psychological injury (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987; Vangelisti & Sprague, 1998). Although soft emotions appear to be associated with small increases in negative communication, they can also elicit empathy, increase positive communication, and foster conflict resolution (Sanford, 2007b). Finally, *flat emotions*, such as apathy and disinterest, are rooted in negative affect and low levels of arousal and are related to withdrawal, decreased positive communication, and relationship dissatisfaction (Maldonado, 2009; Sanford, 2007a).

The second typology includes four sets of emotions that are distinguished by whether they are self- or other-focused and whether the associated action tendency is to approach or avoid (Bell & Song, 2005). Emotions falling under *hostility* are self-focused and approach oriented. These emotions "typically arise in response to threats or failure to achieve one's goals, desires, or rights" and then draw an individual toward whomever or whatever caused them to feel that way (Bell & Song, 2005, p. 34). *Relational positivity* includes other-focused emotions that are approach oriented. These emotions, which include respect, fondness, and empathy, are associated positively with integrating, compromising, and obliging conflict strategies (Bell & Song, 2005). *Self-conscious emotions*, such as embarrassment,

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guilt, and humiliation, are self-focused and withdrawal oriented. These emotions are also social in that they occur during or in response to interpersonal interactions. Finally, Bell and Song (2005) conceptualized *fearful emotions* as "apprehension related to troubling or hurting the other party" (p. 36). These emotions are focused on the partner and are related to avoidant tendencies.

Hard emotions and hostility are the only two categories that are similar across these typologies. Thus, when these two typologies are combined, there are six categories of conflict-related emotion that can be labeled as (1) hostile, (2) vulnerable, (3) flat, (4) positive, (5) self-conscious, and (6) fearful. Placing the emotions that people experience during conflict into categories such as these may be essential for advancing theory on emotional communication. As Nabi (2010) argued, understanding the specific patterns of thoughts and behaviors that are associated with particular types of emotion can provide insight into what types of communication are most effective in a given situation. She gives the example of using different words to calm someone down depending on whether that person is "in an angry, sad or fearful state" (Nabi, 2010, p. 155). For instance, if someone shows anger and hostility during a conflict episode, expressing remorse and acknowledging wrongdoing may be good strategies since anger is often about blame. On the other hand, fearful emotions may signal that there are issues related to power and control that need to be resolved, so having a conversation around these issues "might help calm [the] one who is frightened" (Nabi, 2010, p. 155). In line with this reasoning, the communication patterns related to each of the six conflict-related emotions identified above are discussed next.

Hostile Emotions

Hostile emotions such as anger, frustration, jealousy, envy, contempt, and disgust are commonly associated with conflict. Of these, anger, jealousy, and to a lesser extent, contempt and disgust have been studied most extensively. The action tendency associated with anger is to attack (Lazarus, 1991) through behaviors such as hitting or yelling (Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994). As Shaver et al. (1987) put it, "Angry persons report becoming stronger . . . and more energized in order to fight or rail against the cause of anger" (p. 1078). When Shaver et al. (1987) asked people to describe behaviors that are associated with anger, most were aggressive. For example, people described *verbal attacks* (e.g., yelling, complaining, and using obscenities), *physical attacks* (e.g., clenching one's fist, making threatening gestures, and throwing things), and displays of *nonverbal disapproval* (e.g., stomping, slamming doors, and gritting one's teeth) as prototypical responses to anger. These types of expressions are inversely associated with relational satisfaction. Gottman, Markman, and Notarius (1977) found distressed couples to engage in more behaviors indicative of negative affect, including frowning, sneering, and angry looks, than nondistressed couples. Expressing anger aggressively is also associated with perceptions of incompetence and feelings of heightened distress (Kubany & Richard, 1992; Sereno, Welch, & Braaten, 1987; Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher, & Gramzow, 1992).

Jealousy is also often associated with relationship dissatisfaction (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, & Spitzberg, 1995). Jealousy is a unique emotion that is based on the perception that one's primary relationship is being threatened by a third party (e.g., White & Mullen, 1989). As such, jealousy is sometimes a cause or consequence of conflict. Jealousy can be communicated in various ways, with some responses to jealousy more likely to cause or exacerbate conflict than others. Guerrero, Hannawa, and Babin (2011)

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identified three destructive communicative responses to jealousy that are negatively associated with relational satisfaction: *negative communication* (e.g., yelling, arguing, insulting, and ignoring); *counterjealousy induction* (e.g., attempts to make the offending partner feel jealous too); and *violent communication* (e.g., actions such as hitting, shoving, or pushing the partner). Indeed, research has shown jealousy to correlate with violence and aggression (e.g., Dutton, van Ginkel, & Landolt, 1996; Simonelli & Ingram, 1998), and victims of abuse often cite jealousy as a cause of violence in their relationships. In one study, 15% of participants reported that they had suffered physical aggression because their partners were jealous (Mullen & Martin, 1994). In another study, the use of jealousy-inducing behaviors was moderately and positively correlated with aggression (Brainerd, Hunter, Moore, & Thompson, 1996). Several other studies suggest that jealousy is one of the top predictors of physical aggression among couples who report using violent behavior (Hansen, 1991; Laner, 1990). These findings do not suggest that violence is a common response to jealousy. Rather, they suggest that among those couples who report physical violence, jealousy is a top predictor.

Similarly, expressions of disgust and contempt are two of the top predictors of relationship decline (Gottman, 1994). Disgust is typically communicated by "sounding fed up, sickened, and repulsed" (Gottman, 1994, p. 24). For example, Kevin might tell Kate, "I can't listen to this anymore," or Kate might tell Kevin, "You make me sick." Contempt, which implies superiority, is expressed through "any insult, mockery, or sarcasm or derision, of the other person. It includes disapproval, judgment, derision, disdain, exasperation, mockery, put downs, or communicating that the other person is absurd or incompetent" (Gottman, 1994, p. 24). Saying "you're acting psychotic," "you don't know what you are doing," or "you just don't get it" are examples of verbal expressions of contempt. Nonverbal expressions of disgust and contempt, which may involve becoming silent, looking away from someone, furrowing one's brow, and looking astonished (Scherer & Wallbott, 1994), may also be evident. Indeed, Gottman (1993b, 1994) has argued that even subtle facial expressions of disgust and contempt can be quite powerful and that expressions of contempt are better predictors of marital decline than anger.

Although research suggests that people often feel a natural inclination to act aggressively when they experience hostile emotions such as anger, jealousy, disgust, and contempt, these emotions can be displayed constructively. Canary, Spitzberg, and Semic (1998) noted that "although people might think of a 'model' anger episode in terms of destructive and aggressive behaviors, research indicates that people also respond to anger in constructive and less threatening ways" (p. 205), including using assertive rather than aggressive communication (e.g., Guerrero, 1994; Kubany & Richard, 1992; Sereno et al., 1987). Assertive modes of anger expression involve listening to the partner's explanations and points of view; trying to discuss issues in a calm, direct, and fair manner; and taking ownership of one's feelings rather than blaming the partner (e.g., Kate says, "I feel really mad" rather than telling Kevin, "You make me so mad!").

Similarly, nonaggressive communication appears to be a relatively common response to jealousy. Across Guerrero, Andersen, Jorgensen, Spitzberg, and Eloy's (1995) qualitative and quantitative data, both destructive and constructive communicative responses to jealousy were reported frequently. Schaap, Buunk, and Kerkstra (1988) examined correlations between jealousy and conflict styles. Jealousy was most strongly associated with a competing or distributive conflict style

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(r = .78), but there were also moderate to small significant correlations between jealousy and the compromising (r = .42), soothing/accommodating (r = .40), and avoiding (r = .27) conflict styles. Only the problem-solving or integrative conflict style was associated negatively with jealousy (r = –.21). Thus, jealousy is associated with a variety of conflict styles and communicative responses.

Vulnerable Emotions

The so-called soft or vulnerable emotions include hurt and sadness, which reflect a focus on oneself in relation to another (e.g., Christensen et al., 1995). Hurt is experienced as an unpleasant and often intense emotion that stems from feeling psychologically injured by another person (Folkes, 1982; Vangelisti & Sprague, 1998). When people's feelings are deeply hurt, they often experience other emotions related to vulnerability, such as anguish and sadness (Shaver et al., 1987). If partners decode these vulnerable or "soft" emotions, they are more likely to appraise a conflict as serious and important to resolve (Sanford & Grace, 2011). Research suggests that having one's personal or relational identity attacked is the primary source of emotional hurt, as is evidenced by work on hurtful messages (Vangelisti, 1994). Vangelisti (1994) identified nine specific types of hurtful messages, the most common of which are *evaluations* (e.g., describing someone's value or worth in a negative way, such as saying, "Going out with you was a huge mistake"); *accusations* (e.g., making statements that show a person's faults, such as saying, "You're such a snob"); and *informative statements* (e.g., disclosing facts that reflect badly on someone, such as saying, "I'm just not attracted to you anymore"). Obviously, these types of statements can cause conflict. They can also be used to try to attack one's partner or defend oneself during the course of a conflict episode.

Hurt also occurs in response to *relational transgressions*, which have been defined as violations of implicit or explicit relational rules (Metts, 1994). Relational transgressions are perceived as betrayals and typically lead to emotional hurt and conflict (Metts, 1994; Vangelisti & Sprague, 1998). The most commonly identified relational transgressions among college students in romantic relationships are having sex with someone outside the primary relationship, wanting to or actually dating others, deceiving the partner, flirting with or kissing another, or being emotionally involved with someone outside the relationship (Metts, 1994). Being dumped and being cheated on were also frequently mentioned as hurtful events in a study by Bachman and Guerrero (2006a).

Vangelisti and Crumley (1998) described three main responses to hurtful messages. First, hurt individuals can use *active verbal* responses such as verbally attacking the offending partner, defending the self, making sarcastic statements, and asking for an explanation. Second, hurt individuals can engage in *acquiescent* responses, which include crying, conceding (e.g., "Fine, I'll just leave then"), and apologizing. Finally, hurt individuals can use *invulnerable* responses, such as ignoring the problem, laughing it off, and becoming quiet. Acquiescent responses were likely when people were deeply hurt by something a close relational partner said, perhaps because their "hurt was intense enough that they were willing (or perhaps forced) to display their vulnerability and acknowledge their conversational partners' ability to hurt them" (Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998, p. 181). Individuals who experience intense hurt may also have a limited array of response tactics at their disposal since they are flooded with emotion. Active verbal responses, on the other hand, were most likely to be used when people were in satisfying relationships, presumably because people in satisfying relationships believe the

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overall tone of their relationship will remain positive despite an occasional hurtful comment or quarrel. In other studies, individuals who reported responding to hurtful events with integrative communication (e.g., problem solving with their partner), relational repair (e.g., strategies such as being affectionate and spending more time with one's partner), and loyalty (e.g., waiting patiently for things to improve) were more likely to be satisfied with their relationships and to have forgiven their partners following a relational transgression (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006a, 2006b).

Expressions of sadness can also provide clues about the well-being of a relationship. Greenberg and Goldman (2008) noted that sadness is often associated with feeling isolated or neglected and as such may indicate that there are low levels of desired qualities in a relationship. Gottman, Levenson, and Woodin (2001) conducted a longitudinal study investigating how facial expressions of emotion predict a host of marital outcomes 4 years later, including the degree of fondness individuals feel for their spouse, the degree of negativity in the marriage, and the extent to which participants identified themselves as part of a couple rather than as an individual, which Gottman and colleagues termed *weness*. Individuals who displayed sad facial expressions were more likely to report negativity in their marriages. In addition, when husbands displayed sadness, both they and their wives reported experiencing less "weness" later in the marriage. Overall, Gottman et al. (2001) concluded that sadness was one of several expressions that is important in predicting relational outcomes.

Flat Emotions

Until recently, flat emotions such as apathy, boredom, and indifference had not been studied frequently in relation to conflict. This is somewhat surprising given that flat emotions are associated with withdrawal (Sanford, 2007a), and withdrawal has been studied fairly extensively as a response to conflict (e.g., Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Gottman, 1994). Sanford's program of research suggests that flat emotions are common in conflict interaction (Sanford, 2007a, 2007b) and that people feel neglected when their partner shows an increase in flat emotion during conflict (Sanford, 2010; Sanford & Grace, 2011). When partners feel neglected, they are more likely to experience, and perhaps communicate, hard (hostile) or soft (vulnerable) emotions. Thus, flat emotions can help explain patterns of withdrawal and demand (Christensen & Heavey, 1990); when one partner experiences flat emotion and withdraws, the other partner may experience hostile emotion and become demanding and aggressive. In other cases, flat emotion could provide a pathway to empathy and understanding. Specifically, if one partner's expression of flat emotions prompts the other partner to feel neglected and hurt, the first partner might see those hurt feelings and feel empathy. Of course, for this to occur, the first partner's flat emotion needs to subside or be replaced by more empathic emotion. More research needs to be conducted on patterns such as these to determine the specific role that flat emotion plays in shaping communication during conflict. For now, scholars know that flat emotion is expressed during conflict, that it relates to withdrawal, and that expressions of flat emotions are often interpreted as communicating neglect, which can lead to the experience and expression of either hostile or vulnerable emotions.

Scholars also know that withdrawal is communicated primarily through nonimmediacy cues that reflect a lack of involvement (Guerrero & Floyd, 2006). Specific behaviors related to withdrawal during conflict include less gaze, more head turns and head down positions, fewer open gestures (Feeney, Noller, Sheehan, & Peterson, 1999), more adaptors

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(Sillars, Coletti, Parry, & Rogers, 1982), and physically pulling away and not talking (Weiss & Summers 1983). The extent that one experiences flat emotions during conflict may be related to how much of each of these types of behaviors an individual enacts.

Positive Emotions

Several positive emotions, including respect, fondness, empathy, and interpersonal warmth, can be experienced and expressed during conflict episodes. In contrast to negative conflict emotions, which are generally elicited by an interruption of one's goals, positive conflict emotions may arise when the prospect of cooperation suggests that one's goals will be obtained. Positive emotions may also emanate from the closeness and interdependence that partners share. Guerrero and Floyd (2006) identified two classes of conflict behavior that are related to positive emotion (see also Margolin, Burman, & John, 1989): those reflecting warmth and those reflecting problem solving and cooperation. Interpersonal warmth is communicated through behaviors such as smiling, facial pleasantness, vocal warmth, reinforcing head nods that signal agreement, and vocal interjections (e.g., saying "uh-huh"). Cooperative behaviors that facilitate problem solving include increased talk time, longer speaking turns, a slower speaking pace, fewer interruptions (Sillars et al., 1982), a relaxed posture and voice (Newton & Burgoon, 1990), increased gaze, facial expressiveness, gesturing, and head nods (Feeney et al., 1999).

These behaviors play a critical role in determining whether conflict can be managed effectively. Individuals who are satisfied with their relationships express more agreement and affection during conflict episodes (Revenstorf, Hahlweg, Schindler, & Vogel, 1984; Schaap, 1984). Levenson and his colleagues demonstrated that individuals who report more positive affect and less negative affect are more satisfied with their marriages during and immediately following the conflict (Levenson, Carstensen, & Gottman, 1994; Levenson & Gottman, 1983) as well as 3 years later (Levenson & Gottman, 1985). Gottman (1993a) also showed that husbands displayed more affection, and wives displayed more interest and joy if they were in stable rather than unstable relationships. In a longitudinal study of newly married couples (Gottman, Coan, Swanson, & Carrere, 1998), the expression of positive emotion during conflict was the sole predictor of happiness and stability 6 years later. Even feigned positive emotion appears to have positive effects on relationships. In a study by Gottman et al. (2001), wives who expressed unfelt positivity (e.g., they acted happy even when they were not) reported more fondness for their husbands 4 years later.

Research on accommodation and forgiveness also supports the idea that expressions of positive emotion are critical for maintaining satisfying relationships. According to *the accommodation principle*, people have a natural tendency to reciprocate negativity. Accommodation occurs when individuals overcome this initial tendency and engage in cooperative rather than uncooperative behavior. Couples who are in satisfying relationships are more likely to accommodate one another than are those in dissatisfying relationships (Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, & Hannon, 2001). Similarly, McCullough, Worthington, and Rachal (1997) found that empathy helped explain why people forgave their partners following a relational transgression. They theorized that there is a natural tendency for people to engage in avoidance or retaliatory behavior when they are hurt by a partner. However, if the partner apologizes and expresses remorse, the hurt individual may feel empathy and forgive the offending partner. This model of the forgiveness process implicates both positive emotion (in the form of empathy) and self-conscious emotions

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(e.g., guilt and remorse) in the conflict resolution process.

Self-Conscious Emotions

Self-conscious emotions are inherently social and involve both self-reflection and self-evaluation (Barrett, 1995; Fischer & Tangney, 1995). Bell and Song (2005) listed embarrassment, guilt, and humiliation as common self-conscious emotions that occur during conflict situations. Of these, guilt has received the most attention. People experience guilt when they perceive that they have injured, unjustly hurt, or failed to help someone. Guilt is a social emotion, because as Baumeister, Stillwell, and Heatherton (1994) noted, a primary function of guilt is to maintain and repair positive relationships. Shimanoff (1984) found that regret (or guilt) was one of the emotions that married couples talked about most frequently. Betraying one's partner, neglecting one's partner, and failing to live up to an interpersonal obligation are primary elicitors of guilt within relationships (Baumeister et al., 1994).

During the course of a conflict interaction, people sometimes try to elicit guilt in their partner. This may be especially likely if one person feels overburdened or mistreated and, therefore, wants to change something in the relationship. Vangelisti, Daly, and Rudnick (1991) examined conversational tactics that elicit guilt, the most common of which were statements about relational obligations (e.g., "You need to spend more time with me and the kids than with your friends"), the nature of things (e.g., "You're not going to waste your time watching that stupid show again, are you?"), role obligations (e.g., "As their coach you should be there on time"), sacrifices (e.g., "I guess I'll have to watch the kids today so you can go shopping with your friends"), and comparisons to others (e.g., "You spend more time doing what you want than I do," "Mary's husband buys her little cards and gifts all the time"). It is easy to imagine these types of statements being said during a conflict episode when individuals believe that they are doing more than their partners, or that their partners are not meeting their obligations or responsibilities. Thus, situations of inequity may lead people to either feel guilty (Sprecher, 2001) or induce guilty feelings in their partner.

Whether people experience guilt on their own or because it is induced by their partner, the primary action tendency associated with guilt is to repair the damage (Lazarus, 1991; Tangney et al., 1992). Guerrero, Andersen, and Afifi (2011) summarized research suggesting that individuals who feel guilty have a number of potentially effective remedial strategies at their disposal, including apologizing and conceding guilt, justifying one's behavior, trying to appease the partner, and engaging in relationship talk. For example, if Kate felt guilty because she went out to lunch with an old boyfriend without telling Kevin, she could confess and tell Kevin that she was wrong and felt badly about her actions (apology); she could tell Kevin that she only met her ex-boyfriend for lunch because he sounded really depressed (justification); she could be especially nice and affectionate toward Kevin (appeasement); or she could tell Kevin that their marriage is strong, so he should not worry about an ex-boyfriend (relationship talk).

Fearful Emotions

Bell and Song (2005) conceptualized fearful emotions as an avoidant reaction to the partner, which stems from not wanting to hurt or trouble the partner. Such emotions could, indeed, surface in conflicts, especially if one person fears that speaking the truth could hurt the other person's feelings. However, a broader conceptualization of fearful emotions would also include more deleterious forms of fear, such as avoiding the partner because one is afraid that the partner will leave or inflict

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hurt in response to a complaint or request for change. This type of fear drives a specific conflict pattern called *the chilling effect* (Roloff & Cloven, 1990). The chilling effect occurs when individuals avoid voicing their opinions and complaints because they fear that their partner will react negatively—perhaps by becoming aggressive or by ending the relationship. In this case, rather than fear stemming from a desire not to hurt one's partner (as Bell & Song, 2005, conceptualized fearful emotions during conflict), fear stems from a desire not to be hurt *by* one's partner. People are particularly susceptive to the chilling effect when they are more dependent on or more interested in maintaining the relationship than their partner is (Roloff & Cloven, 1990; Solomon, Knobloch, & Fitzpatrick, 2004). High levels of mutual commitment protect against the chilling effect. Therefore, moving past one's fear and reinforcing commitment can help people break the conflict pattern associated with the chilling effect. Fear is also common during conflict revolving around traumatic events, such as infidelity, with partners worried that they will be hurt again in the future (Greenberg & Goldman, 2008). In more extreme cases, fear may be related to a pattern of violence in relationships. In particular, *intimate terrorism* involves the chronic use of violence as a means of controlling one's partner (Johnson, 1995). According to Johnson, fear is one of the primary tools that perpetrators of intimate terrorism use. Partners who are caught in a pattern of intimate terrorism should seek professional help. In an interview, Johnson noted that for therapists to "work effectively with an individual couple experiencing violence it would be important to ask them about the power and control issues involved in their relationship, and about the presence of fear in their relationship" (Ooms, 2006, p. 7). Gottman and his colleagues (2001) examined more general expressions of fear in marital dyads. They found that husbands who displayed fearful expressions at the beginning of a 4-year-longitudinal study reported having spent more time separated from their wives during the 4-year period. Both husbands and wives also reported more physical illness if the husband had previously displayed fearful expressions. These findings suggest that expressions of fear are associated with negative relational and health outcomes. In line with the chilling effect, fearful emotions could signal that a person is feeling powerless in the relationship or lacks the courage to confront the partner about important issues. If this is the case, problems will remain unresolved and conflict (although not usually overtly expressed) could fester and worsen.

Theoretical Frameworks for Studying Conflict and Emotion

Researchers have examined how some of the specific emotions mentioned above work together during conflict situations to predict outcomes such as relational satisfaction. Two theories, in particular, have also centered on communication patterns relevant to conflict interaction. Of these, Gottman's (1994) cascade model is the premier relational theory linking emotion to conflict outcomes. Although less well developed than the cascade model in relation to the associations between conflict and emotion, Burgoon's EVT (Burgoon & Hale, 1988) has been applied to situations involving emotion (Burgoon, 1993) and relationship transgressions (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006a), and therefore it appears promising for illuminating how emotion functions in conflict interaction.

Gottman's Cascade Model

Research related to the cascade model (Gottman, 1993a, 1993b, 1994) illustrates the centrality of emotion in conflict as well as the critical role that emotional experience and

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expression plays in determining whether conflict will be productive or damaging within the context of marital relationships. In particular, Gottman's work highlights the importance of disgust and contempt in the conflict process. Gottman's work also suggests that emotional flooding impedes constructive communication and leads to defensiveness and stonewalling. Thus, the theory emphasizes the connections between conflict, emotion, and physiological changes related to arousal levels, as well as relational outcomes such as satisfaction and stability.

Early work by Gottman et al. (1977) set the stage for the cascade model. In this study, facial cues such as smiling, having an empathic facial expression, and nodding to show agreement were coded as nonverbal expressions of positive affect, whereas facial cues such as frowning, sneering, crying, or looking angry were coded as expressions of negative affect. Gottman et al. (1977) found that nonverbal indicators of affect were a better discriminator of distressed versus nondistressed couples than were verbal behaviors; couples who were satisfied with their relationships expressed less negative affect during conflict interaction than did those who were dissatisfied. Their data also suggested that distressed couples were more likely to reciprocate one another's expressions of negative affect, leading to cycles of negativity during conflict episodes. Later studies further specified how emotion is related to conflict outcomes by demonstrating that defensiveness, stubbornness, and withdrawal from the interaction were more predictive of marital satisfaction and stability than anger (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989).

Gottman's later work expanded on both of the main ideas from this early study, first, by showing that the ratio of expressions of positive to negative affect is important and, second, by specifying the pattern of emotion and behavior that predicts divorce. In terms of the ratio of positive to negative behavior, Gottman (1993a) described five couple types, three of which are associated with stable, satisfying relationships. The first stable type is the *volatile couple*. These couples are especially high in emotional expressivity. They engage in conflict readily, share their views freely, and try to influence one another when they have differing opinions. The second stable type is the *conflict-avoiding* couple. These couples are the opposite of volatile couples; they are low in emotional expressivity and prefer to steer clear of conflict. Rather than discuss differing opinions, they are likely to accommodate one another or avoid conflict altogether. The third stable couple type, the *validating* couple, falls in between the volatile and conflict-avoiding types. Validating couples are moderately expressive, discuss differing opinions when necessary, and engage in moderate amounts of conflict. Interestingly, even though these three couple types are very different, they are all characterized by about a 5:1 ratio of positive to negative expressions when they are trying to persuade one another, and therefore, according to Gottman, they are all in satisfying relationships. Importantly, then, it is not the amount of conflict that makes a relationship satisfying, but rather the extent to which positive behaviors outweigh negative behaviors by at least a 5:1 ratio. As Gottman (1993b) put it, "each type of marriage is likely to represent a necessary adaptation that ensures a stable marriage, each with its own rewards and costs and each with its own comfort level of emotional expression" (p. 67).

In contrast, the two unstable couple types, which Gottman (1993a) labeled *hostile* and *hostile/detached*, are marked by ratios of about 0.8:1. In other words, on average, people in unstable relationships use about as many negative expressions as positive expressions. Given that negative expressions, which may occur in the form of complaints, criticisms, contemptuous remarks, or defensiveness, can lead to emotional flooding, it is

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no surprise that a 0.8:1 ratio would be unhealthy in a marriage. By ensuring that positive expressions outweigh negative expressions, couples can negotiate and persuade one another without risking emotional flooding and the attendant cascade of contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. Although both hostile and hostile/detached couples are characterized by more negative affect and less positive affect than the three stable couple types, hostile/detached couples are characterized by especially high levels of negative affect and low levels of positive affect as well as low levels of listening. In particular, hostile/detached couples displayed especially high levels of verbal contempt, hostility, and disgust, as well as especially low levels of interest and positive agenda building (Gottman, 1993a).

The conflict patterns associated with each of the couple types are theorized to be habitual although they can change over time. For the unstable couples, the pattern is described by the cascade model, which is sometimes referred to as the model of the "four horsemen of the Apocalypse" (Gottman, 1994). There are two interrelated cascades. The first of these, the outcome cascade, involves the following sequence: becoming dissatisfied with the relationship, thinking about separation or divorce, separating, and then divorcing. According to Gottman (1994), "There is a cascade of process variables that are related to the outcome cascade" (p. 110). These process variables include behavior (e.g., complaining or withdrawing) as well as emotion. Specifically, Gottman posited that couples who are heading for divorce tend to exhibit the following four-part sequence (a.k.a. the four horsemen) during conflict episodes: (1) complaining and criticizing, (2) which leads to contempt, (3) which leads to defensiveness, (4) which eventually leads to withdrawal or "stonewalling" (p. 110). Of course, not all sequences that begin with complaints or criticism ultimately lead to stonewalling, but when this pattern becomes habitual, and problem solving is replaced by stonewalling, Gottman predicts that couples will divorce unless the unlikely happens and they somehow break the cycle of the four horsemen.

In addition to the key roles played by disgust and contempt, emotion is also featured in the cascade model through the inclusion of a concept called emotional flooding. *Emotional flooding* occurs when people become "surprised, overwhelmed, and disorganized" by their partner's negative behavior, leading to a state of diffused physiological arousal that is often marked by increased heart rate, perspiration, warm temperature, and heightened blood pressure (Gottman, 1994, p. 21). As such, emotional flooding makes it difficult for people to listen to their partners and process information accurately. Instead, people who are emotionally flooded tend to focus on alleviating their negative emotions, often through destructive means such as using personal attacks (e.g., personal criticism, sarcasm, or contemptuous looks), becoming defensive (including using behaviors such as whining), or withdrawing from the situation (stonewalling). Fortunately, expressions of positive affect can act as buffers against emotional flooding. So if Kevin tells Kate, "You mean so much to me that I hate it when we fight like this," this type of expression could prevent or alleviate emotional flooding.

Kevin and Kate could also benefit by understanding some of the other practical implications of Gottman's theory. Five implications, in particular, are related to the experience and expression of emotion during conflict as noted next.

1. Couples need to recognize that conflict is an emotion-laden process. Thus, partners should expect one another to display some negative affect when discussing contentious issues. They should remember that the amount of negative affect expressed is not as important as the ratio of negative

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to positive affect. If the balance is tipped toward too much negativity, couples can compensate by injecting affection, agreement, or humor into the mix.

2. When emotions become intense, postponing the discussion may be a good option. As Gottman's research demonstrates, emotional flooding leads to less productive communication and more negative spirals of behavior. This does not mean that conflict should be postponed indefinitely but rather that couples may need time to cool down before they can get back to discussing a contentious topic more effectively.
3. Couples should be aware of the four horsemen of the apocalypse—criticism/complaints, disgust/contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. Teaching couples how to express complaints without personally attacking one another may help prevent the cascade from developing, especially since contempt and defensiveness are often reactions to insults. Gottman, Gottman, and DeClaire (2006) explained that one difference between "marriage masters" and "marriage disasters" is that marriage masters know how to complain respectfully without criticizing one another. Avoiding particularly destructive behaviors, such as whining and rolling one's eyes, can also be helpful.
4. Gottman et al. (2006) also noted that partners need to accept and respond positively to one another's emotional bids. This may be especially true during conflict when people have a tendency to notice and respond to negative behaviors more than positive behaviors (Gaelick, Brodenshauser, & Wyer, 1985). So if Kevin tells Kate that he has felt a need to relax at home lately because he has been under extra pressure at work, Kate should respond positively to his emotional bid, perhaps by touching Kevin's arm and saying she understands.
5. Finally, being able to decode neutral and positive emotions accurately (rather than mistaking them for negative expressions) appears to be a particularly critical skill. Fruzzetti and Iverson (2006) found that accuracy in decoding one another's emotions during conflict was positively related to high-quality communication and the ability to reach a resolution for married couples. Gottman's (1994) work also suggests that it is imperative that partners be able to put themselves in the other's position by creating mental maps of the partner's thoughts and feelings and then verifying why the partner feels a particular way. Too often, relational partners think that they know one another's thoughts and feelings when in truth they are making misattributions. For example, if Kevin understands that Kate is yelling because she is frustrated rather than because she thinks he is lazy, he might be less defensive and display more supportiveness.

Expectancy Violations Theory

Similar to Gottman's theory, EVT predicts that people can break negative cycles of conflict communication by engaging in positive, compensatory behavior in response to a partner's hostility. Thus, EVT provides a framework for explaining sequences of communicative behavior, including reciprocity and compensation, which occur in response to unexpected events that can lead to or occur during conflict. According to Burgoon's EVT (Burgoon & Hale, 1988; Burgoon, Stern, & Dillman, 1995), people hold both predictive and prescriptive expectancies for people's behavior. Predictive expectancies involve knowing how a person tends to act in a particular situation. For instance, based on his past behavior, Kate might expect Kevin to kiss her good-bye as they both depart for work in the morning. Prescriptive expectancies, on the other hand, involve expecting someone to conform to general rules of social appropriateness. So, once at work, Kate might expect to shake hands with a new business associate when meeting her for the first time.

According to Burgoon's (1983, 1993) theory, expectations help regulate both emotion

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and behavior. When someone's behavior is perceived to exceed expectations, positive emotions and reciprocal behavior likely follow (e.g., Kevin gives Kate an especially nice kiss; she feels positive affect and hugs him longer than usual). In contrast, when someone's behavior is perceived to fall short of expectations, negative emotions likely follow (e.g., Kate's new coworker ignores her extended hand). In some cases, people compensate in response to negative expectancy violations; in other cases, they reciprocate and a cycle of negative behavior ensues.

Whether people compensate or reciprocate depends in part on the reward value of the person who committed the expectancy violation (e.g., how attractive or how high or low in status). If the person is unrewarding, then her or his negative behavior will likely be reciprocated (e.g., Kate's new coworker is an intern, so she frowns and looks away when her extended hand is ignored). If the person is highly rewarding, then her or his negative behavior will likely be compensated, at least initially (e.g., Kate's new coworker is of high status, so she smiles despite feeling snubbed when her attempt to shake hands fails). However, if the rewarding person persists in exhibiting negative behavior, the receiver is likely to experience increased negative affect and eventually reciprocate.

EVT is applicable to conflict situations. Afifi and Metts (1998) had people recall something a friend or romantic partner did that violated their expectations. Positive expectancy violations included relationship escalation (e.g., saying "I love you"), acts of devotion (e.g., helping the partner through a crisis), and gestures of inclusion (e.g., extending an invitation to meet one's family). Negative expectancy violations included criticism or accusations (e.g., insulting someone), relationship de-escalation (e.g., spending less time together), transgressions (e.g., being unfaithful or deceitful), and acts of disregard (e.g., forgetting an important occasion). Obviously, these negative expectancy violations can also lead to conflict as well as emotions such as anger and guilt.

EVT has also been applied to the study of relational transgressions and hurtful events. Drawing from EVT, Bachman and Guerrero (2006a) predicted that reward value and negative valence (i.e., the degree to which the event negatively violated expectancies) would associate with communicative responses to hurtful events. They found that people were most likely to use integrative communication (i.e., problem solving) when the relationship was rewarding and the event constituted a relatively mild transgression. Conversely, when people rated their relationships as unrewarding prior to the hurtful event, they tended to report using de-escalation, distributive communication (e.g., yelling, making accusatory statements), and vengeful behavior. When people perceived the hurtful event as a severe relational transgression, they were more likely to report using de-escalation, distributive communication, and active distancing (e.g., ignoring or stonewalling their partner). Perhaps surprisingly, Bachman and Guerrero (2006a) also found that people reported a tendency toward using constructive rather than destructive responses when they were deeply hurt by the partner's actions. Similarly, Lukasik (2001) found that adolescents who were deeply hurt by something a friend said or did during conflict were more likely to forgive the friend. These findings may indicate that people tend to be the most hurt when someone they care about makes cruel remarks or engages in relational transgressions toward them; because they care about the errant partner, they may attempt to use constructive rather than destructive communication. Such an explanation is consistent with principles from EVT, which suggest that people are more likely to respond to negative expectancy violations positively when the violator is rewarding.

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Despite this tendency, the predominant pattern is to reciprocate negative behavior (Burgoon et al., 1995). This may be because negative emotions surface when someone fails to meet expectations. So if Kevin expects Kate to help entertain his friends when they come over to watch football, he will likely become angry if she goes upstairs and ignores them. In such a case, the same behavior that produces an expectancy violation also produces an aversive emotional response, which in turn can lead to conflict and negative behavior, such as defensiveness or accusations. Rusbult, Drigotas, and Verette (1994) claimed that it is very difficult for people to accommodate their partners and break negative cycles of behavior when they are experiencing negative emotion.

Of course, within the context of conflict interaction, the threshold for what counts as an expectancy violation may shift. Angry words and harsh vocal tones may be expected during conflict, even though they are unexpected in other contexts. For couples in distressed relationships, it may become increasingly difficult to violate one another's expectations during the course of a conflict because negative spirals of behavior are expected. During conflict, behaviors such as speaking in a neutral tone, giving the partner a compliment, or failing to respond to a personal insult may sometime violate expectations more than negative behaviors. Thus, a starting point for research on conflict from an EVT framework may be to determine what behaviors typically constitute positive and negative violations during conflict. Behaviors that are perceived to violate expectations positively may help stop destructive cycles of communication.

The extent to which a behavior is perceived to be an expectancy violation also helps predict whether or not forgiveness is forthcoming. Guerrero and Bachman (2010) used principles from EVT and Rusbult's (1983) investment model (IM) to predict forgiveness and forgiving communication following relational transgressions in dating relationships. Individuals were surveyed before and after a relational transgression occurred. Victims were likely to report granting forgiveness if they had previously rated their relationship as rewarding (among other characteristics) and currently perceived the transgression to be relatively mild. Variables from EVT and the IM also predicted the types of forgiving communication that participants reported using (if any). For example, conditional forgiveness (e.g., forgiveness that is contingent on meeting demands) was likely when participants reported having a rewarding relationship, having few good alternatives outside their current relationship, and evaluating the transgression as relatively severe. These individuals likely feel torn regarding whether or not to forgive their partner—on the one hand the transgression was severe, but on the other hand the relationship was previously rewarding and might therefore be worth saving. Having a rewarding, high-quality relationship was also associated positively with discussing the transgression and granting forgiveness explicitly. The more negative the expectancy violation was, the less likely victims were to report showing forgiveness through nonverbal displays (e.g., hugging), discussion, or minimization (e.g., saying that it's "no big deal"). Thus, this study demonstrates that EVT variables are not only associated with emotions and conflict behavior but also with forgiveness, which can be an important part of reconciliation during or after a conflict episode.

Thus far, research suggests that EVT is a helpful framework for understanding communication related to relational transgressions and forgiveness. This work has several implications for couples who are coping with conflict as discussed next.

1. Couples should negotiate rules and expectations for behavior in their relationships. Conflict often arises when partners have different expectations for behavior, so reaching a consensus regarding standards

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for behavior can help couples avoid conflict and provide a starting point for negotiation when conflict does occur. For example, Kate and Kevin may need to establish rules regarding household chores and calling when one is going to be late.

2. Offenders should realize that the more a transgression violates expectations, the more work they will need to do to try to make amends. Offenders should also understand that if a transgression constitutes a particularly severe violation of expectancies, forgiveness may never be forthcoming.
3. Individuals with low reward value (i.e., those who are considered less socially or physically attractive) should be especially careful not to violate expectations during conflict (or by engaging in a relational transgression) since they will be judged more harshly than individuals with high reward value.
4. Finally, hurt feelings are likely to be expressed during conflict when relational transgressions have occurred. Hurt feelings may reflect not only the severity of the transgression but also the closeness of a relationship, since individuals tend to be more hurt when the transgressor is someone they care about. Thus, hurt individuals may sometimes feel competing impulses—on the one hand they want to disconnect from the person who hurt them, but on the other hand they want to stay close. The hurt individual may need time to sort through these conflicting feelings, and the offending individual may need to give the hurt person time to do so.

Critical Issues for Future Research

Thus far, scholars have spent considerable energy studying both conflict and emotion, but with the exception of Gottman's cascade model, and to a lesser extent, EVT, little work has directly investigated the links between communication and emotion within situations involving relational conflict. Retzinger (1991) argued that specifying the presence or absence of emotions such as contempt and anger may help "untangle the knot of protracted conflict" and that "the communicative aspects of emotional states need to be assessed as they occur in interaction" (pp. 60–61), yet few investigations have examined moment-by-moment patterns of emotion in conflict. Jones and Bodtker (2001) also noted that the lack of attention given to emotion in research on conflict mediation is surprising. However, work related to the communication of hostile, vulnerable, flat, positive, self-conscious, and fearful emotions, along with the two theories discussed herein, provide a foundation for examining the role emotion plays in conflict. Several issues stand out as candidates for future research on each of the six conflict-related emotions discussed in this chapter, as described next. More research is also needed on culture as a possible moderator of the associations between emotion and conflict behavior.

Issue 1: Identifying Conditions That Affect How Hostile Emotions Are Expressed

Considerable research suggests that people follow the action tendency to attack when experiencing hostile emotions. Although contempt and disgust may be difficult to express constructively, other hostile emotions, such as anger and jealousy, can be expressed in a positive manner that focuses on sharing feelings and solving problems. Gottman's (1994) research shows that emotional flooding is one condition that prevents people from responding to hostile emotions productively. EVT suggests that people are also unlikely to express hostile emotions in a constructive manner if they consider the behavior that prompted that emotion to be a negative violation of expectancies. However, EVT, along with the IM (Rusbult et al., 1994), specifies that people

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may resist the urge to retaliate when experiencing hostile emotions if the relationship is rewarding enough. The IM also suggests that people will be less quick to respond aggressively if they have invested a lot into a relationship or if they have poor quality alternatives. The extent to which these relationship factors can prevent emotional flooding and curb relational responses is unknown. Thus, scholars could benefit from better understanding the associations between relationship characteristics and the experience and expression of hostile emotions during conflict.

Issue 2: Examining How Hurtful Messages and Responses to Hurtful Messages Function Within Conflict Interactions

Hurt and other vulnerable or "soft" emotions can be associated with either negative or positive communication (Sanford, 2007b). Sometimes, hurt individuals are able to elicit empathy; other times, they become emotionally flooded and defensive, which can usher in Gottman's (1994) four horsemen of the apocalypse. Vangelisti's (1994; Vangelisti & Sprague, 1998) work on hurtful messages may add specificity to the cascade model by identifying specific types of verbal messages that are perceived as especially critical or contemptuous, and are therefore likely to prompt emotional flooding, defensiveness, and eventually even stonewalling. For example, certain types of accusations (e.g., "You're crazy"), expressed desires (e.g., "Sometimes I wish I'd never met you"), and informative statements (e.g., "You sure weighed a lot less when we got married") may be particularly hurtful because they are perceived as highly critical or contemptuous. Identifying messages that are especially hurtful would help practitioners, who could train clients to avoid using such messages. By the same token, it would be valuable to learn how hurt can be communicated in nondefensive ways that elicit empathy.

Issue 3: Understanding the Role of Flat Emotion in Withdrawal Patterns

The conflict literature is replete with references to avoidant behavior, withdrawal, and stonewalling. Yet with only a few notable exceptions (e.g., Gottman, 1994), researchers have not discussed how these responses may be governed, at least partially, by emotion. Yet flat emotions such as apathy and disinterest are associated with avoidant communication as well as low levels of constructive communication (Maldonado, 2009; Sanford, 2007a). This suggests that flat emotions could help predict when demand–withdrawal patterns (Christensen & Heavey, 1990) or stonewalling (Gottman, 1994) ensue. Indeed, the demand–withdrawal conflict pattern is one of the most researched aspects of conflict communication. This sequence involves one person demanding and the other person withdrawing, in either order, with the demanding person becoming increasingly aggressive in response to the partner's continuing withdrawal, and the withdrawing person becoming increasingly avoidant in response to the partner's continuing demands. One of the most accepted and empirically supported explanations for this pattern is that the person in the demanding position wants change, whereas the person in the withdrawing position wants to maintain the status quo (Sagrestano, Heavey, & Christensen, 2006). Emotions may provide a complementary, or perhaps mediating, explanation. Individuals who are in the demanding position may indeed want change, but the desire for change may be fueled by hostile emotions such as frustration, anger, or jealousy that are related to approach tendencies. In contrast, individuals in the withdrawing position may feel flat emotions that are related to avoidant tendencies, such as disinterest and apathy, because their goals are not being interrupted, except by their partner who wants change. Flat emotions could also play a role in the cascade model. Chronic stonewalling may

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only occur when emotional flooding has dissipated and individuals instead feel a sense of apathy and perhaps even hopelessness toward dealing with their partner.

Issue 4: Understanding the Role of Positive Affect in Conflict Interaction

Research on conflict and emotion has primarily focused on negative emotions. Yet people can experience positive emotions such as fondness, admiration, and empathy during conflict. Indeed, the trick to managing conflict constructively may be to alleviate negative affect and, ideally, to experience some positive affect during the conflict episode. Constructive conflict behaviors may be effective not only because they help couples tackle issues and solve problems but also because they detract from negative emotion and can sometimes lead to positive affect. Cooperative behaviors may also facilitate rather than impede goals, and goal facilitation has been linked to happiness and love (Ellis & Malamuth, 2000). Positive affect also promotes openness and creativity in problem solving and conflict negotiation (Isen, 1993). It is critical, then, for researchers and practitioners to understand how couples can inject expressions of positive emotion into conflict interactions.

Issue 5: Exploring the Role Self-Conscious Emotions Play in Conflict Interaction

Little research has examined self-conscious emotions within conflict episodes. Yet emotions such as guilt may be central to many conflict interactions. When conflict is caused by a relational transgression, one person may be cast in the role of the "guilty party," while the other person may be cast as a victim. These roles may then frame the conflict interaction. Guilty feelings may cause people to make amends or, ironically, to avoid conflict if they perceive that discussing the transgression will only further harm their self-image. Individuals who feel they have been treated unfairly may induce guilt in their partners by using the types of guilt-inducing techniques that Vangelisti et al. (1991) uncovered. The effects of guilt-inducing techniques, however, are unclear. Guilt induction may sometimes be necessary to point out inequities and solve problems. Other times, guilt-inducing techniques may be perceived as contemptuous or critical remarks that imply superiority or unfairly judge the partner. When this is the case, aggressive behavior, defensiveness, or stonewalling may follow, leading to a destructive negative cycle (Gottman, 1994; Tangney et al., 1992). Pride is another self-conscious emotion that needs to be better understood within the context of conflict interaction; pride could lead people to stubbornly cling to positions or to get especially defensive when attacked.

Issue 6: Understanding Types of Fear That Prevent or Promote Communication About Conflict Issues

Different types of fear can be part of the conflict process. In some cases, fear may prompt demands or retaliation. Such may be the case when fear stems from a relational transgression, such as infidelity or deception, which makes the hurt individual fearful that the partner will engage in similar behavior in the future. This type of fear may be related to conditional forgiveness and demands for change. In other cases, fear may prevent conflict from being expressed. Such is the case with the chilling effect (Roloff & Cloven, 1990). Yet little is known regarding how fear may work with other emotions to prevent or promote people from voicing their opinions. There may be a point where hostile emotions, such as anger or irritation, override the chilling effect, and people express their frustrations

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regardless of their fear. Fear can also be studied in relation to *the principle of least interest*, which specifies that the person who is less interested in maintaining a relationship has more power (Sprecher, Schmeeckle, & Felmlee, 2006). If, indeed, one partner cares more than the other, the partner who cares more may inhibit negative emotional expressions during conflict so as not to put the relationship in jeopardy. Fear may also be used to manipulate. Intimate terrorism is an extreme example of this, with one partner controlling the other through threats and violence (Johnson, 1995). The fear instilled through intimate terrorism can go beyond keeping people from expressing disagreement; it can also trap people in unhealthy relationships and is therefore worthy of future study.

Issue 7: Incorporating Culture Into Conflict Models

In addition to examining each type of conflict-related emotion in more detail, there is a general need to investigate conflict communication using more diverse populations. The vast majority of research reported in this chapter comes from U.S. samples consisting mostly of people with European American backgrounds. Yet scholars recognize that people from different cultures and cocultures express and regulate emotions differently (Planalp, 1999). In general, studies suggest that people from some Asian cultures tend to express less emotion than people from other cultures. For example, Rimé, Corsini, and Herbette (2002) reported a study where people from France, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and the United States recalled their most recent experience of an unpleasant emotion. Although there were no cultural differences in felt emotional intensity, people from Japan, Korea, and Singapore reported significantly less emotional sharing than did people from France and the United States. For example, people from the United States reported that they shared their emotional experiences with others about 95% of time, whereas people from Korea reported sharing their emotions less than 80% of the time (see Rimé, Finkenauer, Luminet, Zech, & Philippot, 1998, for details). Similarly, research has demonstrated that people from some Asian cultures avoid conflict and mask negative emotions such as shame, anger, and disgust more than their Western counterparts (Barnlund, 1989; Matsumoto, 2000). In contrast, people from some Arab countries tend to approach conflict and express negative emotions more than people from the West (Almaney & Alwan, 1982; Feghali, 1997). As these studies suggest, cultural differences in emotional expression could exacerbate conflict in cross-cultural or intercultural interaction.

Indeed, some studies have shown differences in conflict patterns based on culture or coculture. Chua and Gudykunst (1987) noted that individuals from low-context cultures, such as the United States, use more solution-oriented conflict behaviors, while individuals from high-context cultures, such as Japan, prefer nonconfrontational behaviors. Flores, Tschann, Marin, and Pantoja (2004) found that Mexican American couples who were more oriented toward Mexican culture than Anglo culture tended to report avoiding conflict, whereas those who were more oriented toward the Anglo culture tended to report expressing more feelings during conflict. Other research has shown that people in collectivist cultures are more likely to use avoidant conflict strategies than are those in individualistic cultures, who are more likely to use confrontational strategies (Cai & Fink, 2002; Pearson & Stephan, 1998).

In cultures where individuals value interdependence and group identity, people may be unlikely to confront one another or express negative emotions (Kim & Leung, 2000). With regard to interdependent cultures, attention needs to be focused on nonverbal communication as a

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means of perceiving the indirect, emotional messages conveyed during conflict (see Doi, 1973; Okabe, 1983). In addition, research on how people from various cultures manage emotions differently during conflict may be one of the keys to understanding some of the cross-cultural differences mentioned here.

Summary and Conclusion

When people are engaged in conflict, their communication is as much a function of the emotion they are experiencing as the arguments they are hearing or the situation they are facing. Research on hostile, vulnerable, flat, positive, self-conscious, and fearful emotions provides a foundation for understanding the types of emotions that influence the conflict process. Gottman's (1994) cascade model and Burgoon's (1993) EVT also provide invaluable starting points for explaining how emotions function in conflict interactions. Including emotion in theories on conflict communication will give scholars more explanatory power. Indeed, emotion acts as both a cause and consequence of conflict communication and may ultimately guide behavior and determine outcomes. During conflict, relational partners need to do more than manage their conflict behavior; they must also be able to deal effectively with the many emotions they are experiencing.

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5

Social Cognition and Conflict

Michael E. Roloff and Courtney N. Wright

Perceived disagreement and goal interference are central characteristics of interpersonal conflict (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). Consequently, conflict is influenced by how people construe it and conflict has an inherent cognitive component. Appropriately, scholars have investigated the social cognitive aspects of interpersonal conflict. The chapter in the first volume of *The Sage Handbook of Conflict Communication* focused on social cognition, and interpersonal conflict remains an excellent starting point for understanding research in the area (Roloff & Miller, 2006). We update that chapter and to establish continuity, we follow the same general outline. We first focus on research that examines the relationship between social knowledge and conflict and then move to an analysis of scholarship that informs as to the relationship between cognitive processes and conflict. The reader will note that new perspectives have emerged and some older perspectives not included in the earlier edition are now relevant. Finally, as in the earlier edition, we focus on recent research and evaluate strengths and weaknesses.

Social Knowledge and Interpersonal Conflict

Social cognition research is focused on how people make sense of themselves, others, and their social activities. Such sense making is guided by and influences knowledge structures that are defined as organized sets of interrelated information about a person's experience (Fletcher & Fitness, 1996). Six types of social knowledge have been studied by conflict researchers: (1) beliefs, (2) scripts, (3) partner memory, (4) rules, (5) frames, and (6) problem appraisals (Roloff & Miller, 2006). To some degree, knowledge structures vary in the extent to which they reflect a person's general conception of a conflict or individual aspects. Frames and problem appraisal often focus on how individuals generally understand their current conflict, whereas beliefs, scripts, rules, and memory structures are focused on specific features of conflict. We begin by examining the specific structures and then move to the more general ones.

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Beliefs

Beliefs constitute descriptions of phenomena that individuals perceive to be accurate. Beliefs can influence perceptions and actions by making people sensitive to certain features of a focal object or action. Conflict researchers have focused on four sets of beliefs: other-related, self-related, relationship-related, and conflict-related.

Other-Related Beliefs

Some researchers have studied whether beliefs about partners influence how individuals perceive and react to conflict. Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, and Rubin (2010) studied dyadic trust, which is the belief that one's partner is a dependable source of support and comfort especially in difficult times. Trust decreased the likelihood of negatively reacting to conflict, engaging in destructive behavior, making negative attributions about the partner's objectionable behavior, and responding in a way that could threaten the future of the relationship. Trust increased constructive conflict behaviors.

Perceiving that a partner is provocative does not always lead to a confrontation. Some individuals hold entity beliefs that reflect their view that human attributes are fixed and not easily changed, whereas others endorse incremental beliefs that indicate that human attributes are malleable and can change over time (Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995). Individuals who hold incremental beliefs use voice during conflict and especially when angry, whereas those who endorse entity beliefs are less likely to voice their complaints as their anger increased (Kammrath & Dweck, 2006). This may indicate that believing that people cannot change reduces the likelihood of confrontation. However, avoidance by "entity theoriest" may belie negative reactions. In a study of adolescent victims of bullying, Yeager, Trzesniewski, Nokelainen, and Dweck (2011) found that believing that traits are fixed was positively related to blaming the bully and experiencing negative self-feelings (e.g., shame) that stimulated a desire for vengeance.

Of course, a key issue is whether trying to change a partner might be effective, and evidence indicates that it may not be. Overall, Fletcher and Simpson (2006) found that individuals were rarely successful at changing their partners in part because their regulation attempts signals to the partners that they are perceived to be deficient and that lowers their relational satisfaction.

Self-Related Beliefs

Researchers who study self-related beliefs and conflict assume that confrontation is determined by a person's beliefs about himself or herself. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory assumes that to engage in an action, one must be confident that one can perform it, which is referred to as self-efficacy. Research indicates that self-efficacy is negatively related to withholding relational complaints (Makoul & Roloff, 1998) and positively related to being verbally assertive (Vera, Shin, Montgomery, Mildner, & Speight, 2004).

Conflict actions may also be related to self-determination. Knee, Lonsbary, Canevello, and Patrick (2005) argue that individuals who have a need for autonomy believe that their relationships afford them personal benefits and they have freely chosen to remain in them, whereas those with a low need for autonomy believe that they receive no personal benefit from being in relationships and remain in them due to the expectations of others or guilt arising from terminating them. Holding autonomy beliefs is positively correlated with engaging in conflict behavior that facilitates understanding and negatively correlated with defensive reactions that enhances relational satisfaction. Also, a partner's autonomy beliefs

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promote an individual's use of understanding actions and reduce the likelihood of engaging in defensive ones.

Relationship-Related Beliefs

Researchers focused on beliefs about relationships mostly examine dysfunctional beliefs. Researchers have extended this research by examining the relationship between dysfunctional beliefs and conflict in non-Western samples. Hamamci (2005a) studied the association between dysfunctional relational beliefs and marital conflict in a Turkish sample. Holding dysfunctional beliefs was positively related to self-reports of the number and frequency of conflicts and the level of tension in the relationship, although interpersonal rejection beliefs showed stronger relationships than did unrealistic expectations and interpersonal misperception. In a subsequent study, Hamamci (2005b) examined whether dysfunctional relational beliefs were related to conflict resolution between Turkish adolescents and their parents. Holding dysfunctional beliefs was negatively related to engaging in actions that lead to conflict resolution (i.e., focusing on the other's needs).

Conflict-Related Beliefs

Scholars have long noted that people have beliefs related to the consequences of conflict. Some research has focused on the antecedents of believing that conflict is always destructive. Campbell et al. (2010) found that the degree to which individuals trusted their partners was negatively related to believing that conflict is destructive.

Conflict beliefs are also related to a person's attachment style. Individuals vary with regard to the degree to which they perceive that establishing an emotional bond with another creates a secure relationship that will be supportive and caring (Shaver & Hazan, 1993). Individuals who have a secure style report being less threatened by conflict and engaging in more effective arguing than do individuals who have a fearful attachment style (Pistole & Arricale, 2003). Similarly, having a secure attachment style is positively related to positive beliefs about conflict and negatively related to expressing negative conflict beliefs (Ben-Ari & Hirshberg, 2009). In contrast, possessing an anxious style is positively correlated with expressing negative beliefs and negatively related to holding positive beliefs about conflict.

Research focused on beliefs provides valuable insights into conflict. However, researchers typically examine these beliefs separately and overlook the interrelationships that may exist between them. We noted that compared with individuals who believe that their partners are reliable, individuals who believe that their partners are untrustworthy monitor them to a greater degree and engage in negative behaviors designed to influence them. Such actions constitute regulatory behavior arising from the partner not conforming to beliefs about how a partner should ideally behave. Partners often resist such regulatory attempts, which could cause individuals to believe that their partner won't change and quit trying. This outcome could have long-term effects. Some individuals may generalize their negative experience to other relationships, believing all close relationships produce negative consequences and that conflict has few positive and many negative consequences. Alternatively, individuals who hold incremental beliefs are more willing to confront their partners and may do so in a way that gains their partners' compliance. In this case, they conclude that the partner can change, and relational quality is improved. Although this analysis is entirely speculative, by exploring multiple beliefs, researchers may gain new insights into their role in conflict.

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Scripts

Cognitive scripts constitute sequences of goal-related actions that individuals perceive are expected and appropriate (Abelson, 1981). Researchers have investigated how cognitive scripts may lead to interpersonal conflict. Four patterns have been uncovered. First, some investigators have noted that actors within the same script may have incompatible goals and actions that stimulate interpersonal conflict. For example, research on the traditional cultural heterosexual sex script indicates that males are supposed to be initiators of sexual activity, while females are expected to passively acquiesce or resist (e.g., LaPlante, McCormick, & Brannigan, 1980). If so, males and females may find each other's scripted behavior to be incompatible and problematic. Indeed, males find their female partner's sexual withholding as being more annoying than do females, and females find their male partner's sexually aggressive behavior to be more annoying than do males (ter Laak, Olthoff, & Aleva, 2003).

Second, conflicts may result from two individuals who have scripts that do not include the same set of behaviors. Bartoli and Clark (2006) studied scripts for typical dates among undergraduates. Although script content was similar for both genders, upper-class students were more likely than first-year students to expect that sexual activity would occur and that women would limit sexual activity. However, divergent scripts may not always create conflict. Holmberg and MacKenzie (2002) examined whether the degree to which relational partners held the same normative or personal relational development scripts was correlated with self-reported interpersonal conflict. Neither of the correlations was statistically significant.

Third, disagreements may occur when two individuals apply different scripts to the same situation. For example, Littleton and Axsom (2003) studied rape and seduction scripts held by undergraduates. Both scripts involved a man and a woman who had minimal prior contact, the man used manipulative techniques to obtain sex, and the woman was not interested in having sex. The primary difference was that the rape script involved violence. If so, victims of nonviolent rape may find that others believe they were seduced rather than raped. Indeed, priming consensual and nonconsensual sexual scripts causes individuals to have different reactions to a description of a sexual encounter in which a man was persistent but not violent toward a woman who was consistently resistant to his advances before having sex with him (Littleton, Axsom, & Yoder, 2006).

Fourth, conflict could arise when an individual's personal script deviates from a normative script. Holmberg and MacKenzie (2002) studied whether the degree to which an individual's personal relational development script matched his or her conception of a normative relational script was related to interpersonal conflict. The correlations were positive but of low magnitude and not significant among females.

Although scripts could stimulate interpersonal conflict, it is possible that arguing may influence which scripts are active. Although increasing intimacy gives rise to interpersonal conflict, cognitive scripts related to relational escalation do not include clusters of behaviors focused on conflict (Honeycutt, Cantrill, & Greene, 1989). However, Honeycutt, Cantrill, and Allen (1992) found that aversive communication (e.g., fighting and antagonizing each other) was often included in descriptions of breakup scripts.

Other research has examined the scripts people have about their interpersonal conflict. Individuals develop interaction scripts that reflect the typical statements and patterns that characterize a given type of interaction (Honeycutt & Bryan, 2011). Most

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researchers have viewed interaction scripts as hindrances to resolving conflict in part because they direct attention away from what is currently being said to what individuals expect will be said. For example, some conflicts are not resolved in a single encounter, and as a result, partners may repeatedly argue over the same issue, which is referred to as serial arguing (Trapp & Hoff, 1985). A by-product of serial arguing is that some individuals report that they can identify the conditions that set off an episode of serial arguing, that they can predict what each other will say during these episodes, and that the arguments have become scripted (Johnson & Roloff, 1988). Indeed, having argued frequently over the same topic is positively related to believing that what will occur in an episode is predictable and scripted (Johnson & Roloff, 2000). Importantly, individuals who report that their serial arguments are predictable are less optimistic that the agreement will ever be resolved (Johnson & Roloff, 1988).

Research on cognitive scripts indicates that the construct is a useful way to study conflict. Much of the research indicates that cognitive scripts are problematic for conflict. However, cognitive scripts might have positive effects. For example, if relational partners encounter routine situations that require joint behavior, they may negotiate agreements for how to manage them, which eventually become a script. To the extent that such scripts provide an effective way of dealing with the situation, then not having to constantly negotiate what will be done would seem a personal benefit. Alternatively, although conflicts that have been scripted seem to cause hopelessness, it is possible that some individuals see them as a danger signal and take action to change them. Perhaps by communicating about the dysfunctional pattern, they may be able to control its negative influence or to break out of it.

Partner Memory

Researchers have studied whether the manner in which individuals store partner-related information influences conflict. People vary in how they structure positive and negative information about their partner's traits. Some individuals have a compartmentalized structure in which positive and negative partner traits are clustered into separate domains (e.g., the partner is an irresponsible and poor student but is a kind and caring lover), whereas others have integrated structures in which both positive and negative traits are clustered together in the same domain (e.g., the partner is a kind and caring lover but can also be irresponsible with regard to performing relational duties). These memory structures can become activated during interactions and thereby influence an individual's subsequent perceptions and actions. Some research suggests that having an integrative structure relative to a compartmentalized one may enhance conflict resolution and relational quality. When focused on a partner's provocative behavior, activated integrative structures bring to mind both positive and negative partner traits, whereas compartmentalized structures highlight only negative actions. The recalled positive actions help offset the impact of the current provocation. Murray and Holmes (1999) found that undergraduate daters with integrative partner structures were less likely to break up than were those with compartmentalized structures partly because they could see virtue in their partner's shortcomings. Holding compartmentalized structures is common among individuals who have difficulty with interpersonal conflict management such as those with low self-esteem (Graham & Clark, 2006) and those who are mistrustful of their partners (Campbell et al., 2010). However, Showers and Kevlyn (1999) found among undergraduate daters, who reported that their partners had generally negative traits, that individuals

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with an integrative structure reported loving/liking their partner to a greater extent than did those with a compartmentalized approach. Among those who perceived their partner as possessing mostly positive traits, those with a compartmentalized pattern reported more positive feelings. However, the aforementioned patterns were different when subjects reported the attributions they made when encountering their partner's negative behaviors. Among individuals in newer dating relationships who viewed their partner's traits as being mostly negative, a compartmentalized structure increased positive attributions for a partner's negative behavior more so than did an integrated one. On the other hand, among those in more established relationships who viewed their partner's negatively, holding integrated structures was associated with more positive attributions than was having complementary structures. Thus, the influence of memory structures on conflict processes was moderated by the stage of the relationship.

Showers and Zeigler-Hill (2004) examined how compartmentalization and conflict change over a 1-year period and interact to influence relational termination. Movement toward greater integrativeness was observed among individuals who had primarily negative views of their partner's traits but reported little conflict and among those who viewed their partners positively but reported a great deal of conflict. However, a shift to compartmentalization was observed among individuals who viewed their partners negatively and were in frequent conflict and among those who viewed their partners positively and reported little conflict. In effect, when individuals perceived their partners in a way that was inconsistent with conflict, memory structures became more integrative, but if the perceptions were congruent with conflict, memory structures became more compartmentalized. When individuals reported little relational conflict, movement toward integration decreased the likelihood of termination, but when individuals reported a great deal of conflict, shifting to integration increased the likelihood of termination. Thus, adopting integrative structures may help preserve a relationship when there is little conflict, but could facilitate ending a relationship when there is considerable disagreement.

Campbell, Butzer, and Wong (2008) studied the influence of memory structures among married couples. Among wives who had been married for a short time, the type of memory structure was not significantly related to their self-reported ability to resolve conflict or to their actions observed during a conflict with their husbands. Instead, their conflict resolution abilities and positive conflict behaviors were only associated with how negatively they viewed their husband's traits. However, among wives in older marriages who viewed their husband's negatively, conflict resolution and positive conflict behaviors were greater among those having an integrative structure. On the other hand, among wives in longer marriages who viewed their husbands as having few negative traits, a compartmentalized structure was positively related to conflict resolution and positive conflict behaviors. Among husbands who had been married for a short time, their self-reported conflict resolution and observed conflict behavior were not significantly related to either their evaluations of their wives or memory structures. However, among husbands in lengthy marriages, having an integrative structure was positively related to enacting positive communication behaviors.

Campbell et al. (2008) also examined whether the degree to which spouses shared the same memory structure influenced conflict. Among wives, sharing an integrative structure with their husband was negatively related to enacting negative conflict behavior, but wives engaged in more negative behavior when their husband had a compartmentalized structure regardless of whether they had one

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as well. For husbands who viewed their wives negatively, sharing a compartmentalized or integrated structure with their wives increased the likelihood of conflict resolution.

Research on partner memory structures has provided interesting insights into conflict. It demonstrates that conflict plays a role in the kind of structure that will develop over time as well as how structures can influence conflict resolution and behaviors. Although some research suggests that integrative structures should facilitate conflict resolution and relational well-being, other research indicates that this relationship is moderated by gender, similarity between partners' memory structures, and relational longevity. However, the research is not without limitations. In some cases, memory structures are not significantly related to multiple measures of the same construct (e.g., conflict resolution and positive and negative conflict behavior) nor is there clear evidence for why there are gender differences or differences across relational longevity.

Rules

Rules constitute shared expectations for appropriate behaviors occurring within a given context. When rules are violated, victims may feel betrayed and transgressors may be subject to social sanctions. Current research on rules has focused on reactions to rule violations.

Feeney (2005) examined accounts of hurtful events and found that the majority involved a rule transgression, although not all rule violations were equally hurtful. Fitness (2005) asked individuals to describe the worst rule violations that could occur between parents and children and between siblings. For parents, abandoning a child or a father committing incest with his daughter was most frequently cited as the worst violations. For children, rejecting the parent, a daughter having sex with her father, and a son engaging in criminal behavior were the worst offenses. Among siblings, betrayal, deception, and sexual abuse were considered the worst violations. Respondents felt that some rule violations could result in exclusion from a family.

Although not a great deal of current research has been conducted on rules, rule violations can have serious consequences. However, the research has not explored how individuals deal with the rule violations. Do victims always confront transgressors? For example, research conducted with victims of incest finds that they often delay disclosing their victimization and when they disclose as children, others are not always supportive (e.g., Roesler & Wind, 1994). Moreover, although some rule violations may be unforgivable, how can less serious offenses be forgiven? Research on forgiveness would seem to have important implications for research on rule violations (Waldron & Kelley, 2005).

Frames

Frames and framing have been used to study a variety of conflict processes, including intergroup conflict (Brummans et al., 2008) and international conflict (Vallacher, Coleman, Nowak, & Bui-Wrzosinska, 2010). Within these literatures, some researchers have adopted a cognitive approach to framing that is focused on "the way that people experience, interpret, process or represent issues, relationships and interactions in conflict settings" (Dewulf et al., 2009, p. 160). For example, Rogan (2006) identified six frames individuals may use when framing interpersonal conflicts—(1) instrumental, (2) other assessment, (3) affect, (4) face, (5) affiliation, and (6) distributive frames. Some individuals held multiple frames. Although some gender differences were found with regard to frames, they were small.

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Although individuals frame their interpersonal conflicts, researchers have not investigated how cognitive frames are related to communication. Certainly, there is ample research focused on how interaction frames emerge in intergroup conflicts, but Dewulf et al. (2009) note that this scholarship does not adopt a cognitive framework and works from assumptions that are incompatible with it (e.g., frames reside in discourse rather than within individuals). Sillars (2010) argued that the division between cognitive and interaction framing approaches ignores the possible interrelationship between the two (i.e., cognitive frames may appear in discourse and may be influenced by the frames enacted during an interaction).

The potential utility of an integrated approach is illustrated by an older article. Krokoff (1990) studied hidden agendas or feelings of insecurity about respect and love that are related to an issue about which spouses disagree but do not directly discuss. It is possible that hidden agendas constitute frames that spouses bring into a conflict even if the issue at hand is not explicitly about them. If so, hidden agendas may be difficult to change. Vallacher et al. (2010) argued that ongoing disagreements may generate cognitive processes that provide a coherent explanation for the conflict as well as suggest courses of action. After a time, any cue related to the opposing party may automatically stimulate a conflict frame. In some cases, attempts by one party to reframe an intractable conflict (e.g., apologizing) may be momentarily successful, but over time, the action may be reinterpreted by the other party in a manner consistent with the original frame.

One way to overcome frames supporting intractable conflict may be to activate latent frames. Vallacher et al. (2010) noted that some adversaries have enjoyed times of harmony in the past, but while creating relatively simple explanations for conflict, such memories become latent. If parties refocus their attention on the good times, frames supporting intractability may become less active, and the conflict may be resolved.

Problem Appraisal

Conflict arises because of a problematic action and how people make sense of it. One such problem is hurtful communication. Vangelisti and Young (2000) argued that a person's initial appraisal that a partner's hurtful action has been hurtful can cause individuals to distance themselves from partners. However, this tendency can be overcome when the hurtful action is perceived as unintentional. Their results indicated that individuals who believed that the hurtful communication was intentional reported more relational distancing, less relational satisfaction, and lower feelings of closeness to their partners than did those who felt the communication was unintentional. Also, the degree of hurt arising from a partner's statement was greatest when the victim felt that hurtful statement was intentional and infrequent but lowest when the hurtful statement was perceived to be intentional and frequent.

McLaren and Solomon (2008) argued that appraisals of hurtful messages could reflect primary and secondary appraisals. Using Lazarus's (1991) appraisal framework as a base, they asserted that the primary appraisal of a hurtful message is focused on the degree to which it communicates lack of worthiness in the eyes of the partner, which increases how intensely a person feels hurt. This primary appraisal can lead to relational distancing. However, a secondary appraisal may take place during which individuals consider other relevant information before they act. This process entails considering intentionality, relational quality, and the frequency of the hurtful message. If so, the aforementioned

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three variables should moderate the relationship between the intensity of hurt arising from a message and relational distancing. Their results confirmed their basic notions but were more complex than anticipated. Only intentionality and frequency were moderators but only under certain conditions. For males in friendships and females in dating relationships, intensity of hurt was more strongly predictive of relational distancing when the message was perceived to be intentional than when not or when the message was part of a frequent pattern. However, for males in romantic relationships, intensity of hurt was not significantly related to distancing regardless of intentionality or frequency. For females reporting about friendships, intensity was positively related to distancing only when it was perceived as unintentional and infrequent.

Young (2004) examined three types of appraisals that individuals make when analyzing a hurtful message. She argued that hurtful messages could reflect the speaker's concern for the receiver, the emotional comfort experienced by the receiver, and the helpfulness of the comment for the receiver. The results indicated that only message intensity was related to the three appraisals, and in each case, the relationship was negative. Thus, the form of the communication seems to affect the type of appraisal more so than does the emotional reaction to it.

Priem, McLaren, and Solomon (2010) focused on the degree to which relational messages are related to perceptions of hurt and physiological stress. The results indicated that the degree to which the partner's communication was perceived to be affiliative (e.g., warm and caring) and informal decreased feelings of being hurt. Because being hurt was positively related to an increase in cortisol, the two perceptions should have resulted in smaller increases in stress. They also discovered that the degree to which a partner's message was perceived to be affiliative decreased the likelihood that cortisol remained stable, but the degree to which the message was perceived to be receptive (e.g., the partner was interested in talking) increased stability. Because hurt was not significantly related to the stability of cortisol, it is unlikely that the latter two relationships were mediated by feeling hurt.

Rather than focusing on how the message is perceived, Vangelisti, Young, Carpenter-Theune, and Alexander (2005) investigated the explanations that individuals use to explain why a message was hurtful. The degree to which individuals were hurt by the message was positively related to relational denigration and humiliation and negatively related to ill-conceived humor. The receiver's self-esteem was negatively related to relational denigration, humiliation, and intrinsic flaw but positively related to being shocked. Individuals were most likely to relationally distance themselves when the hurt was due to relational denigration and an intrinsic flaw and least likely when the hurt arose from mistaken intent.

A second line of research has focused on how individuals understand problems arising from relational turbulence. Relationships are not static but go through transitions. Such transitions can be smooth but can often create feelings of turbulence that can be related to conflict. The relational turbulence model (RTM) provides useful insights into these processes (Solomon, Weber, & Steuber, 2010). Relational turbulence is the tendency to be cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally reactive to events during relational transitions (Knobloch, 2007). Relational transitions create turbulence by increasing relational uncertainty about how people view their own and their partner's involvement in the relationship as well as their understanding of the state of the relationship. A transition may also change an individual's perception of the impact a partner's behavior can have on his or her goals.

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Instead of facilitating the accomplishment of one's goals, the partner's behavior may be perceived to be interfering with goal attainment. The degree to which individuals report relational turbulence is related to their own and their partner's relational uncertainty and to their own perceptions of their partner's interference (Knobloch & Theiss, 2010).

Research using the RTM has provided insights into two areas of problem appraisals. First, some researchers have used it to understand how individuals respond to their partner's irritating behaviors. Solomon and Knobloch (2004) found that negative appraisals of a partner's irritating behavior (i.e., seeing it as severe and relationally threatening) were positively related to relationship uncertainty and perceptions of partner interference. In a follow-up study, Theiss and Solomon (2006) found that relationship and partner uncertainty were negatively related to directly confronting the partner about his or her irritating behavior, but perceiving partner interference was positively related to direct communication because it increased negative appraisals of the irritation.

The RTM has also provided insight into appraisals of hurtful communication. McLaren, Solomon, and Priem (2011) found that relational turbulence was positively related to those individuals who reported feeling hurt, experienced negative emotions, and perceived the message to be intentional. However, some of the relationships between partner behaviors and uncertainty were different for males and females. For both genders, interference was positively related to turbulence. However, for males, the relationship between reporting that the partner facilitates goal attainment and turbulence was negative and significant, but the same relationship was not significant for females. For males, relationship uncertainty was not significantly related to turbulence, but it was positive and significant for females.

Theiss, Knobloch, Checton, and Magsamen-Conrad (2009) discovered that relational uncertainty and partner interference were positively related to the intensity of hurt and intentionality, and these appraisals were positively related to communication directness. However, relational uncertainty and partner interference were not significantly related to communication directness.

Research on problem appraisals is guided by theory and provides useful insights into how problem appraisals can influence the cognitive, affective, and behavioral reactions to a conflict. The research has used both experimental and longitudinal survey designs. The statistical analyses are sophisticated. If there is a weakness, it is that multiple measures are often used to assess key constructs, and in some cases, only a few yield significant results consistent with expectations. Hence, the reader sees a strong pattern of hypothesized significant relationships that obscure those that are not. This may indicate that the theories need to become more parsimonious.

Summary

The study of knowledge structures continues to provide important insights into conflict. Moreover, the methods being used are becoming more sophisticated (e.g., longitudinal designs are common as are dyadic designs), and research seems more theory based. However, each area remains segregated with little awareness of how the various forms of social knowledge might be interrelated. To some degree, the boundaries between the constructs seem fuzzy. For example, there are elements of beliefs embedded within cognitive scripts, and scripts might themselves be part of conflict frames and problem appraisals. Assuming that the constructs are indeed mutually exclusive, it is unclear how the various constructs might be

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related to one another. So we do not know the extent to which beliefs increase the likelihood that certain conflict frames and problem appraisals will emerge.

Figure 5.1 contains a tentative, descriptive model that demonstrates the interdependency among the structures. It has three important features. First, beliefs, scripts, partner memory, and rules constitute specific elements that should be related to general conceptions of a conflict, such as how it is framed and appraised. Second, all variables are intercorrelated. Hence, specific elements could influence and are influenced by each other (e.g., scripted actions can become part of partner memories, which in turn influence scripts), and the same is true for general conceptions (i.e., how a conflict is framed can influence how it is appraised, and vice versa). Finally, specific elements can influence general conceptions of a conflict, and the frame and appraisal of an interpersonal conflict are experiential elements that can influence beliefs, scripts, partner memory, and rules.

Cognitive Processing and Interpersonal Conflict

Knowledge structures focus on the content of cognition, but conflict researchers have also been interested in whether the process of thinking might be related to conflict. In doing so, they investigated whether processes mediate the relationship between other variables (e.g., attachment styles cause individuals to ruminate more about a conflict, which influences their conflict actions), whereas other researchers have examined the direct relationship between cognitive activity and conflict behaviors (e.g., imagining a conflict influences how individuals try to resolve it).

Cognitive Processes as Mediators

Researchers have studied six mediating cognitive processes: (1) expectation violation/confirmation, (2) attribution making, (3) accommodation, (4) influence goals, (5) sentiment override, and (6) self-regulation.

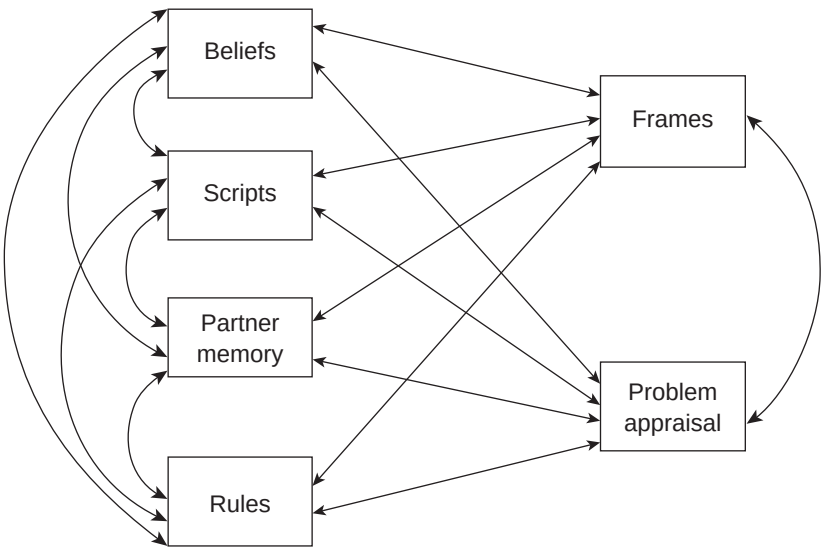

Figure 5.1 Possible Interrelationships Among Knowledge Structures

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Expectation Violation/Confirmation

Individuals often develop expectations for how people will act in a given situation. Expectancy violation theory assumes that when a person's actions violate an expectation, individuals become aroused, search for explanations for the violation, and then react often by attempting to bring the person's behavior back into alignment with expectations (e.g., Afifi & Burgoon, 2000). This implies that a partner's action may prompt a conflict when it violates a prior expectation. Bachman and Guerrero (2006) used this framework to study how individuals respond to hurtful events. The degree to which individuals reported that their partner engaged in a hurtful behavior that was unusually harmful was negatively related to responding in a constructive manner and to their perceptions of relational quality but positively related to responding in a destructive fashion and terminating the relationship. They also found statistically significant bivariate correlations between their measure of negative expectancy violation and relational uncertainty, perceived intentionality, and hurtfulness.

However, simply because a partner's behavior is consistent with expectations does not mean that conflict will be avoided. Some individuals form negative expectations that can lead to conflict when confirmed. Individuals with an anxious attachment style often expect that their partners may abandon them and monitor their partner's behaviors for signs of rejection (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Consequently, individuals who are anxiously attached may be especially sensitive to and possibly exaggerate cues of rejection. Anxiously attached individuals perceived more conflict in their relationships, are more distressed by relational conflict, and are more prone to escalate it than are those who are not anxiously attached (Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, & Kashy, 2005). Among husbands and wives, attachment anxiety is positively related to the extent of conflict they report in their marriage, and the extent to which wives are anxiously attached is negatively related to their own and their husband's marital satisfaction, and this relationship is mediated by both spouse's perceptions of marital conflict (Brassard, Lussier, & Shaver, 2009).

Domingue and Mollen (2009) focused on the degree to which both relational partners had an insecure or secure attachment style that influenced conflict. As expected, constructive responses to conflict were more common when both partners were securely attached than when only one was secure or when both were insecure. Also, destructive communication and avoidance were less frequent in dyads in which both partners were securely attached than when only one or neither was.

The results of research focused on expectations are somewhat complex. In some cases, if expectations are violated, then conflict will emerge, but in other cases, confirmed expectations seem to stimulate disagreement. In part, this may reflect the valence of the expectation. When positive expectations are *violated* (i.e., the partner acts negatively when expected to act positively or the action is more negative than usual), then intensely negative reactions occur. When negative expectations are *confirmed* (i.e., the partner acts in an expected negative manner), disagreement and negative reactions also result. It is possible that the two instances involve different mediating process. Violated positive expectations may cause individuals to feel betrayed and uncertain about their partners. However, because the violation was infrequent, it might be possible to grant forgiveness. Confirmed negative expectations may have little effect or may actually increase certainty about the partner since he or she acted as expected, although some individuals may still lose patience with the constant provocations that increase their frustration and tendency to escalate the conflict.

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Attribution Making

When events occur, individuals often try to understand their causes. In doing so, they attribute causes and responsibility for the action. Researchers have studied the degree to which attribution making might mediate the relationship between antecedent variables and conflict actions and consequences.

Pearce and Halford (2008) investigated the degree to which attributions mediate the association between attachment styles and negative communication. Having an insecure attachment style was positively related to self-reported negative communication and postdiscussion stress, but this relationship was most evident among females. Attributions partly mediated the associations between insecure attachment and negative communication and fully mediated the relationship between insecure attachment and postdiscussion distress. However, attribution making did not mediate the relationship between attachment and communication.

Kennedy and Pronin (2008) examined a different type of attribution. They reasoned that individuals are prone to see others who disagree with them as biased, and consequently, they allow conflict to escalate. They found that disagreement increases the tendency for individuals to attribute biases toward others, which increases the tendency to compete rather than cooperate. Moreover, the preference for competition further increases perceptions that an opposing party is biased. Hence, attributed bias seems to set off an escalation process that is self-reinforcing.

Accommodation Processes

When individuals engage in a negative action, their partner's initial inclination is to respond in kind. However, when individuals care about the future of their relationship, they often stifle destructive responses and act constructively. Conflict researchers have investigated these accommodative responses, and recent scholarship has extended knowledge in two ways.

First, researchers have focused on how accommodation processes are associated with dependency dilemmas with close relationships. When partners confront one another about provocative actions, individuals who are highly dependent on their partners may feel they have little control and influence over the interaction (Overall & Sibley, 2007). Consequently, dependent partners face a dilemma. On one hand, their lack of relative power may cause them to feel less valued by their partners, and they may begin to question why they are in the relationship, but on the other hand, their dependency might prompt them to want to act in a way that promotes their relationship. Dependent partners might successfully resolve the dilemma by responding in an accommodative manner to their partner's interference. In that way, they do not endanger the relationship, and voicing their concerns may prompt a positive or at least less negative reaction from the partner. Among dependent partners, those who engaged in accommodation reported greater acceptance from their partners and greater intimacy in the interaction than did those who did not accommodate. However, when individuals reported a great deal of influence and control within an interaction, accommodation was unrelated to perceptions of the interaction. Thus, possessing power increases positive impressions, but among dependent partners, reacting in an accommodative fashion is associated with more positive impressions than reacting in a destructive manner.

Second, researchers have also investigated whether accommodation processes are influenced by culture and self-construal. Yum (2004) studied the degree to which members of collectivistic cultures engage in accommodation

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to a greater extent than do those from individualistic cultures and whether a member's self-construal (how individuals relate to the group to which they identify) influence accommodation. Yum recruited samples from South Korea, Hawaii, and the mainland United States and asked them about how they responded to relational problems. Small cultural differences were observed with Koreans, and Hawaiians reported greater use of neglect than U.S. mainlanders. With regard to self-construal, individuals who were bicultural (i.e., felt both independent and interdependent with their culture) reported greater use of loyalty and less use of neglect than did individuals who were marginal (i.e., felt neither independent nor interdependent of the culture), independents (i.e., felt independent of the culture), or interdependent (i.e., felt strongly connected to the culture). Self-construal was not significantly related to voice or exit. Thus, cultural effects were only observed for the use of neglect, and self-construal effects were only evident for loyalty and neglect. This pattern indicates that culture and self-construal are only related to the passive components of accommodation. The degree to which individuals openly voice their concerns or leave the relationship appears to be independent of culture and self-construal. Thus, research focused on accommodation has continued and provide a more refined view of when it occurs.

Influence Goals

Individuals can identify things about their relational partners that they wish would change (Heyman, Hunt-Martorano, Malik, & Slep, 2009). In some cases, they may decide to change their partners and their attempts are guided by influence goals as well as other objectives they wish to accomplish during an interaction.

Keck and Samp (2007) examined how goals are related to whether individuals have initiated a conflict or are resisting a partner's attempt to influence them. The results indicated that the degree to which initiators viewed self/instrumental goals as important (i.e., the person wanted to maintain a sense of self while influencing the partner to change) increased the likelihood that they would enact distributive actions (i.e., controlling the interaction while ignoring the partner). In contrast, initiators endorsing other/identity goals (i.e., supporting the partner's identity) were more likely to use partner-oriented integrative actions (i.e., validating the partner or his or her statements). When focusing on resistors, the same two patterns were significant, plus two additional ones emerged. Viewing instrumental goals as important (i.e., simply trying to change the partner) was related to being distributive, and seeing identity/relational goals as important increased the likelihood of issue-oriented integrative behavior (i.e., problem solving).

Additionally, Keck and Samp (2007) found that an individual's conflict behavior predicted the partner's subsequent goal. When initiators acted in a distributive way, they increased the likelihood that resistors would form instrumental goals and decreased the likelihood that they would see other/identity, or identity/relational goals as important. In effect, pressure seemed to cause resistors to exclusively form goals aimed at influencing the initiators. On the other hand, initiators who engaged in issue-oriented integrative actions increased the likelihood that resistors would form identity/relational goals and decreased the likelihood that resistors would form influence goals. Distributive responses from resistors increased the likelihood that initiators would adopt self/instrumental goals while decreasing the likelihood that initiators would see relational goals as important. A resistor's issue-oriented integrative behavior was positively associated with the initiator's seeing relational goals as important and negatively related to the perceived

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importance of self/instrumental goals. The distributive actions by resistors seem to harden the initiator's commitment to creating change, while their issue-oriented integrative actions seem to soften it. Although the findings are somewhat complex, they indicate that individuals often try to achieve multiple goals during a disagreement, that some conflict behaviors flow from particular types of goals, and that a person's conflict behaviors can influence a partner's goals.

As noted in an earlier part of this review, partners sometimes are unable to resolve a conflict in a single encounter, and future argumentative episodes occur. Researchers have investigated the goals that individuals have when serial arguing. There appear to be seven primary goals that are sometimes clustered into positive and negative objectives (see Bevan et al., 2007; Bevan, Finan, & Kaminsky, 2008; Bevan, Hale, & Williams, 2004). Positive goals include seeking mutual understanding/resolution and positive expression, while negative goals include negative expression, deciding about relational continuation, dominating/controlling the partner, changing the partner, and hurting the partner/benefitting self-goals. The importance of the goals is generally stable across types of close relationships (e.g., parent–child, sibling, romantic) with positive expression, mutual understanding/resolution, and changing the target that is being viewed as most important (Bevan, 2010).

Bevan et al. (2007) found that the importance of serial arguing goals predicted self-reported conflict behaviors. Self-reported use of integrative conflict strategies is positively related to the importance of positive expressiveness and mutual understanding/resolution goals and negatively related to the importance of dominating and controlling the partner, changing the partner, and hurting the partner/benefiting self-goals. Distributive behavior is positively related to negative expression, dominance/control, changing the partner, deciding about relational continuation, and hurting the partner/benefitting self-goals and negatively related to the importance of positive expressiveness and mutual understanding/resolution goals. Finally, engaging in conflict avoidance is unrelated to many of the goals and is only positively related to the importance of negative expression, dominance/control, and hurting the partner/benefitting self-goals.

It is possible that during the course of serial arguing, a person's motivation to attain goals may change. Bevan et al. (2008) examined the factors that predict whether individuals remain motivated to achieving their serial arguing goals. When examining positive goals, they found identical indirect paths leading from attributing importance to mutual understanding/resolvability and positive expression goals to motivation. Seeing either goal as important was positively related to self-reported integrative conflict behavior that in turn was positively related to ruminating about the conflict, and rumination was positively related to being motivated to achieve goals. In a sense, positive goals stimulate active problem solving during the disagreement and continued thought afterward, which seems to keep individuals committed to their goals. However, there were no statistically significant indirect paths leading from negative goals to motivation. Instead, both integrative and distributive communications were negatively related to the motivation to reach goals because of their tendency to increase rumination about the conflict. Thus, negative goals may set off processes that lower motivation regardless of the type of negative goal.

Unfortunately, research has not investigated how people react when conflict goals are attained. The results of a study on aggression suggest that goal attainment could alter the future course of a conflict. Denzler, Forster, and Liberman (2009) found that after a transgression, individuals have aggressive thoughts that are easily accessible and make them

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prone to future aggression unless they have been able to directly or symbolically aggress against their antagonists. Simply acting in an aggressive manner was insufficient to reduce aggressive responding; the aggression must be against the transgressor. Importantly though, nonaggressive resolution of the conflict also decreased accessibility of aggressive thoughts. These findings could indicate that a conflict will continue until individuals feel that their goals have been achieved, which could include reciprocating the partner's behavior or achieving a resolution to the problem.

Sentiment Override

Conflict researchers have focused on the degree to which relational satisfaction influences how individuals interpret their partner's behaviors, or what is known as the sentiment override hypothesis. In effect, individuals who are satisfied tend to interpret their partner's behavior in a positive way even if the behavior appears to be negative, while dissatisfied individuals seem to discount a partner's positive behavior.

The research on sentiment override has been extended in two ways. First, some research has focused on how relational satisfaction influences recall of a partner's traits and actions. Jose, Rajaram, O'Leary, and Williams (2010) reasoned that sentiment override might stem from schematic processing of information about partners. Individuals have conceptions of what their partners are like, which are related to their relational satisfaction. When their partner schemas are activated, they tend to remember partner traits that are consistent with their relationship satisfaction. The researchers report an experiment in which individuals indicated how applicable positive and negative traits were to their partners, and later after being distracted, they reported how many traits they originally felt were applicable and whether most were positive or negative. Satisfied individuals felt that more positive traits applied to their partners than did those who were dissatisfied, while the latter felt that negative traits were more applicable to their partners. In addition, satisfied individuals recalled more positive traits than did dissatisfied ones, but relational satisfaction was unrelated to recalling negative traits. However, regardless of relational satisfaction, individuals estimated that they had indicated that most of their partner's traits were positive. They found evidence for positive sentiment override when recalling traits but not for negative sentiment override.

Halford, Keefer, and Osgarby (2002) examined recall of relational events occurring over a week. Relational partners kept diaries of everyday events, including disagreements, and at the end of the week, they were interviewed about how often positive and negative interactions took place. For males and females, their diary entries were significantly correlated with their global assessment of both positive and negative interactions, but martial satisfaction was a statistically significant predictor after controlling for daily assessments. Individuals showed a hindsight bias in that relatively dissatisfied individuals recalled a higher frequency of negative interactions and lower frequency of positive interactions than did satisfied ones.

A second area of research on sentiment override examined how it occurs during a disagreement. Story et al. (2007) wondered if sentiment override is related to age and to different interaction contexts. They had middle aged (40 to 50 years old) and older (60 to 70 years old) spouses discuss an issue about which they disagreed or engage in a problem-solving task focused on how to accomplish errands. The data indicated that older husbands and wives who had engaged in a disagreement rated their partner's behavior more positively than did outside observers and more frequently than did middle aged couples.

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When problem solving, the positive sentiment override was only observed for wives evaluating their husband's behavior. Moreover, the age differences in positive sentiment override were mediated by marital satisfaction. This seems to indicate that older spouses are prone to viewing their partner's actions in a more positive light than do others.

Waldinger and Schulz (2006) examined how sentiment override might be related to relational satisfaction and emotional reactions that individuals have during a disagreement. They found that attributions of a partner's intentions were weakly to moderately related to the partner's judgments of his or her own intentions, and these relationships were partly mediated by relational satisfaction. For both men and women, martial satisfaction was positively related to making attributions that their spouses were trying to be facilitative and negatively related to perceiving the partners as being dominating even after controlling for the partner's own intentions to be facilitative or dominating. Also, the relationship between relational satisfaction and sentiment override was mediated by the emotions that individuals reported feeling during the disagreement. Hence, sentiment override seems to be driven by the momentary emotional reactions occurring during a disagreement.

Self-Regulation

Individuals often engage in behaviors that are automated, habitual, and/or innate. Such actions can be efficient ways of accomplishing goals. However, sometimes individuals find that their typical responses may be incompatible with other goals, and they need to engage in considerable self-regulation to control their behavior. In such cases, a person forgoes immediate gratification to achieve future goals. Self-regulation is a cognitively demanding task that depends on executive control, including inhibition, task switching, and updating memory (e.g., Miyake et al., 2000). Consequently, because of resource depilation, self-regulation may interfere with other concurrent or subsequent tasks.

Self-regulation may influence four aspects of conflict. First, self-regulation can influence the likelihood that individuals will engage in behaviors that create conflict. Romantic partners often derogate the attractiveness of alternative partners as a means of protecting their relationships (e.g., Karremans & Verwijmeren, 2008). Ritter, Karremans, and van Shie (2010) studied whether the derogation effect arises from self-regulation as individuals control their impulse to approach attractive individuals in order to preserve the long-term commitment to their romantic relationship. However, the ability to self-regulate in this manner will be difficult when resources are low. Consistent with this expectation, romantically involved individuals expressed less interest in pictures of attractive alternative partners than did those who were romantically uninvolved, but this difference was only statistically significant when individuals had not engaged in a cognitively demanding task prior to seeing the picture and when they did not have to make a quick judgment about the alternative partner. Pronk, Karremans, and Wigboldus (2011) studied similar processes among individuals who varied in their ability to engage in executive control. Individuals with higher levels of executive control reported having less trouble remaining faithful to their romantic partners, were less flirtatious with a member of the opposite sex, and had less desire to meet an attractive alternative partner than were those with low levels of executive control.

Second, self-regulation may be related to the actions that occur during a conflict. Mischel, DeSmet, and Kross (2006) speculated that conflict can be controlled by two systems. Cold systems are cognitive, deliberative, rational, and strategic, whereas hot systems are automatic, emotional, and appetitive. Cold

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systems promote self-regulation, whereas hot systems undermine it. During a conflict, both systems are activated, and individuals often engage in self-control so as to reduce the likelihood of negative consequences associated with angry displays. However, when individuals are tired, distracted, or emotionally drained or have been ruminating about a provocative action, their ability to self-regulate is greatly diminished, and conflict often escalates.

Considerable evidence supports this analysis. Dispositional self-control increases accommodation independent of how committed individuals are to their relationship but resource depletion prior to an encounter decreases the likelihood of accommodation (Finkel & Campbell, 2001). In addition, individuals are more likely to respond aggressively to an insult when self-regulatory resources have been diminished prior to the affront, and this tendency is greater among individuals who are low relative to high in trait self-control (DeWall, Baumeister, Stillman, & Galliot, 2007). Apparently, individuals who generally control their reactions can withstand resource depletion. Wilkowski and Robinson (2007) also examined individual differences in self-regulation and found that individuals who are easily angered are less likely to expend cognitive resources to control aggressive thoughts than are those who are low in trait anger. Thus, some individuals may not work as hard to control aggressive reaction to others.

Ruminating about an event can be cognitively demanding, which could lead to aggressive responding. After having been provoked, ruminating about the event decreases self-control, which increases the likelihood of aggressive responses, but bolstering energy levels by consuming a glucose beverage prior to ruminating increases self-control (Denson, Pedersen, Friese, Hahm, & Roberts, 2011). Thus, if individuals have reserves of energy prior to ruminating, then individuals may have sufficient resources to self-regulate even when focused on a negative event.

Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, Oaten, and Foshee (2009) found that self-control was related to intimate partner violence. Relational partners reported more violent impulses when arguing with their partners than they actually enacted. Individuals who were high in trait self-control were less likely to engage in intimate partner violence than those who were low in trait self-control, and individuals provoked by their partners were more likely to respond with intimate partner violence after having self-regulation resource diminished than when not. Importantly, individuals who underwent self-control training had less violent inclinations than those who did not. Thus, through self-regulation, individuals can control their actions during a disagreement.

Third, research also suggests that self-regulation may influence recall of the conversation. When individuals try to regulate their emotions during an interaction, they are expending energy and focusing their attention away from what is being said to their emotional responses to it. Consequently, emotional regulation may decrease subsequent recall of the content of the conversation. However, Richards, Butler, and Gross (2003) argued that not all emotional regulation techniques reduce recall. They reasoned that emotional suppression during a disagreement distracts individuals from what the partner is saying, whereas cognitive appraisal (entering the conflict with a positive mindset) would increase recall. On the other hand, emotional suppression should increase recall of emotions. The results of an experiment verified their reasoning.

Finally, research indicates that self-regulation after a conflict is related to how people adjust to it. For example, postepisodic self-regulation of stress can influence relational quality. There is evidence that conflict can increase a person's stress hormones, especially when an individual or his or her partner has an insecure

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attachment style (Powers, Pietromonaco, Gunlicks, & Sayer, 2006). Salvatore, Kuo, Steele, Simpson, and Collins (2011) reasoned that the ability of an individual to recover from conflict-related stress might be beneficial to the partner and the relationship. Continued stress indicates that the person does not believe that the conflict is over, which could increase the likelihood of continued fighting. Moreover, the researchers believed that the ability to recover reflects self-regulation. They found that individuals who were securely attached were better able to recover from the stress of a conflict, which also facilitated their partner's ability to recover and improved their relational satisfaction. However, a partner's ability to recover from the conflict also increased the likelihood that the relationships of insecurely attached individuals would remain intact rather than terminate. Thus, the ability to recover from stress seems to benefit partners and the relationship.

Hooker, Gyurak, Verosky, Miyakawa, and Ayduck (2010) examined how brain activity influenced self-regulatory activity after an interpersonal conflict. They cited evidence that activity within the ventral portion of the prefrontal cortex (VLPFC) enhances emotional control largely through its impact on cognitive skills. Hence, such activity should increase the ability to self-regulate after an interpersonal conflict. Using fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) scanning, they assessed the degree of VLPFC activity resulting from individuals viewing a picture of their romantic partner's positive, neutral, or negative facial expression. The responses were correlated with diary entries about how the individuals reacted with their partner the day after a conflict. They found that the degree of VLPFC activity occurring while viewing a partner's negative expression was negatively related to having a negative mood, ruminating about the conflict, and using drugs or alcohol one day after the conflict. Also, the degree of VLPFC activity was negatively related to having a negative mood one day after the disagreement. The researchers speculated that VLPFC may serve a protective function by directing resources to cognitive skills that can be used to self-regulate after a dispute.

Self-regulation may also protect relationships through forgiveness. Pronk, Karremans, Overbeek, Vermulst, and Wigboldus (2010) reasoned that individuals who had a high degree of executive control functioning would be better able to forgive their partner for a transgression largely because of their ability to control ruminating about the offense. The results of a series of studies confirmed their reasoning, although executive functioning only facilitated forgiveness when the transgression was severe.

Cognitive Processes as Direct Influences on Conflict

The previous sections highlighted how some factors influence aspects of interpersonal conflict through cognitive processing. However, other research assumes that cognitive processing itself can influence features of interpersonal conflict. One area actively being researched is thinking.

Thinking

Individuals engage in thought during the process of making sense of something, which may influence the conclusions they reach. Conflict researchers have studied two interrelated types of thinking: (1) ruminating and (2) imagined interactions.

Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, and Lyubomirsky (2008) defined rumination as "a mode of responding to distress that involves repetitively and passively focusing on symptoms of distress and on the possible causes and consequences of these symptoms" (p. 400). Nolen-Hoeksema et al. (2008) noted that rumination

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causes individuals to become fixated on their problems, and rather than take action to address them, they become passive.

Because interpersonal conflict can be stressful, some researchers have studied the effects of ruminating after a conflict. Nolen-Hoeksema et al. (2008) asserted that rumination leads to passivity through which individuals give up trying to solve problems and/or engaging in self-aggression. Conflict researchers have noted that rumination may also lead to aggressive actions toward another. Bushman (2002) found that after being insulted, individuals who ruminated while hitting a punching bag were angrier and later were more aggressive toward the person who insulted them than were those who were distracted while hitting the bag or did nothing after being insulted.

Research also indicates that rumination can aversely influence forgiveness for a transgression. Kachadourian, Fincham, and Davila (2005) looked at how rumination influences forgiveness among individuals who feel ambivalent about their relational partners. The results of their study indicated that ambivalence is negatively related to forgiveness when individuals frequently ruminate about the transgression but not when they avoid rumination.

Although research indicates that rumination has a negative influence on conflict, some research suggests that rumination may not be universally bad. Wenzel, Turner, and Okimoto (2010) found that right after a transgression, rumination decreased forgiveness but over the course of three days, it increased it. Thus, it is possible that in the immediate aftermath of a transgression, emotions are still hot and ruminating makes individuals less forgiving. But after a cooling-off period, ruminating may help reframe the transgression in a less negative way that facilitates forgiveness.

Although not directly studying rumination, Bevan et al. (2008) reported correlations that imply that rumination may have both positive and negative effects on interpersonal conflict. Their path analysis showed that self-reports of both integrative and distributive tactics were positively related to rumination. In addition, they reported bivariate correlations that show positive relationships between holding a mutual understanding/resolution goal and positive expression goal and engaging in both integrative actions and ruminating. Moreover, wanting to achieve these two goals was negatively related to using distributive tactics. This implies that holding positive goals can increase the use of positive conflict tactics and rumination while decreasing the use of negative tactics. On the other hand, holding a negative expression goal was positively related to using distributive tactics and ruminating and negatively (but not significantly) to being integrative.

In part, the effect of rumination may depend on the type. Martin and Tesser (1996) offered a broad conceptualization of rumination and noted that it involves ongoing self-focused thoughts concentrated on a single event or theme. They noted that rumination often results from blocked goals. Mikulincer (1996) noted three different types of rumination. Action rumination is focused on the task that includes thinking about why the goal failed, how failure might be overcome, and how failure might be avoided in the future. State rumination is focused on how a person currently feels about the failure and its implications for the future. Task-irrelevant rumination distracts individuals by focusing thoughts on events unrelated to the failure. Ciarocco, Vohs, and Baumeister (2010) argued that action rumination improves task performance by allowing individuals to understand why they failed and how to change their actions, whereas the other two types are likely to have minimal impact on performance because they provide no insights into failure or increase negative emotions. Across a series of studies, they demonstrate that action rumination

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improves performance to a greater degree than either of the other two types. Although none of their studies focused on conflict, it is possible that action rumination could facilitate understanding about why a conflict occurred, why it was not resolved, what might be done to resolve it now, and how future occurrences can be avoided.

In addition to ruminating about a conflict, some individuals engage in imagined interactions in which they replay a disagreement or plan what they will say in a future encounter (see Honeycutt & Bryan, 2011). Honeycutt (2004) created imagined interaction conflict linkage theory that describes how imagined interactions influence interpersonal conflict. He argues that interpersonal relationships are maintained through imagined interactions with one's partners and that some of these imagined interactions are focused on disagreements. Repeated conflicts, such as serial arguing, are maintained by individuals retrospectively thinking about prior argumentative episodes and prospectively planning future encounters. Imagined interactions can portray positive or negative encounters depending on the mood of the person at the time he or she is imagining the conversation. Constructive conflict is facilitated through positive imagined interactions. However, negative imagined interactions are powerful and can sometimes overwhelm an individual's ability to create positive ones. Moreover, imagined interactions may not reflect what actually transpires during a disagreement in part because people may imagine themselves being more bold or dominant than they typically are.

The theory provides insight into conflict escalation as it assumes that imagined interactions can sustain a conflict and perhaps escalate it. Individuals who are prone to construct negative imagined interactions may become physically aggressive. Honeycutt and Bryan (2011) found that individuals who reported that they engaged in verbal aggression with their partners also admitted that they had also been physically aggressive and that this relationship resulted from their tendency to imagine negative conflict interactions with their partners. This research also indicates that imagined interactions may sometimes be a mediator of effects rather than a direct cause. Moreover, Honeycutt and Bryan (2011) discovered that engaging in imagined integrations prior to a marital disagreement influenced an individual's physiological arousal after a subsequent interaction with the partner. Heartbeat increased when an individual's imagined interaction was discrepant from the actual interaction and if the individual did not rehearse what he or she would say in the actual interaction. However, arterial blood pressure was greatest when individuals imagined negative interactions with their partners.

Online Processing

Assessing cognition occurring during a conflict provides important information about how cognition influences the course of a disagreement. We have already discussed two studies focused on online processing (Keck & Samp, 2007; Waldinger & Schulz, 2006). One additional study examined how individuals react to their partner's behavior in conflict versus supportive interactions (Verhofstadt, Buysse, Ickes, De Clercq, & Peene, 2005). In this study, spouses engaged in a discussion of either their most significant relational problem or one partner's most significant personal problem. The behaviors were coded, and while viewing videotapes, spouses indicated at various points how they felt about the interaction. The type of interaction was not significantly related to cognition, and only one interaction was found between the type of enacted behavior and context. During a disagreement, the presence of a partner's facilitative behavior (e.g., humor, positive mind

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reading, and positive touch) increased positive online cognitions but had less effect during a supportive interaction. However, in both contexts, a partner's validating behavior (e.g., agreement), expressions of instrumental support (e.g., offering a specific plan or constructive feedback), and proposals for change (e.g., compromise) created positive cognitions.

The study of online processing is labor-intensive, and few researchers have studied it. However, the research has provided useful insights into a variety of cognitive processes. Unfortunately, the research in the area lacks a theoretical perspective that would guide research. In a sense, the study of online processing borrows theories from other areas and constitutes a method rather than a theory-driven area of inquiry.

Summary

Research on cognitive responses continues to provide important insights into interpersonal conflict. Each of the areas we reviewed extended the literature in important ways. In addition, a new area of inquiry has developed focusing on self-regulation. This area of inquiry highlights how people cognitively control their responses before and after conflict. Moreover, it shows how such control can be effortful and could exhaust recourses dedicated to other processes.

Just as research on knowledge structures focused on individual variables and processes, so does most inquiry on cognitive processes. There has been some improvement in this regard. For example, attribution making is often included in research focused on other cognitive processes, and the study of online cognitions has been used to study goals and sentiment override. These are important moves that hopefully will provide a more integrated view of how cognitive process relate to interpersonal conflict.

Summary Critique

Our goal was to update an earlier review of social cognition and conflict communication (Roloff & Miller, 2006). Significant advances have occurred in the past 5 to 6 years. The following is a synthesis of what we found.

First, individuals are motivated to understand their social environment. As a result of their observations, experiences, and inferences, individuals form social knowledge structures about themselves, others, and the various relationships and interactions that connect people. The structures can take the form of beliefs, scripts, and rules and are stored in memory. When activated, they influence how people interpret and respond to their environment.

Second, beliefs can influence the degree to which individuals monitor their partner's behavior, interpret its meaning, and respond to it. Consequently, beliefs can influence how individuals appraise a problem and whether they should confront it. When individuals believe that people and, more specifically, their partners can change and they are confident that their partners will not leave them, they are willing to express their complaints and often form a goal to get the partner to change. However, some individuals are not confident that they can enact confrontational behavior and avoid it.

Third, individuals vary in how they enact confrontation based on their appraisal of the problem. When the partner's action has been intentionally hurtful and unexpected, individuals may enact negative behavior, whereas in other cases, they may enact problem-solving behavior. Moreover, appraisals may be influenced by the general level of stability or turbulence in the relationship.

Fourth, during an argument, individuals monitor their own and their partner's actions and to some extent adapt to them. Their actions can depend on the degree to which their partner's behavior is expected, perceived

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to be intentional, and goal related. Processing a partner's actions may be influenced by an individual's emotional reactions during the argument, which are related to his or her relational satisfaction. Also, individuals will often try to control their negative responses and respond in a more constructive manner. Self-regulation is effortful, and individuals may be unable to control potentially negative responses when they are exhausted or have limited ability to engage in self-control.

Fifth, individuals can become aware through confrontation that they have failed to meet their partners' standards. Because confrontation can be hurtful and can create resistance, conflict may be unresolved and repeated. Consequently, arguments may become scripted, and individuals may develop frames that help them understand the ongoing dispute. In some cases, frames may make conflict intractable.

Sixth, the effect of conflict is evident after an episode has ended. Because conflict can be arousing, individuals often try to recover after an episode has ended, and their ability to do so influences their own and their partner's feelings about the conflict. Moreover, individuals often ruminate about their conflict and engage in imagined interactions about what happened and what may happen in the future. Although continued thought about the conflict often has negative consequences, in some cases, thinking may be helpful.

We also noted that research in the area has improved from the time that Roloff and Miller (2006) published their review. They noted a number of challenges facing researchers in their area, and there is evidence of successful adaptation. Although the bulk of the research continues to use U.S. samples of undergraduate daters, studies have been conducted in other cultures and on other forms of relationships. Many more longitudinal studies are being conducted and studies that analyze both members of the dyad. Although much of the research remains "siloed," there is some integration of constructs, most notably attribution making. And researchers seem more mindful of the implications of their research for practice, particularly in the area of individual and couples' therapy.

We also identified some new areas of research. Physiological measures, including those associated with stress and with brain activity, are becoming more common. In addition, there is a growing area related to the role of self-regulation and conflict.

Recent research also provides insights into the difficulties that individuals experience when trying to manage conflict. Conflict inherently involves the interpretation of actions, and individuals use their past experiences to understand those actions. Consequently, individuals may not only engage in behaviors that interfere with one another but may also disagree as to their causes and solutions. When in conflict, individuals propose solutions that seem reasonable given their experiences and understandings, but their partners may find them to be unreasonable because their background and perceptions differ. In such cases, both individuals feel that their own position is legitimate and superior relative to the others. Unless the interpretative differences are resolved, it is likely that conflict will continue and could become intractable.

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6

Conflict in Dating and Marital Relationships

John P. Caughlin, Anita L. Vangelisti, and Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart

Conflict in dating relationships and marriages has generated enormous scholarly and popular interest. When handled well, conflict in romantic unions can enable relational partners to learn about each other and foster a sense of cohesion and commitment (Siegert & Stamp, 1994). When not managed well, conflict can have negative implications for the relationship and for the relational partners (e.g., Zacchilli, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 2009). Conflict in romantic relationships also has implications for individuals beyond those directly involved. Marital conflict, for instance, is an even more important predictor of negative outcomes for children than is parental divorce (Booth & Amato, 2001). The effects of parents' conflicts appear to follow children into adulthood; parental conflict is associated with conflict and poor relational quality and insecure attachment in the children's relationships as young adults (Cui & Fincham, 2010; Rodrigues & Kitzmann, 2007).

Because of the enormity of the literature on conflict in romantic relationships, any review of this research must be highly selective. With the breadth and complexity of the work on this topic, it was useful to organize our review around a framework that we adapted from Huston's (2000) social ecological model for understanding marriage and similar unions (see Figure 6.1). We employed this framework because it was applicable to a wide variety of close dyadic unions, it provided a general schema for understanding conflict in romantic relationships, and it highlighted some potentially important issues and questions that appear to be understudied (e.g., the impact of the social context on relational conflict).

The core assumption of Huston's (2000) model is that there are "historical, multilayered, interdependent causal pathways that produce, maintain, and modify" (p. 298) relational behaviors, including conflict. The complexities of these interconnections imply that analyses of conflict in dating and married couples are extraordinarily complex. Following Huston (2000), we approach this complexity by considering three interconnected levels of analysis: (1) the environment, which ranges from broad societal influences to

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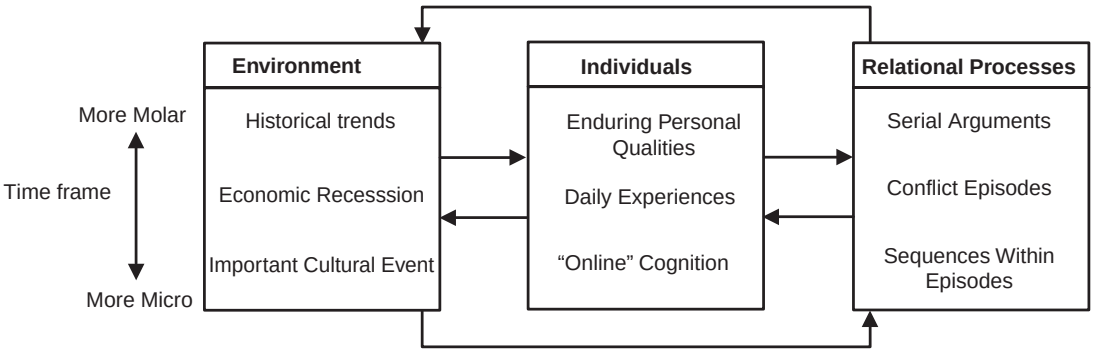

Figure 6.1 Framework for Organizing Questions About, and Research on, Conflict in Romantic Relationships

a couple's specific social and physical context; (2) the individuals, including the enduring characteristics that people bring to their relationship and attitudes and beliefs they develop during the relationship; and (3) the relational processes, which are composed partly of relational conflict behaviors and conflict patterns. One important aspect of this perspective is that it highlights the dynamic nature of the individuals and their relationship, including the conflict behaviors and patterns in that relationship (Huston, 2000).

The dynamic aspect of relational conflict implies that questions about conflict can reflect various time frames. As depicted from top to bottom in each of the boxes in Figure 6.1, all three levels of analysis can be examined over different temporal periods, such as different historical periods or different seasons within a year (e.g., the impact of holidays on conflict). Varied time frames also can be considered when examining individuals engaging in conflict; for example, individuals' attachment styles may influence conflict over a fairly long time period (Feeney, Noller, & Roberts, 2000), but scholars may also be interested in the specific "online" thoughts that individuals have during a particular conflict (e.g., Sillars, Roberts, Leonard, & Dun, 2000). Finally, with the relational process level, researchers could examine relational conflicts that occur over long time periods spanning many specific encounters (Malis & Roloff, 2006) but also could study specific, microscopic sequences of conflict behaviors (Buysse et al., 2000).

Although the conceptual model summarized in Figure 6.1 indicates that there is interplay among the various levels, the main foci of relational conflict researchers have been on relational behaviors and the individuals who enact them (rather than on connections to environmental factors). The largest portion of the relationship conflict literature has examined connections between conflict behaviors and relational outcomes like satisfaction or relational stability (for reviews, see Bradbury, Cohan, & Karney, 1998; Sillars & Canary, 2013).

Because research on the connection between conflict behaviors and relational outcomes has been such a focus of the literature, we begin by reviewing this research. Next, we examine how individual dyad members influence the behavioral system (and particularly conflict) in a relationship. Finally, we examine how the larger environment influences conflict processes in romantic relationships.

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Conflict Behaviors and Relational Outcomes

The primary outcomes of interest have been individuals' satisfaction with their relationships and relational instability (i.e., breakups among dating couples and divorce among married dyads). The prototypical studies in this genre are based on the problem-solving paradigm, which involves dyads engaging in relatively brief discussions of issues that they nominate as problematic and then researchers examining the conversations to determine if the partners' behaviors are associated with relational outcomes (e.g., Sullivan, Pasch, Johnson, & Bradbury, 2010). Until the early 1990s, most of this research compared the behaviors of satisfied couples with those of couples who were dissatisfied (for a review, see Robinson & Jacobson, 1987). Since then, there has been a surge in longitudinal studies examining whether conflict behaviors predict changes in relational satisfaction and relational dissolution (e.g., Birditt, Brown, Orbuch, & McIlvane, 2010; Heavey, Christensen, & Malamuth, 1995; Sullivan et al., 2010).

Individual Behaviors

The specific behaviors examined in studies of relational conflict are myriad (see Sillars & Canary, 2013). However, scholars frequently conceptualize the various behaviors in terms of two dimensions. The first is positive or negative affect (Canary, Cupach, & Messman, 1995; Heavey et al., 1995), which is sometimes labeled as valence or cooperation versus competition (Sillars & Canary, 2013). The second dimension is engagement versus avoidance (Canary et al., 1995) or directness (Sillars & Canary, 2013).

Negativity and Positivity. Scholars frequently conceptualize conflict behaviors having positive and negative affect along a single dimension, but most coding systems distinguish between behaviors that are viewed as cooperative and those that are seen as competitive. Researchers using Sillars's (1986) Verbal Tactics Coding Scheme or similar measures, for example, usually make separate assessments of integrative and distributive strategies, which are viewed as having positive and negative affect, respectively (e.g., Canary & Cupach, 1988). Similarly, coding schemes that incorporate nonverbal assessments (e.g., Gottman, 1994; Matthews, Wickrama, & Conger, 1996) typically include categories of positivity (i.e., expressions of warm or positive affect) and negativity (i.e., expressions of hostile or negative affect).

Numerous studies have shown that negativity and similar constructs are associated inversely with concurrent relational satisfaction (Fincham & Beach, 1999; Robinson & Jacobson, 1987). This association has been found with a variety of different methods, including observations of laboratory conflict discussions (Campbell, Martin, & Ward, 2008; Levenson & Gottman, 1983), retrospective reports of relational conflict (Birchler & Webb, 1977), and daily diary ratings of negative behaviors that are associated with conflict (Caughlin, Huston, & Houts, 2000; Huston & Vangelisti, 1991). Negativity also frequently predicts declining satisfaction and divorce (Birditt et al., 2010; Gottman, 1994; Heyman, 2001; Huston & Vangelisti, 1991).

There are a few studies suggesting "reversal effects" (Fincham & Beach, 1999, p. 52), in which some form of negativity is associated concurrently with dissatisfaction but predicts increases in satisfaction (e.g., Heavey et al., 1995; Heavey, Layne, & Christensen, 1993). However, such effects generally have not been confirmed in attempted replications (Fincham & Beach, 1999), and due to ambiguities in the analyses, the reversal effects may reflect extremely unhappy couples becoming somewhat less unhappy—rather than couples becoming satisfied due to negativity (Caughlin,

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2002). McNulty and Russell's (2010) recent study showing that negative behaviors can be associated with stable satisfaction when problems are severe is consistent with this interpretation because they also found that couples who were relatively unhappy as newlyweds tended to report severe conflicts and high negativity early in marriage. In short, negativity seems more likely to be an indicator of a stable but unhappy relationship than a predictor of an improving one.

Compared with the findings pertaining to negativity, the connection between expressions of positive affect during conflict and satisfaction is more muted. In some studies, it is difficult to determine whether expressions of positive affection matter because the researchers combine positive and negative affect into a single score (e.g., Matthews et al., 1996). There are some studies suggesting that positivity during conflict matters; for instance, affiliative humor is related to relational satisfaction (Campbell et al., 2008). Still, negativity is a more consistent and powerful predictor of relational satisfaction than is positivity (Gottman, 1994; Huston & Vangelisti, 1991).

Engagement Versus Avoidance. There is a cultural bias in the United States against avoiding conflict (Parks, 1982), and some scholars are so accepting of this bias that they consider withdrawal to be a form of negativity (e.g., Lindahl, Clements, & Markman, 1998). On the surface, such parsimony appears reasonable. Overall, there is an inverse association between relational satisfaction and various measures of conflict avoidance (e.g., Afifi, McManus, Steuber, & Coho, 2009; Noller, Feeney, Bonnell, & Callan, 1994; L. Smith, Heaven, & Ciarrochi, 2008).

However, this overall inverse association is modified by a number of factors, including the three discussed here. First, the form of conflict avoidance matters. Roberts (2000) and Sillars and Canary (2013) argued that there are qualitatively different forms of conflict avoidance, with some forms being more hostile and other forms being more neutral or cooperative. Roberts found that conflict avoidance that included negative affect was related more consistently to marital dissatisfaction than was neutral avoidance. Also, conflict avoidance can vary in directness (e.g., Caughlin, Hardesty, & Middleton, 2012; Caughlin & Scott, 2010). In some cases, relational partners seem able to negotiate the avoidance of a potential conflict topic in a way that does not draw attention to the conflict avoidance, which diminishes the chances that it will elicit dissatisfaction (Caughlin et al., 2012).

Second, conflict avoidance is most likely to be successful if it is used selectively, as in cases when the issue is not considered important (Roloff & Wright, 2009). McNulty and Russell's (2010) longitudinal study suggests that when topics are trivial, the harm of engaging in negative conflict behaviors may be particularly acute; thus, avoiding is probably preferable to overt negativity when the conflict is not severe. Finally, individuals may be unlikely to find conflict avoidance dissatisfying if they choose to avoid without excessive pressure to do so (Roloff & Wright, 2009). When people feel forced to avoid topics in general, they find this particularly dissatisfying (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010), and this probably extends to avoiding topics during conflicts. Consistent with this proposition, Afifi et al. (2009) found that avoiding due to fears of negative consequences for discussing an issue was related to dissatisfaction in dating couples.

Dyadic Patterns

Negative Reciprocity

Numerous studies, using a wide variety of coding systems and definitions, have established that exchanging negative behaviors

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(e.g., complaints, defensiveness, and expressions of negative affect) is associated with dissatisfaction (Margolin & Wampold, 1981) and diminished closeness (Campbell et al., 2008). The link between negative reciprocity and dissatisfaction has been observed with measures focusing primarily on nonverbal behaviors (Levenson & Gottman, 1983), ones focusing mainly on verbal behaviors (Ting-Toomey, 1983), and schemes mixing verbal and nonverbal assessments (Margolin & Wampold, 1981). Negative reciprocity also presages declines in satisfaction and relational dissolution (Filsinger & Thoma, 1988; Gottman, 1994).

Demand/Withdraw

Demand/withdraw involves one partner nagging, complaining, or criticizing and the other partner avoiding. The label does not imply a particular order; in fact, sequential analyses have shown that withdrawal can lead to demands, just as demands can lead to withdrawal (Klinetob & Smith, 1996). However, the person initiating an overt conflict sequence is more likely to take the role of demander than withdrawer (Papp, Kouros, & Cummings, 2009).

Despite variations in the specific measures of demand/withdraw, both observations and participant reports have indicated that demand/withdraw is associated inversely with concurrent relational satisfaction (Caughlin & Huston, 2002; Heavey et al., 1993; Papp, Kouros, & Cummings, 2009). The prospective outcomes associated with demand/withdraw are less clear. Some studies indicate that demand/withdraw (especially woman-demand/man-withdraw) predicts declining satisfaction (Heavey et al., 1995) and dissolution (Gottman & Levenson, 2000). Other studies have failed to replicate such findings (Heavey et al., 1993; Noller et al., 1994), and still others suggest that demand/withdraw can foreshadow increasing relational satisfaction (Caughlin, 2002; Heavey et al., 1995).

There is evidence that a rigid pattern of husbands demanding while wives withdraw may be associated with spouses' depression (Papp, Kouros, & Cummings, 2009) and with spousal abuse (Eldridge & Christensen, 2002). Gottman, Driver, Yoshimoto, and Rushe (2002) suggested that violent husbands sometimes use coercive verbal tactics to gain short-term compliance, even if they cannot actually influence their wife's beliefs. Gottman et al.'s (2002) explanation is consistent with Johnson's (2001) contention that battered wives are often subjected to verbal and physical coercion that is part of a coherent pattern of control.

Critique of Research on Conflict Behaviors and Outcomes

Research in this general area has produced many impressive results. Despite huge variation in how constructs like negativity have been measured (Heyman, 2001), there is ample evidence that negativity predicts dissatisfaction and divorce. Moreover, systematic studies of interventions based on the problem-solving paradigm demonstrate that teaching couples to enact constructive strategies and avoid excessively negative ones can prevent distress and improve strained relationships (Hahlweg, Markman, Thurmaier, Engl, & Eckert, 1998). In short, research on the connections between conflict resolution behaviors and relational outcomes has proved quite useful.

Nevertheless, there are concerns about the research in this area. Because the extant literature is so large and varied, no particular concern applies to all studies, but each is prevalent. These concerns pertain to studies that predict divorce, research on the affect

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dimension of conflict engagement, and some general assumptions of the problem-solving paradigm.

Research on Predictors of Divorce

The research demonstrating that negativity predicts divorce has been fruitful, with some studies indicating the ability to predict divorce at a rate greater than 90% (e.g., Gottman, 1994). Not surprisingly, such findings have generated much attention, but there are reasons for this enthusiasm to remain somewhat tempered (Bradbury, Rogge, & Lawrence, 2001). First, the statistical analyses used to predict divorce are optimized for a particular sample. Unless the same prediction equations are validated with another sample, it is impossible to know how many divorces can actually be predicted. Heyman and Smith Slep (2001), for example, used half of a nationally representative sample to compute a prediction equation that correctly labeled 90% of participants as married or divorced. However, when they applied the same equation to the other half of the sample, the overall accuracy in predicting divorce was only 69%, and among the individuals that had been predicted to be divorced, the equation was correct in only 29% of the cases. This suggests that previous claims of being able to predict divorce with 90% accuracy are, at best, exaggerated.

Second, even if negativity predicts relational dissolution, this does not prove a causal relationship (Glenn, 1998). Indeed, the existing evidence suggests that part of the association between negativity and divorce may be an artifact of including couples who are already moving toward dissolution. Negativity appears to be a reliable predictor of divorces in the short term but not in the longer term. Huston, Caughlin, Houts, Smith, and George (2001) found that newlywed levels of negativity were significantly higher in couples who divorced in the first 2 years of marriage than for couples who divorced after at least 2 years. Similarly, in their 14-year longitudinal study, Gottman and Levenson (2000) found that negativity predicted divorces during the first half of the study but not in the second half. Given that relational dissatisfaction predicts heightened negative conflict resolution behaviors (Noller & Feeney, 1998), at least part of the association between negativity and relational dissolution may reflect general distress rather than evidence that negativity causes divorce.

Research on the Affect Dimension of Conflict Behaviors

A number of critiques have been made of research that focuses on the affect dimension of conflict behaviors. First, the well-documented finding that "negativity" is associated with relational dissatisfaction and relational dissolution may seem obvious (Sillars & Canary, 2013). One counterargument to this point is that the general category of negativity summarizes a number of specific behaviors, some of which may be more important correlates of dissatisfaction and dissolution than are others (Gottman, 1994). Alberts (1988), for example, reported that satisfied couples were more likely than dissatisfied ones to focus on behaviors when complaining, whereas dissatisfied partners were more likely to complain about each other's personal characteristics. Also, the effects of negativity probably depend on the specific context; for example, in two longitudinal studies of newlyweds, McNulty and Russell (2010) found that negative conflict behaviors presaged dissatisfaction when the topic was a mundane one, but not when the topic was severe.

Another important point to be gleaned from the literature is the empirical evidence that negativity and positivity cannot be adequately described with a single dimension (Caughlin & Huston, 2006). If a single dimension accounted for negativity and positivity,

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these behaviors would have a strong inverse correlation across all studies. However, the observed correlations are often quite small, and factor analyses support treating positive and negative behaviors separately (Huston & Vangelisti, 1991; D. A. Smith, Vivian, & O'Leary, 1990). Moreover, positive and negative interaction behaviors often moderate each other's association with relational satisfaction (Huston & Chorost, 1994; D. A. Smith et al., 1990), a finding that would be unlikely if a single dimension adequately captured these constructs. Finally, Gottman and Levenson (2000) and Huston et al. (2001) found that the relational outcomes associated with positive and negative interaction behaviors are distinct (i.e., negativity and positivity do not demonstrate parallelism). Because of the empirical evidence that negativity and positivity are not part of a single dimension, it is usually not appropriate to collapse behaviors with positive and negative affect into a single measure (e.g., Matthews et al., 1996).

Assumptions of the Problem-Solving Paradigm

The prototypical study of conflict and relational outcomes involves observing a single episode of problem solving (Noller & Feeney, 1998). Findings using other methods are often considered suspect, unless they converge with observational research (Noller & Feeney, 2004). Obviously, there are some important advantages to observational studies; for example, biases in self-reports are well documented (Metts, Sprecher, & Cupach, 1991). Nevertheless, the problem-solving paradigm implies several questionable theoretical assumptions about relational conflict.

First, research in this area often assumes that conflict is inevitable. This assumption is often taken to mean that the amount of conflict and the difficulty of the issues do not matter; for example, Clements, Cordova, Markman, and Laurenceau (1997) argued, "The number and type of conflict areas . . . are less important than how couples handle these conflicts" (p. 342). The countless studies asking couples to discuss their most contentious issues implicitly assume that frequency and difficulty are unimportant. Also, using the behaviors produced in these episodes as indicative of "how couples handle" conflict presumes that couples actually discuss their disagreements and that all couples have equally troubling yet solvable conflict issues. This implies a theoretical perspective of how conflict operates in romantic relationships that is, at best, suspect.

In contrast to the assumption that managing conflict is more important than the difficulty and frequency of conflicts, experienced relationship counselors attribute the majority of couples' troubles to fundamental problems that often cause communication difficulties, rather than to problems managing conflict, per se (Vangelisti, 1994). Also, Sanford (2003) showed that the difficulty of married couples' conflict issues is related positively to observations of negativity and related inversely to relational satisfaction. Thus, the observed connections between negativity and dissatisfaction may be somewhat spurious and driven by the difficulty of the conflict.

Moreover, research outside laboratories suggests that the frequency of conflict is an important predictor of relational outcomes. Diary studies of dating and married couples have suggested that, on average, conflict episodes are experienced once every few days (Caughlin & Huston, 1996) or at least several times monthly (McGonagle, Kessler, & Schilling, 1992). Although some scholars have suggested that the infrequent occurrence of conflict episodes means that conflict is not particularly important (Bradbury et al., 2001), variations in the frequency of conflict are associated with relational outcomes. In both dating and married couples, the amount of conflict

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is associated with dissatisfaction (Cramer, 2000; Noller & Feeney, 1998; Orbuch, Veroff, Hassan, & Horrocks, 2002). Also, premarital conflict foreshadows dissatisfaction after marriage (Kelly, Huston, & Cate, 1985), and newlywed levels of conflict presage dissatisfaction 13 years later (Caughlin & Huston, 1996). The clear links between frequency of conflict and important relational outcomes highlight the theoretical importance of understanding why some couples encounter more conflicts than do others. This issue is addressed in the section about explanations for conflict.

A second questionable assumption in the problem-solving paradigm is evident in the typical design of such studies. Most of this research, even investigations that assess other constructs longitudinally, measures conflict behaviors only once (Noller & Feeney, 1998). This is potentially problematic because behaviors in a particular episode are likely to have a greater association with judgments of a similar time frame (e.g., satisfaction with the interaction) than with more molar judgments like overall relational satisfaction (Caughlin, 2010). Thus, the usual conflict observational paradigm assumes that the observed behaviors reflect what generally occurs in the relationship and that these behaviors are stable over time. This is a dubious assumption given that relational conflict does change over time (Caughlin & Huston, 1996). The few studies that have assessed conflict at multiple points in time indicate that dissatisfaction can predict increases in negativity and the amount of conflict (Huston & Vangelisti, 1991; Noller & Feeney, 1998), suggesting that it may be best to conceptualize the connection between conflict and relational outcomes as involving reciprocal effects.

Also, in a study using both diaries and self-reports, Caughlin and Huston (1996) found that marital stability over a 13-year period was related to changes in the experiences of conflict over the first 2 years of marriage. According to daily diary reports of conflicts, dyads who divorced and those who stayed married were similar in the first 2 years in terms of the number of conflict episodes. Divorced and married couples did not differ significantly in conflict frequency, and the frequency declined over the first 2 years of marriage, regardless of whether a couple eventually divorced or not. However, retrospective reports taken first when the couples were newlyweds and again after 1 and 2 years indicated that couples who eventually divorced reported significant increases in conflict over time, whereas couples who stayed married reported stable levels of conflict.

Our conceptual framework (see Figure 6.1) implies one possible explanation for the discrepancy between the two assessments of conflict. The two different measures ask people to report on different time frames, with retrospective reports reflecting a 2-month period and the diaries a single day. The different time frames might cue individuals to count conflicts differently. Consider, for example, the notion of serial arguing (e.g., Malis & Roloff, 2006; Roloff & Johnson, 2002; Roloff & Reznik, 2008), which recognizes that conflict about a particular issue can extend past a single episode. For a diary measure of conflict on a given day, participants may report only the overt conflict episodes, which means they would exclude ongoing serial arguments that were not explicitly discussed that day. However, when asked about the amount of conflict over the past 2 months, spouses would likely include ongoing serial arguments, even if they are rarely discussed on a given day. Having many (or particularly frustrating) serial arguments could explain why dyads who end up divorcing reported fewer daily episodes of conflict over time while also reporting that the amount of conflict in their relationship was increasing. Even if a couple does not discuss an issue often, the knowledge that the issue is ongoing and difficult to resolve may

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be just as important as overt conflict episodes (Lloyd, 1990; Roloff & Johnson, 2002). These findings show the importance of considering more than a single episode: Patterns of conflict can develop and unfold over periods of time much longer than the typical observational study (Christensen & Heavey, 1993; Roloff & Johnson, 2002).

A third assumption of the problem-solving paradigm is that the sample of conflict behaviors obtained during a laboratory encounter is valid and representative. Much has been written about the external validity of typical observational studies (Heyman, 2001). The general conclusion typically is that laboratory behaviors are not as negative as conflict behaviors at home, but there is some validity to observational methods because they can predict dissatisfaction and divorce (Heyman, 2001).

Nevertheless, observational studies are often not ideal for addressing certain important questions about relational conflict (Noller & Feeney, 2004). Consider, for example, the difficulties of studying conflict avoidance in a laboratory setting. Individuals are less likely to withdraw if they are directed by a researcher to discuss an issue for a preset amount of time (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van de Vliert, 1997; Roberts, 2000). The setting also constrains the types of avoidance behaviors partners engage in (e.g., they are unlikely to leave the room, make a phone call, or turn on an electronic device). Moreover, much conflict avoidance occurs before an issue is even introduced, making it difficult to observe such avoidance.

Even if behaviors can be validly assessed in an observational episode, there are questions about whether a single assessment is adequate (Fincham, 2004). Particular kinds of critical conflicts are unlikely to be captured in a laboratory. A couple's "first big fight," for instance, can have a large impact on the development of a relationship, leading to dissolution of some dyads and heightened interdependence in others (Siegert & Stamp, 1994). Unless scholars assume that there are no behavioral differences between the most crucial conflict episodes and ones observed in research, laboratory studies are likely to miss important aspects of conflict.

Also, research using diary methods has shown that relational partners' moods influence how negatively they treat each other (Schulz, Cowan, Cowan, & Brennan, 2004). Having a negatively stressful day at work, for example, is associated with more marital conflict (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Wethington, 1989), greater expressions of anger from wives, and more withdrawn behavior from husbands (Schulz et al., 2004). Such variations probably add a source of unreliability to assessments that rely on a single encounter. Given this potential for unreliability, analyses based on these measures may actually underestimate the association of conflict behaviors with relational outcomes.

In short, the assumptions of the problem-solving paradigm may obscure important aspects of relational conflict. The typical laboratory designs make the untenable assumptions that the frequency and difficulty of conflict is irrelevant; they focus primarily on observable conflict behaviors in a particular episode, which may be less important than perceptions of conflict, such as the belief that a serial argument is not resolvable; and they usually presume that the behaviors in a single session are representative of conflict behaviors in a relationship generally, a dubious assumption given the situational demands inherent in observational studies. Although more research using the problem-solving paradigm is certainly warranted, it is important not to treat the results from this paradigm as representative of the overall impact of conflict on romantic relationships. Common observational methods capture some of what is important about relational conflict, but not everything. Indeed, the concerns about this

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paradigm suggest that previous studies may have underestimated the complete impact of relational conflict.

Individuals' Influences on Relational Conflict

Conflict scholars investigating how individuals shape their conflicts have sought to explain how conflicts emerge and develop and have investigated how individuals' cognitions influence the course and outcomes of relational conflict. Again, the literature in this general area is enormous, even rivaling the research on associations between conflict behaviors and relational outcomes. Our focus here is on reviewing several common explanations for conflict and on briefly discussing the importance of interpretations of relational conflict.

Explanations of Conflict and Conflict Behaviors

Much of the work relevant to explaining conflict in romantic relationships does not refer to explicit theoretical models (Fincham & Beach, 1999), but several common explanations exist, including the ones that refer to skills, gender differences, other individual differences, stressors, and goals. Each of these explanations has a number of variants, but we focus on general themes rather than the variations.

Skills

One of the most common accounts of why couples engage in communication behaviors that are associated with dissatisfaction is a skills-based one (e.g., Clements et al., 1997). The skills metaphor is implied in the behavioral models of conflict that have been the dominant perspective on marital conflict (Fincham & Beach, 1999). The assumed connection between skills and conflict behaviors is so pervasive that many scholars treat the phrases "conflict skills" and "conflict behaviors" synonymously (e.g., McNulty & Karney, 2004).

Despite the ongoing pervasiveness of the skills explanation, the role of communication skills as a cause of aversive relational conflict behaviors may be overstated (Canary, 2003). Burleson and Denton (1997) argued that the skills deficiency approach fails to make the important conceptual distinction between ability and motivation. Burleson and Denton conducted a study in which they measured skills directly. They found that communication skills were not reliably associated with marital distress, but expressions of negativity were. Such findings suggest that the behaviors frequently linked to dissatisfaction in relationships "may result more from ill will than poor skill" (p. 897).

Gender Differences

Many explanations of conflict behaviors involve research on gender differences. Two types of gender differences are potentially important: differences in men and women's proclivities for enacting particular behaviors and differences between men and women in the associations between conflict and other constructs. Beginning with differences in behaviors, women in heterosexual dyads, as compared with their partners, exhibit more negativity (Kelley et al., 1978; Messman & Mikesell, 2000). Men tend to be more likely than women to avoid conflict (Denton, Burleson, Hobbs, Von Stein, & Rodriguez, 2001; Kelley et al., 1978). Not surprisingly, woman-demand/man-withdraw occurs more frequently than does man-demand/woman-withdraw (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 1999).

Although less commonly studied than simple behavioral frequencies, there are also sex differences in the covariances between conflict

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behaviors and other constructs. Du Rocher Schudlich, Papp, and Cummings (2004), for example, reported that husbands' depression was more strongly associated with negativity than was wives' depression. Also, Kluwer, Tumewu, and Van Den Bos (2009) found that women overall were more adversely affected by perceived unfairness during conflicts.

Researchers have explained gender differences in a number of ways. One set of explanations involves enduring differences in male versus female dispositions. Some scholars have suggested that compared with men, women are socialized to focus more on relationships, which explains why women tend to approach conflicts more while men avoid them (e.g., Napier, 1978). Another set of explanations focuses on the social structure or the power structure of heterosexual relationships, particularly marriages (see Eldridge & Christensen, 2002). A social structural model suggests that men's greater power relative to women in heterosexual relationships means that relationships tend to favor men's wishes. Women, as a consequence, often are put in a position of advocating change while men resist (Heyman, Hunt-Martorano, Malik, & Smith Slep, 2009). A related view posits that gender differences are modified by the nature of specific conflicts; for instance, the usual gender difference in demand/withdraw is evident in discussions of women's complaints but less so during discussions of topics that are more symmetrical in terms of who has complaints (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van de Vliert, 2000; cf. Caughlin & Vangelisti, 1999). Similarly, when husbands desire more change on an issue than do wives, the tendency for wives to demand more often than do husbands reverses (Klinetob & Smith, 1996).

Circumstances in which usual gender patterns are reversed highlight arguments that sex differences in conflict behaviors are often exaggerated (Canary et al., 1995). Effect sizes for gender differences tend to be small, and even where there are significant sex differences, there also are similarities; for example, even though Messman and Mikesell (2000) found that women in dating dyads engaged in more distributive tactics than did men, both women and men engaged in more integrative tactics than distributive ones. Such findings are not surprising given that male and female communicators in relationships are often more similar than they are different (e.g., Vangelisti & Daly, 1997).

Despite the evidence that gender differences in conflict sometimes are exaggerated, researchers often inadvertently perpetuate stereotypes about men and women. For example, some researchers have failed to analyze conflict behaviors that run counter to stereotypes (e.g., husbands demanding and wives withdrawing), even though attending to such behaviors can be theoretically important (see Caughlin, 2002). In the case of demand/withdraw, the pattern with wives demanding and husbands withdrawing is more common, but a substantial minority of couples fall into a pattern of husbands demanding and wives withdrawing (Denton et al., 2001). Furthermore, husband-demand/wife-withdraw is associated with consequential outcomes like relational dissatisfaction (Caughlin & Huston, 2002; Heavey et al., 1995) and relational violence (Eldridge & Christensen, 2002).

Individual Differences

The largest group of studies examining individual differences (other than sex) has linked attachment styles or dimensions to conflict behaviors (Feeney et al., 2000). According to attachment theory, experiences with important others are internalized so that individuals develop various working models or attachment orientations (Feeney et al., 2000). Individuals with secure attachment orientations (i.e., they feel comfortable in relationships) are more likely than people with other attachment styles

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to enact conflict behaviors such as compromises, validation, and other behaviors that are usually considered constructive (Domingue & Mollen, 2009). An avoidant orientation (i.e., the extent to which one is uncomfortable with closeness and finds it difficult to depend on others) has been linked to low levels of warmth and supportiveness (Feeney et al., 2000; Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips, 1996) and high levels of negativity (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). Finally, anxious-ambivalent orientations (which involve strong desires for closeness with fears of rejection) have also been linked to negativity and to dominating and coercive tactics (Creasey et al., 1999; Simpson et al., 1996). Although attachment orientations are typically conceptualized as having an enduring influence on relationships and behaviors in those relationships, there is evidence that the association between conflict and attachment is reciprocal. Ruvolo, Fabin, and Ruvolo (2001) found that the extent to which women reported avoiding conflicts with their dating partner was significantly related to declines in attachment security over a 5-month period.

Consistent with attachment theory's tenet that individuals' views of current relationships are rooted in prior important relationships, individuals' conduct during conflict is related to how they view their family of origin. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002) studied college students' perceptions of their family of origin and their reports of conflict behaviors in current romantic relationships. Having a family of origin with a conformity orientation (i.e., one that stressed homogeneous attitudes, harmony, and obedience) was associated with avoiding conflicts and with negative behaviors during conflicts. Also, reports of parental violence or divorce in the family of origin are associated with negativity during engaged couples' conflicts (Chen et al., 2006; Halford, Sanders, & Behrens, 2000). Such studies suggest that experiences in one's family of origin have an enduring impact on how one engages in conflict.

Also, a number of personality constructs are associated with conflict behaviors. The Big Five personality factor of agreeableness, which refers to qualities such as being likable and good natured, is related inversely to coercive conflict tactics and expressions of negative affect (Graziano & Tobin, 2002), is related negatively to demand/withdraw in marriage (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2000), and is associated positively with affectively positive strategies like affirmations and appeasements (Gonzaga, Keltner, Londahl, & Smith, 2001). The Big Five neuroticism factor, which refers to qualities like proneness to anxiety and negative moods, is correlated positively with aggression, negativity, and demand/withdraw (Caughlin et al., 2000; Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2000; Hines & Saudino, 2008).

Stress

There is growing interest linking romantic partners' experiences of stressful circumstances to conflict. For example, marital conflict is linked to stress at work (Schulz et al., 2004), stress about money and bills (Papp, Cummings, & Goeke-Morey, 2009), and poor economic conditions (Conger, Rueter, & Elder, 1999). Moreover, when spouses engage in conflict while they are already experiencing stress, they are more likely to become physically aggressive than they are at other times (Frye & Karney, 2006).

Goals

The notion that one's goals are associated with relational conflict has a long history (e.g., Lewin, 1948), but the role of goals in conflict is often implicit. Prevalent explanations for the demand/withdraw pattern are a good example of how references to goals are often implied (Caughlin & Scott, 2010). Gender differences in demanding and withdrawing

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are often attributed to women wanting change while men favor the status quo (Heyman et al., 2009). Although the term *goal* usually is not used explicitly (cf. Kluwer, 1998), the clear implication is that conflict behaviors are related to individuals' goal.

Explicit discussions of goals in relational conflict suggest that multiple goals are relevant in conflict episodes (Canary, 2003; Fincham & Beach, 1999; Keck & Samp, 2007). Although there is no single correct way to classify such goals, common types of goals include (a) instrumental or content goals, such as what outcomes or resources are desired; (b) relational goals, such as the desire to maintain or change a particular quality of a relationship; (c) identity goals, including desires to portray oneself in a positive manner and to allow one's partner to maintain a positive identity; and (d) process goals, including the desired manner of conflict management (Canary, 2003; Fincham & Beach, 1999).

The relative importance of various goals can shift during an episode (Fincham & Beach, 1999; Keck & Samp, 2007); for instance, identity issues may emerge during interaction. A disagreement that begins with both spouses trying to determine how to find their destination after getting lost can shift to one in which spouses are concerned primarily with protecting their own identities by blaming each other. Based on such examples, Fincham and Beach (1999) suggested that one useful intervention would be to counsel romantic partners to recognize when a shift to identity issues is likely so that they can pay attention to more positive goals.

A multiple goals perspective on conflict has some advantages over the more common behavioral models of conflict (Caughlin, 2010). First, considering multiple goals provides an opportunity for a theoretically grounded notion of communication skills in conflicts. As noted above, many relational conflict scholars equate expressions of negativity with a lack of skill, regardless of individuals' goals (cf. Burleson & Denton, 1997). In contrast, a multiple goals perspective might define skills in terms of the ability to attend to multiple goals simultaneously or in terms of the ability to reframe the situation so that the various goals are more compatible (Caughlin, 2010).

Second, considering multiple goals can provide a more complete account of conflict behaviors than do studies that only implicitly refer to goals. Consider, for instance, the account of demand/withdraw that attributes avoidance to the goal of maintaining the status quo and demanding to the goal of changing the partner (Kluwer, 1998). Such claims about a one-to-one association between a goal and a behavior cannot explain when a person has that goal but does not enact the associated behavior; for example, not all people wanting change demand (Caughlin & Scott, 2010). If, in addition to desiring change, individuals are also committed to pursuing positive relational goals and to maintaining positive identities, they may forego the affectively negative strategy of demanding and instead not raise the issue or try to raise it in the most positive and constructive manner possible. This is just one example, but it illustrates how a multiple goals perspective can be useful at providing a more thorough account of conflict behaviors than do standard accounts.

Cognition and Relational Conflict

Because there are excellent extant reviews of cognition in interpersonal conflict (e.g., Roloff & White, this volume), our discussion is limited to three points that are particularly pertinent to our framework for understanding conflict in romantic relationships (see Figure 6.1). First, although there is ample evidence of links between observable conflict behaviors and relational outcomes, it is crucial to augment such findings with an understanding of how relational partners interpret these behaviors. Individuals' perceptions of conflict behaviors

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mediate much of the connection between manifest conflict behaviors and relational outcomes (Canary, Cupach, & Serpe, 2001; Matthews et al., 1996), and biased but positive perceptions of a partner's conflict style may quell the effects of negative conflict styles (Segrin, Hanzal, & Domschke, 2009).

Second, it is important to recognize the complex interconnections among cognitive elements of varying time frames. More molar perceptions are not necessarily the simple sum of more microscopic experiences (Caughlin & Huston, 1996). In fact, once broad perceptions are formed, they probably shape more specific evaluations, which would explain why overall relational dissatisfaction predicts negative thoughts about one's partner during specific interactions (Sillars et al., 2000; Vangelisti, Corbin, Lucchetti, & Sprague, 1999).

Third, cognition is usually conceptualized in terms of how people interpret conflicts; for instance, attributions and biases concerning conflict have received considerable attention (see Roloff & White, this volume). It is important to recognize, however, that such interpretations influence subsequent conflict interactions. Consider, for example, instances when individuals perceive that their partner has been hostile in previous conflict encounters and believe that the partner will be hostile in future encounters. In some cases, the expected hostility may lead the individuals to begin conflicts in an antagonistic manner, but in other cases, the expected hostility may lead the individuals to be particularly positive or to avoid conflicts altogether (see Miller & Turnbull, 1986). Regardless of how they respond to such expectations, their cognitions about conflict are important to understanding the conflict.

The Environment of Conflict in Romantic Relationships

The social ecological framework depicted in Figure 6.1 suggests that is it important to consider the broader context of conflict in romantic relationships, but there is far less research on environmental influences than there is on individuals' and on dyads' behaviors. When the environment is considered, it is usually conceptualized as operating through individual differences, such as ethnicity and sexual orientation.

Ethnicity

The majority of research on conflict in romantic relationships has used samples that were mostly White. There are exceptions such as the Early Years of Marriage (EYM) Project (Veroff, Douvan, & Hatchett, 1995), a longitudinal study that examined both African American and White married couples. The EYM Project suggested many similarities between White and Black dyads in terms of conflict, but it also indicated some important differences. As newlyweds, Black and White couples report similar frequencies of conflict, but compared with their White counterparts, Black spouses report a significantly smaller number of areas of disagreement (Oggins, Veroff, & Leber, 1993) and significantly fewer conflict issues pertaining to their partner's family (Timmer, Veroff, & Hatchett, 1996). Also, marital discord (e.g., frequency of conflicts) is a predictor of divorce for both Black and White couples (Orbuch et al., 2002).

White and Black couples also differ in terms of specific conflict behaviors. Black spouses are significantly more likely to report that they withdraw from conflicts than are White spouses (Oggins et al., 1993). Additionally, whereas wives' negativity predicts declining marital quality for White couples, Veroff et al. (1995) found no evidence of a similar association for Black dyads. Orbuch and Veroff (2002) explained this finding by arguing that Black spouses are more accepting of negativity than are White spouses; thus, whereas White couples "might be especially put off" (p. 557) by negativity, Black couples might view negativity as a normal part of a close relationship.

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Obviously, there is tremendous room for more research on the influence of ethnicity on relational conflict. The extant research suggests that impact of ethnicity can be subtle because there is considerable heterogeneity within ethnic groups. For example, spouses of Mexican origin who live in the United States vary in how much they orient to Mexican culture, and these variations influence marital conflict and how much spouses focus on finding mutually agreeable solutions (Wheeler, Updegraff, & Thayer, 2010).

Sexual Orientation

The research on conflict in same-sex unions suggests that the outcomes of conflict in these relationships are often similar to those in heterosexual dyads (Domingue & Mollen, 2009; Patterson, 2000). For instance, negativity is associated inversely with concurrent satisfaction and predicts declines in satisfaction for heterosexual, gay, and lesbian relational partners (Kurdek, 1994). Homosexual and heterosexual couples also show similar levels of physiological reactivity to conflict (Roisman, Clausell, Holland, Fortuna, & Elieff, 2008).

Despite such similarities, there are some differences. Domingue and Mollen (2009) found that same-sex couples were less likely to mutually avoid conflicts than were heterosexual couples. Also, the environment for conflict is different for same-sex couples versus heterosexual ones. This environment can be a unique source of conflict for lesbian and gay couples, inciting disagreements over issues such as how much to tell others about their sexual identity or their relationship (Diamond, Rith, & Butterworth, 2013).

Conceptualizing the environment in terms of individual differences has yielded important findings about the influences of particular relational contexts on conflict. However, it does not provide a comprehensive understanding of conflict environments in romantic relationships. Defining the environment and identifying the various ways that it affects conflict is difficult, but one way to proceed is to consider the influence of environment on five different levels: the cultural, social, dyadic, physical, and temporal levels.

The Cultural Level

The majority of studies on conflict in romantic relationships has been conducted in North America. Most of the remaining research had been done in Western Europe, and this work is generally consistent with research that uses North American samples (e.g., Hahlweg, Kaiser, Christensen, Fehm-Wolfsdorf, & Groth, 2000). Connolly and her colleagues (2010), for example, found that the level of conflict in adolescent dating relationships was significantly related to dating aggression in both Canada and Italy.

Some studies done outside of North America and Western Europe complement the results of investigations done in North America. For instance, a study of married Blacks in South Africa revealed that satisfaction was related positively to reports of collaborative conflict and negatively associated with competitive conflict (Greeff & de Bruyne, 2000). Other investigations suggest that culture may shape couples' conflict in subtle ways. In one study, undergraduate students in the United States and Japan were asked to describe recent interpersonal conflicts (Ohbuchi & Takahashi, 1994). Although Japanese individuals were more likely to avoid conflicts, both groups noted that more direct strategies (e.g., bargaining, compromise) were preferable to avoidance. Such findings highlight the importance of conceptualizing culture and conflict beyond simple binary comparisons because there may be both similarities and differences at the same time.

Moreover, even when results from a particular study appear to show similarities across cultures, researchers must be careful not to equate similar scores on measures to mean that there are not important differences. There is evidence, for example, that the Conflict

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Tactics Scale (CTS) demonstrates excellent psychometric properties across at least 17 different nations (Straus, 2004), but even if people across cultures respond to the items in the same way, it does not necessarily mean that the response has the same meaning. It is possible, for example, for two people from different cultures to report that they respected their partner's feelings (which is one item on the CTS), but what it means to show such respect could nevertheless be very different in those cultures.

The Social Level

Within any culture, the social milieu influences romantic partners' conflicts. That is, the presence or absence of other individuals and the interactions with those individuals affect romantic dyads' conflicts. For example, married couples report that rules barring expressions of negative affect are more important in public than in private settings (Jones & Gallois, 1989).

Individuals who are part of the social context can influence relational conflicts. Wilson, Roloff, and Carey (1998) found that friends of dating partners often comment when they have negative opinions concerning the partners' conflicts. Also, Klein and Milardo (2000) found that women perceived their positions on conflict issues to be more legitimate to the extent that they had support from people in their social network, and this perceived legitimacy was related to being unwilling to compromise.

The Dyadic Level

Dyads, like social groups, develop histories and patterns of behavior that influence their conflicts. Siegert and Stamp (1994) referenced the effect of couples' shared history on their subsequent conflict behavior when they discussed romantic partners' "first big fight." These researchers found that couples who survived their first big fight distinguished it from other fights based, in part, on the lack of shared history that preceded it. Siegert and Stamp noted that prior to the first big fight, couples "don't have the knowledge base that is possessed later or the arsenal of conflictual weapons and strategies that such a knowledge base engenders" (pp. 353–354). The shared knowledge that couples develop over time influences the way they cope with and interpret conflict in their relationships.

The patterns of behavior that couples enact also create a context that may shape the meaning partners assign to conflicts. For example, romantic partners who routinely express affection to each other appear to be less susceptible to any adverse impact of negativity and demand/withdraw on relational satisfaction (Caughlin & Huston, 2002; Huston & Chorost, 1994). Thus, the meaning assigned to negative behaviors appears to be influenced by the behavioral context that couples create together.

Moreover, this behavioral context need not be limited to behaviors that are usually thought of as communication. Caughlin (2002) argued that one reason why some couples may increase their satisfaction after engaging in demand/withdraw episodes is that the person being asked to change may do so over time, which would influence the ultimate meaning of the conversation. For example, if a husband withdraws while being nagged to pick up his dirty socks, the actual interaction is likely to be unpleasant and associated with concurrent dissatisfaction. However, if this husband begins to put his dirty laundry away without being nagged (perhaps even as a strategy to avoid being nagged again), this may lead the wife to reappraise the conflict episode, downplaying its importance compared with the changed behavior. Furthermore, once the husband has demonstrated a willingness to

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change despite engaging in avoidance, subsequent episodes of demand/withdraw might be viewed differently.

The Physical Level

Conflict behavior and the interpretation of conflict behavior also are affected by various aspects of the physical environment. For instance, some studies show that aggressive acts are related positively to increases in temperature and humidity (Anderson, Bushman, & Groom, 1997). Other investigations suggest that certain variables (e.g., the perceived ability to leave the setting) may interact with temperature and humidity to encourage or discourage aggressive behavior (Baron & Bell, 1976). The recent surge in research on the physiological correlates of relational conflict behaviors (e.g., Loving, Heffner, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 2006) suggests a possible mechanism by which weather (e.g., temperature) influences conflict behaviors. Individuals' hormones are linked to conflict behaviors (Kaiser & Powers, 2006), so if humans have hormonal responses to weather, those responses would explain why weather influences conflict patterns.

The physical environment also includes architectural structures and movable objects. In their commentary on the influence of physical environments on personal relationships, Brown, Werner, and Altman (2006) provided a very interesting comparison of people's homes during different historical time periods. For example, they noted that middle-class colonial homes might have had only two lower rooms and an upper sleeping loft. As a consequence, families inhabiting these homes shared most of their daily experiences and had very little privacy. By contrast, Victorian homes had many separate spaces for family members. Clearly, the physical access that couples living in these two types of homes had to each other differed. It is very likely that the way couples conducted themselves during conflict episodes (e.g., the strategies they used to avoid conflict) was affected by the physical contexts in which they lived.

The Temporal Level

The analysis offered by Brown et al. (2006) suggests that historical periods indirectly affect the way couples communicate by influencing the physical environment. Historical periods also affect social interaction in more direct ways. Hatfield and Rapson (2002) offered a historical analysis of passionate love. They noted that the norms associated with love and sexual desire at different points in time (e.g., norms concerning the degree to which women should enjoy sex, the double standard for extramarital affairs) greatly influenced couples' sexual relationships. Undoubtedly, these same norms and others (e.g., those concerning decision making and the use of physical violence) also affected the way couples handled conflict.

Within any given historical period, conflict is further shaped by the temporal rhythms of couples' day-to-day activities. Several studies have demonstrated that the experiences spouses have at work predict the tone of subsequent marital interactions (Doumas, Margolin, & John, 2003). Bolger et al. (1989), for instance, found that when husbands or their wives reported having an argument at work, husbands were more likely to report having an argument with their spouse at home the following day. Similarly, Schulz et al. (2004) found that women were more likely to express anger and men were more likely to withdraw if they had negatively arousing workdays.

In sum, as Huston's (2000) social ecological model indicates, the impact of the environment on dating and married couples' conflict is complex. It is also more pervasive than would be implied by most of the extant literature on this topic. As we have argued, the environmental influence on couples'

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conflict operates at various levels, including the cultural, social, dyadic, physical, and temporal levels. Although we discussed these levels separately, they are also interconnected in their influence on conflict; for example, consider the changes that have occurred in North American homes since the colonial period (Brown et al., 2006). Such changes occurred over time (the temporal level), they affected the characteristics of housing (the physical level), and they were related to changes in the entire society (the cultural level). Such interconnections among levels illustrate some of the complexities of conceptualizing couples' conflicts from a social ecological perspective (such as that depicted in Figure 6.1).

Conclusion

The literature on conflict in romantic couples is enormous and, in many respects, impressive. Considerable advances have been made in identifying conflict behaviors and patterns that are associated with outcomes like dissatisfaction and dissolution. Scholars have also made important progress in understanding why conflict develops in particular ways and why relational partners enact some conflict behaviors rather than others. Although relational conflict researchers have made great strides, our review and the social ecological conceptual framework suggest that greater attention to the environment of relational conflict is warranted. To illustrate the potential of such a focus, we note two particularly important areas for future study.

First, the impact of conflict on close relationships probably depends on a number of temporal issues that have received scant attention. Although there have been many studies on sequences within particular conflict episodes, understanding the impact of conflict on relationships likely will require more attention to issues involving broader time frames (e.g., the daily rhythms of conflict, how serial arguments develop over time, and how changes in conflict over time affect relationships). Moreover, as depicted in our adapted social ecological model (Figure 6.1), there are undoubtedly historical and cultural changes that influence couples' conflict, but we know little about how such changes operate. There is, for example, evidence that financial difficulties affect couples' conflicts at a given point in time (Papp et al., 2009), but what happens to relationships and relational conflict when there is widespread economic hardship occurring over a period of years, such as during the so-called Great Recession? It is possible that such widespread financial difficulties could lead to an increase in difficult conflicts and a decrease in the constructiveness with which such conflicts are handled. Yet it is also possible that as financial difficulties become more normative, the influence of such difficulties on a particular couple would be diminished. Clearly, there are many important questions about temporal aspects of conflict in dating and married relationships that have yet to be addressed.

Second, there are sound conceptual reasons—and some empirical ones—to believe that the impact of environmental factors on conflict in romantic relationships is greater than that implied by a typical laboratory study. The ideology that a particular culture holds concerning conflict, the social milieu in which conflict occurs, and the physical environment all influence the conflict behaviors enacted by relational partners as well as the effects those behaviors have on their relationship. Taking a more contextual perspective on conflict in romantic dyads is likely to offer many potentially important insights.

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7

Intimate Partner Violence

Brian H. Spitzberg

Aggression and violence are adaptive tools in the ancient evolutionary repertoire of humanity. So are cooperative and peaceful relations. The ongoing dialectic implied by these seemingly incompatible tactics reflects a tension between humanity's more cultural and more feral ontologies. This tension, between the aggressive impulse to violence and the need to establish more cooperative relations, and the delicate balance in the philosophy of means versus ends, forms a fulcrum on which much of human history has turned. One of the contexts in which this fulcrum continues to parse the enormous cultural and societal forces at work is intimate partner violence (IPV). Whereas wars are often fought over tangible resources and perceived threats to collective survival, violence in intimate relations generally involve far more intangible objectives and symbolic representations. This chapter considers aggression and violence in the intimate partner context, with an eye to their nature, scope, functions, processes, and effects.

Nature

First, given the nexus of biological and cultural concerns, there is no possibility of a purely objective assessment of the topic. Several issues still energize polarizing debates among IPV researchers (see, e.g., DeKeseredy, 2011; M. P. Johnson, 2011; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010; Nicolaidis & Paranjape, 2009; Straus, 2011; Winstok, 2011), and the more international and intercultural the analysis, the harder it is to identify generalizable principles or conclusions that still permit confident empirical grounding (e.g., Haj-Yahia, 2011; Larkin & Morris, 2009; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2008). Among other problems, most research has emphasized Western and Anglo populations, rendering pancultural conclusions suspect (Krahé, Bieneck, & Möller, 2005).

Second, two initial ethical considerations merit articulation. From a *deontological* ethical perspective, it seems reasonable to conjecture that violence is seldom, if ever, the

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most moral response to a conflict. However, from the Code of Hammurabi to the Old Testament, to the narrative of Jesus cleansing the temple, to the Koran's instruction to beat women who are not obedient to their husband ("The Women," section 4.34; http://quod.lib.umich.edu/k/koran/browse.html), aggression and violence have clearly been ingrained as moral and normative conditionals in the consciousness of many cultural traditions. Research from a more contextual ethical perspective has identified a broad range of types of violence and situations in which violence is considered legitimate, including forms of IPV. Nontrivial percentages of people approve of the use of violence, or consider it justified, in certain intimate relationship circumstances (Cauffman, Feldman, Jensen, & Arnett, 2000; Olson, 2002; Rani & Bonu, 2009; Uthman, Moradi, & Lawoko, 2009; World Health Organization [WHO], 2005; Yahia, 2010). Furthermore, viewing it as wrong is not the same as believing that it should be illegal (Sorenson & Taylor, 2005). It is relatively easy to say that using violence to resolve conflicts is wrong, but ask a person if it is appropriate to slap a partner who has just been discovered in flagrante in committing infidelity, and people's contingencies for the legitimacy of violence tend to liberalize.

A third concern is the relationship between IPV and communication. *It is axiomatic that violence is a form of communication*. To elaborate this axiom, some terminology will require clarification. The term *aggression* is defined as any act that is unwanted and intended as injurious to a person or a person's symbolic representations or affiliations (Parrott & Giancola, 2007). *Abuse* is considered any type of aggression that is directed to a particular person with some degree of chronicity, thereby qualifying it as an abusive relationship. *Violence* is a subset of aggression, and in particular, *physical violence* is defined here as any actions that (a) are unwanted by the target(s) of such actions, (b) are enacted with the intent to harm, and (c) impose some degree of physical harm on that target, that target's property or affiliative relations (Dailey, Lee, & Spitzberg, 2012; Spitzberg, 2010b). *Intimate partner violence* is therefore any acts of physical violence that occur in the context of a relationship in which romantic or courtship objectives are being pursued by one or both of the interactants. The term *intimate* does not automatically translate into romantic, given that friends, siblings, and parent–child relations certainly qualify as types of intimacy. The qualifier "partner," however, implies a romantic trajectory or definition. These are defensible definitions, although it is important to note that there are divergent approaches to defining these terms (e.g., Desmarais, Gibas, & Nicholls, 2010). One of the intents of this definition is to delimit the term *IPV* to *physical* violence and to exclude various forms of purely symbolic, verbal, or indirect aggression.

If violence is a subset of aggression, then there are other important forms of aggression that need to be considered. The term *psychological abuse* is often used to refer to an infinite class of actions that intend mental or emotional harm to a person (O'Leary, 1999). Related or synonymous terms include bullying, coercion, emotional abuse, harassment, indirect aggression, neglect, psychological maltreatment, relational aggression, social aggression, stalking, verbal abuse, and verbal aggression (Antle et al., 2007; Basile, Chen, Black, & Saltzman, 2007; Corvo & DeLara, 2010; Kinney, 1994; Straus & Savage, 2005). If communication is taken broadly as any action that imparts meaning to or influences another person (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967), then it becomes difficult to imagine any action that would qualify as violent or aggressive that does not

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"communicate" something to someone. As such, psychological abuse is an attempt to communicate diminishment, derogation, or degradation. In considering these issues, Dailey, Lee, and Spitzberg (2007) defined *communicative aggression* (CA) "as any recurring set of messages that function to impair a person's enduring preferred self-image" (p. 303). Many other forms of interpersonal aggression (e.g., child sexual abuse, sexual aggression, neglect, kidnapping, enslavement, forced prostitution, stalking, etc.) can occur in an intimate relationship context but extend too far beyond this context to examine extensively in this chapter.

Scope

Given the subtleties and variegation of aggression, and the challenges of anchoring such concepts in specific behaviors that generalize across cultures and languages, estimating the precise prevalence of IPV is problematic (Hein & Ruglass, 2009; Saltzman & Houry, 2009; WHO, 2005). Prevalence rates for experiencing CA (i.e., psychological abuse) range from one third to three quarters of the U.S. population (Follingstad, 2011; Follingstad & Edmundson, 2010). These prevalence rates appear consistent with the rates reported in other countries as well (WHO, 2005).

Based strictly on larger-scale studies, the prevalence of IPV varies substantially: 1% to 10% (Caetano, Vaeth, & Ramisetty-Mikler, 2008; Zlotnick, Johnson, & Kohn, 2006), 10% to 30% (Breiding, Black, & Ryan, 2008; Fletcher, 2010; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). One major international review (Krahé et al., 2005) and a major international study (WHO, 2005) identified rates of IPV ranging between these amounts, although some countries reported substantially higher rates. Rates of sexual violence tend to range from 1% to 15% in the United States (Basile et al., 2007; Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly, 2007; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

In most larger-scale studies such as these, females tend to report significantly higher rates of victimization (e.g., Breiding et al., 2008; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Weston, Temple, & Marshall, 2005), although studies that rely exclusively on lists of behaviors, such as the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), tend to find similar rates of victimization and perpetration for males and females, implying high degrees of reciprocity and shared responsibility for IPV initiation (Mulford & Giordano, 2008; Robertson & Murachver, 2007; Straus, 2004, 2008, 2011). Prevalence rates tend to be similar or higher in gay and lesbian relationships in all of these forms of aggression (Blosnich & Bossarte, 2009; Halpern, Young, Waller, Martin, & Kupper, 2004; Tjaden, Thoennes, & Allison, 1999). Although ethnic differences often arise within cultures, they often appear inconsistent across studies, and relatively little systematic research or theory has emerged to account for the differences that do arise. Such differences, when they occur, can be attributed in part to socioeconomic, religious, cultural, educational, urban/rural, social network, or societal trauma factors (Lilly & Graham-Bermann, 2009; Próspero & Kim, 2009; Raghavan, Valli, Collado, & Kavanagh, 2009; Renner & Whitney, 2010). Ethnic or racial minorities may experience structural social factors that increase the risks of IPV, but some evidence indicates relatively small effects (e.g., Weston et al., 2005) for ethnic factors or effects for certain minorities relative to others. For example, some research indicates that in the United States, African Americans are more likely to experience IPV, but such effects may be due more to the socioeconomic status differences that relate to race than race itself (e.g., Field & Caetano, 2004; Rennison & Planty, 2003).

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If IPV is not strictly a product of structural or cultural factors, then it becomes important to understand the motives and functions it serves. To understand the underlying motives and functions, an examination of the nature of power is necessary.

Functions and Motives

For some time, the regnant presumption of most research and theory on IPV has been that it is about control and power. *IPV is axiomatically a form of power*—it *functions* as a form of influence. This is potentially quite different, however, from theorizing IPV as being *about* power. If IPV is about power, some presumption must be made that the *intent* or motivation of engaging in violence is to achieve some objective, outcome, or goal. Furthermore, to say that IPV is about power presumes that the instrumental objective is both a predominant proximal and a distal intention—a particularly difficult claim to either verify or falsify empirically.

When both perpetrators and victims are asked about the motivations underlying the violence they experience, the variety of accounts suggests a more complex landscape (Flynn & Graham, 2010; Ogle & Clements, 2007; Spitzberg, 2009, 2010a, 2010b). There are at least two broad typologies of motives. One views violence along an instrumental and expressive dimension (Hamel, Desmarais, & Nicholls, 2007; McEllistrem, 2004; Tweed & Dutton, 1998). *Instrumental* motives represent the more traditional power and control objective, in which a particular, discrete goal is being pursued by the violence, whether proximal (e.g., get the person to shut up) or distal (e.g., to redress a perceived imbalance of power in the relationship). *Expressive* motives reflect internal cognitive and/or affective states (e.g., anger, jealousy, rage, frustration, aggravation) or even personality disorders or traits that reinforce such states. The reasons attributed to incidents of aggression reflect causes that span these motives (e.g., someone being obnoxious or annoying, insulting someone, picking on or bothering someone, defending someone, feeling embarrassed or put down, jealousy; Bair-Merritt et al., 2010; K. Graham & Wells, 2001). As an example, a person who experiences jealousy and resulting rage may engage in IPV as an *expression* of both these feelings and as an attempt to bring a partner into some form of relational compliance.

To imply that IPV is only about control is to significantly devalue the role of expressive motives in the relational dynamics of aggression. For example, using a measure of attributed motives for IPV, Walley-Jean and Swan (2009) found four factors of motives among African American women's perceptions of IPV: (1) expression of negative emotions (e.g., jealousy, displaced anger, control, etc.), (2) aggression as response (e.g., retaliation, to protect self, punishment, etc.), (3) communication (e.g., show anger, inability to express self verbally, etc.), and (4) expression of positive emotions (e.g., to get attention, to express positive emotions, sexual arousal, to prove love). In this set of motives, control is a relatively minor and uninformative account for the variety of expressive motives.

In an extensive review of research on the explanations of IPV, Flynn and Graham (2010) identify three levels of attributed cause or motive: (1) distal background or personal attributes of either the perpetrator or victim (e.g., personality, adverse

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childhood experiences, etc.), (2) proximal/contextual (e.g., stress, relational dissatisfaction, alcohol or drug abuse, etc.), and (3) proximal/interactional (e.g., provocative partner actions, transgressions, etc.). It seems reasonable to further cross-categorize these levels into *individual*-and *relational-/social*-based causes (see Table 7.1). Extensive reviews of the contextual and interactional features of IPV (Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005; Winstok, 2007) have found evidence for several factors rooted in the situation (e.g., control, jealousy, self-defense, identity threats, communication and argumentativeness, escalatory conflicts, spatial factors, weapon use, alcohol and drug use, and the roles of third parties).

In addition to the diversity of motives attributed to IPV, the tendency to reduce it to power suffers from other conceptual and empirical problems. For example, when traits concerned with power motivation or needs are correlated with the use of IPV, they tend to show small to moderate correlations (see Spitzberg, 2009, 2010b). Research also shows that powerlessness is not a significant predictor of victim, perpetration, or mutual IPV status, and it only marginally discriminates between males and females in their use or experience of IPV (Caetano et al., 2008).

Table 7.1 A Taxonomy of Intimate Partner Violence Motives or Attributed Cause

	Distal ← → *Proximal*		
	Background	*Contextual*	*Immediate*
Individual	For example, • Personality • Past experience? • Attitudes/beliefs/values (e.g., need for control) • Mental disorder • Brain injury • Genetic predispositions?	For example, • Stress • Economic problems • Health problems • Alcohol/drug abuse?	For example, • Emotional or physical state • Episode-based intoxication • Episode-based anger or frustration
Social/relational	For example, • Adverse family-of-origin experiences • Upbringing • Attachment disorder • Dysfunctional relational patterns	For example, • Social isolation • Peer influences reinforcing violence or victimization? • Conflict intensification or patterned negative affect reciprocity	For example, • Relational transgression (e.g., infidelity) • Demand–withdraw conflict • Jealousy • Relational anger/rage

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Narcissistic exploitativeness and entitlement do not appear strongly related to perpetration of IPV (Ryan, Weikel, & Sprechini, 2008). In a contrasting interpretation, based on data from college students in 32 countries, the symmetry in use of IPV between males and females led Straus (2008) to conclude that dominance is related to violence, but equally so for males and females. Even assuming that IPV is about power, this glosses whether it is used to achieve, maintain, or redress relative power (dis)advantage. If IPV is employed because of a *lack* of relational power, then it tends to cast it in a different interpretive light than if it is used to *maintain* dominance in a relationship (Spitzberg, 2010a). Thus, rather than claiming that IPV is about power, it becomes far more useful to consider whether or not certain types of IPV or perpetrators are more exclusively motivated by power (M. P. Johnson, 2011).

One speculation that may resolve some of these quandaries is that developed societies may be achieving greater gender egalitarianism, which would suggest that the less developed the culture or society, the more likely the IPV will reveal sex differences that coincide with traditional gender-based status differences (Straus, 2004, 2008, 2011). This development hypothesis presupposes a connection between a host of factors (see, e.g., Twenge, 2009), including socioeconomic causes of IPV. The existing evidence does not yet permit a full test of such a hypothesis, but the existing research suggests some limited basis for support.

Processes

Among the most difficult factors to tease apart in accounting for IPV is the interactional process in which IPV is embedded. IPV is a form of communication and interaction, but it is seldom, if ever, the entirety of that interaction. Several general patterns of IPV seem clear from the research.

First, *IPV is almost always embedded in a larger interactional context of conflict and psychological abuse*. Most arguments do not result in violence (Sorenson, Upchurch, & Shen, 1996), but violence rarely occurs without argument. IPV rarely occurs "out of the blue," and instead almost always emerges from relational conflicts (Feldman & Ridley, 2000; Katz, Carino, & Hilton, 2002; Medeiros & Straus, 2006). Research indicates a significant correlation between IPV and marital discord (i.e., dissatisfaction, $r = .27$; Stith, Green, Smith, & Ward, 2008) and conflict management skills (Rogge & Bradbury, 1999), suggesting the interconnections between violence and conflict processes. Second, *IPV generally co-occurs with CA*. IPV victimization is strongly associated (but far from isomorphic) with expressed anger, hostility, negative affect, and CA and use of other controlling tactics (i.e., psychological abuse, attempts at coercion and control, maltreatment, etc.), by both self and partner (Anderson, 2008; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2008; Ridley & Feldman, 2003; Rogge & Bradbury, 1999; Walton-Moss, Manganello, Frye, & Campbell, 2005). In a meta-analysis of risk factors associated with IPV, the strongest predictor of male use of IPV was the use of emotional/verbal abuse ($r = .49$; Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward, & Tritt, 2004). Third, *both IPV and CA are highly reciprocal* (Luthra & Gidycz, 2006; Mulford & Giordano, 2008). High percentages of people who report experiencing IPV also report perpetrating it (Caetano, Ramisetty-Mikler, & Field, 2005). Próspero and Kim (2009) found strong correlations between victimization and perpetration across Asian, African American, Latina, and White couples and across both IPV (r's ranging from .46 to .94) and forms of CA (r's ranging from .57 to .91). Follingstad and Edmundson (2010) found a correlation of .52 between reports of overall prevalence of having received and perpetrated any of 42 abusive behaviors. It is not uncommon for

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studies to find reciprocity of communicative and physical aggression among 63% to 93% of couples (Straus, 2008). A meta-analysis of risk factors for IPV found that the strongest correlate of female victimization (r = .41) was the female's use of violence toward her male partner (Stith et al., 2004). In short, the two best predictors of using IPV are likely to be whether or not a partner has used CA or IPV (e.g., Herrera, Wiersma, & Cleveland, 2008).

Fourth, *IPV is more likely episodic than chronic*. Despite decades of efforts to ingrain the image of the "batterer" as the prototype of IPV, *most* IPV is more epiphenomenal and episodic across the course of a relationship. The average relationship experiencing violence has experienced it four to seven times (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). An analysis of police reports of IPV found a median time of 61 days between victimizations for those women who had experienced repeat victimization (Mele, 2009). The rate of IPV experience tends to decrease as a relationship continues (Salari & Baldwin, 2002; Winstok, 2006). A large-scale longitudinal (6-year) study of adolescents who had been in two intimate relationships found that (a) women were more likely than men to perpetrate IPV in both relationships, (b) about 30% of perpetrators in the first relationship perpetrated IPV in their second relationship, and therefore (c) perpetration in the first relationship was significantly associated (odds ratio = 2.9) with perpetration in the second relationship, but (d) there was no sex difference in the proportional rate of recidivism (Whitaker, Le, & Niolon, 2010). Longitudinal studies find that some relationships do experience ongoing and chronic episodes of violence, but between half and two thirds of relationships reporting violence at one time report no subsequent violence in the following 1 to 2 years (Caetano et al., 2005; Riger, Staggs, & Schewe, 2004).

Fifth, *most IPV is relatively mild*. Although any injury resulting from IPV is generally one injury too many, given the more competent discursive alternatives to conflict management available, the serious injuries resulting from IPV tend to occur at prevalence rates well less than 10% among those experiencing IPV (Catalano, 2007; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). There are minor injuries (e.g., bruises, scratches, soreness, etc.) resulting from IPV for as many as 40% of women and 20% of men experiencing IPV (Tjaden & Thoenness, 2000). In a large-scale study (N = 604,614) of victimizations reported to police (Warner, 2010), intimate partner victimizations were significantly more likely than other types of contexts to result in injury, and females were significantly more likely to be injured in an intimate partner context, but the base prevalence rates of major injury (males ≅ 6%; females ≅ 2%) were low relative to minor injury rates (males ≅ 39%; females ≅ 41%).

The prospect of considering injuries raises one of the more important dialectics involved in considering IPV. On the one hand, if only 1% to 10% of all IPV relationships involve injury, it is nevertheless an enormous amount of suffering. Some of the more severe examples of such injury are horrific in their effects. At the same time, it is important to qualify such exemplars with at least two considerations. First, the research indicates that CA and psychological abuse cause more enduring deleterious effects on victims' quality of life—most people learn to cope with cuts and bruises that eventually heal, but there are no easy first aid guidelines for psychological wounds (Dailey et al., 2012). Furthermore, psychological wounds are less visible and tangible and, consequently, easier to discount in their impact. Second, it is important to avoid the part–whole fallacy of using the exemplars of severe brutality to characterize the entire class of actions and processes entailed by the concept of IPV.

One of the approaches to account for such potential errors has been the development of typologies of IPV. These typologies attempt to differentiate forms of abuser or abusive

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relationships in an attempt to better adapt theories, policies, and interventions. Numerous typologies have been proffered (e.g., Babcock, Green, Webb, & Graham, 2004; Bender & Roberts, 2007; Carlson & Jones, 2010; Hamberger, 2009; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Parrott & Giancola, 2007). Two of the most extensively investigated typologies are those developed by Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Herron, Rehman, and Stuart (2000) and M. P. Johnson (1995, 2006, 2010).

The Holtzworth-Munroe typology focuses on male perpetrators ("batterers"), a focus justified in part by evidence that women's use of violence is more dependent on a male partner's use of violence than men's use of violence depending on a female partner's use of violence (Herrera et al., 2008). The typology is based on three dimensions: (1) generality (i.e., extent to which violence is familial-only or extrafamilial), (2) underlying personality disorder (i.e., extent of dysphoric/borderline disorder), and (3) severity (i.e., extent of violent and antisocial aggression). These dimensions are used to identify three types of male batterers: family-only, dysphoric/borderline, and generally violent/antisocial. The family-only batterer is generally lower or more moderate in various attachment and social skill deficits, whereas dysphoric/borderline and generally violent types tend to manifest greater deficits in such social resources. Family-only batterers are also lower than the other types in hostility and attitudes supportive of violence. Research has been generally supportive (Delsol, Margolin, & John, 2003; Dixon & Browne, 2003; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000; R. Johnson et al., 2006), although the typology's asymmetrical focus on males and the lack of more rigorous psychometric standards in classification continue to suggest caution in its application (Dixon & Browne, 2003; Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004).

M. P. Johnson (1995) initially recommended the terms *patriarchal terrorism* and *common couple violence* to reflect differences along several dimensions (e.g., symmetry of violence initiation and perpetration, frequency of IPV, escalation over the course of a relationship, likelihood of injury). The labels have been revised to *intimate terrorism* and *situational couple violence*, which are less gender restrictive (e.g., Leone, Johnson, & Cohan, 2007), and other types have been proposed to provide greater comprehensive inclusion (i.e., *violent resistance, mutual violent control*; M. P. Johnson, 2006, 2011). In general, intimate terrorists are anticipated to use IPV with more controlling or domineering purpose (Anderson, 2008; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2008). Johnson and others (e.g., Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2003) estimated that approximately a quarter to a third of IPV couples they studied qualify as intimate terrorists. There is evidence supporting this distinction (e.g., Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2003; M. P. Johnson, 1995; K. H. Rosen, Stith, Few, Daly, & Tritt, 2005), whereas other studies have identified limits of the typology in differentiating IPV in cohabiting from married relationships (Brownridge, 2010), shelter residents, students, and prisoner samples (Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2008), and males from females (Ross & Babcock, 2009; Straus, 2011), and at least one study indicates that the key variables of the typology may not add predictive value beyond simple severity measures of IPV (Anderson, 2008).

The most conservative conclusion is that there exists among all types of IPV a subset of more severe, controlling, and disordered uses of aggression, and within this subset of more severe cases, the evidence indicates that females are at greater risk of victimization and trauma than the males as a result of the IPV (however, see Pimlott-Kubiak & Cortina, 2003; Straus, 2011). The perpetrators of violence in these relationships are likely to be more generally violent, more hostile, more controlling, and more prone to negative emotional reactivity, face threat, and conflict escalation, compared

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with the more common mutual conflict–based forms of IPV. It seems reasonable to conjecture that these more domineering persons are also the perpetrators who are more likely to come to the attention of law enforcement and more likely to show up in forensic and clinical samples. It is not obvious, yet, whether this subset of relationships constitutes a small or a large minority of all cases of IPV. If it is closer to a quarter to a third of all IPV relationships, it is a significant theoretical challenge, and insight, into the process of IPV. If, instead, such severe perpetrators or relationships constitute a relatively small minority of all IPV cases (D. G. Dutton & Nicholls, 2005; Straus, 2008), then IPV writ large becomes a more normal contextual and relational process to be understood through theories and models of affect and conflict (Spitzberg, 2009, 2010a), the more severe cases are more appropriate for clinical and forensic theories and interventions.

A broad range of relational and contextual factors appear to influence the occurrence of IPV (Heron, 2009; Mitchell & Vanya, 2009; Stith et al., 2004; Wilkinson & Hamerschlag, 2005) across cultures (WHO/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2010). Many models, however, propose that IPV is far more a product of proximal relational factors than distal individual factors (Dailey et al., 2012; Spitzberg, 2009, 2010b; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2009). There is extensive evidence that a cascade of conflict-based relational processes is the predominant pathway to IPV. The vast majority of IPV occurs in the context of conflict (Feldman & Ridley, 2000; Katz et al., 2002), conversational competition (Sabourin, 1995), and divergent perceptions (Simpson & Christensen, 2005). In the context of an already affectively charged interaction episode, both the instigating issue of the conflict and subsequent actions within the conflict are likely to be interpreted as threats to face and identity. These threats tend to be responded to with defensively oriented account strategies (e.g., justification rather than excuse or concession and apology), which leads to divergent and defensive attributions regarding the responsibility and fault of the partner (Stamp & Sabourin, 1995; Taylor & Sorenson, 2005). This defensiveness increases the risk of perceptual divergence and misunderstanding (Sillars, Leonard, Roberts, & Dun, 2002), thereby polarizing and escalating the conflict and increasing the likelihood of experiencing and expressing more extreme negative emotions (e.g., anger, rage; Holtzworth-Munroe & Smutzler, 1996; Winstok, 2006) that have the potential to disinhibit regulatory control of violent behavior (Finkel, DeWall, Slotter, Oaten, & Foshee, 2009).

Such conflict models of IPV are often discounted because of the implicit diffusion of responsibility implied for the violence and its effects. To the extent that IPV produces deleterious effects on a "victim" more so than its "perpetrator," the issue of responsibility seems reasonable, even if there are relatively high levels of reciprocity and symmetry in IPV initiation and use. The study of violence has always understood the importance of considering injuries, but research and theory over recent decades has vastly expanded the scope of effects that can be linked to IPV.

Effects

The use of the term *effects* is problematic, given the challenges of demonstrating cause and effect linkages. For example, studies of child sexual abuse find that when dysfunctions in the child's family of origin are controlled for, the experience of child sexual abuse has no significant overall effect on the adult child's psychological adjustment (Rind & Tromovitch, 1997; Rind, Tromovitch, & Bauserman, 1998; Ulrich, Randolph, & Acheson, 2005–2006). Thus, even though the experience of child sexual abuse has a modest zero-order effect on adult adjustment, this effect disappears when

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other potential traumatizing or dysfunctional factors in the person's background are controlled. The relationships between IPV and both depression symptoms and health status are similarly inflated when other distal risk factors are controlled for, although a significant association still remains (Fletcher, 2010; Stith et al., 2004).

The precise identification of cause–effect relationships for IPV is also difficult, given that the IPV often appears to function in ambivalent ways (Spitzberg, 2009, 2010a). For example, Wells and Graham (2003) found that participants rated their aggressive episodes such that 4% had a "positive impact," 31% had "no effect," 20% were "mildly negative," 28% were "moderately negative," and about 17% were "severely negative." Up to a fifth to a third of relationships experiencing episodes of IPV report their relationships as very satisfying or excellent (Tonizzo, Howells, Day, Reidpath, & Froyland, 2000; Williams & Frieze, 2005), and that they intend to continue their relationship (M. A. Dutton, Kaltman, Goodman, Weinfurt, & Vankos, 2005). One of the problems of much of the effects research is that it so presumptively assumes negative effects that positive effects, such as resilience, are not even operationalized, and therefore, the ambivalence of IPV cannot be registered in the empirical literature.

In an attempt to overcome such biases, Cupach and Spitzberg (2004; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007) inductively derived a typology of effects from the stalking literature, based on victims reports of effects across dozens of studies. Their typology is refined and displayed in Figure 7.1. The vertical represents the *phenomenological domain* of the effect, the horizontal represents the *locus* in which such effects are experienced, and the depth

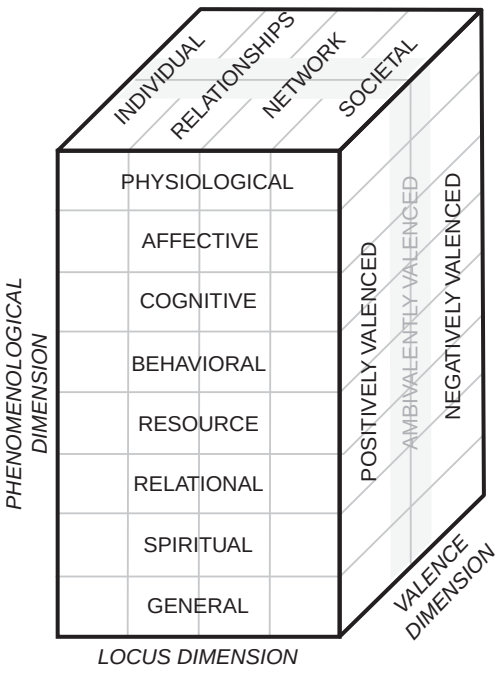

Figure 7.1 A Typology of Intimate Partner Violence Effects

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dimension represents the experienced *valence* of the effect. Research has examined some aspect of all of the cells of this typology, but seldom are all three dimensions reflected in any given study.

Physiological effects represent impacts to basic biological functions such as sleeping, eating, breathing, cardiac, and circulatory processes. Research generally indicates a significant increased risk of a variety of adverse health effects and diseases (Black & Breiding, 2008), from sleep disorders (Lerner & Kennedy, 2000), brain injury (Wilson, 2009), and overall number of health symptoms (Black & Breiding, 2008; Bonomi et al., 2006; Taft, Vogt, Mechanic, & Resick, 2007). Of course, the ultimate physiological effect is murder, which does occur in the context of, or as a consequence of, IPV (Campbell et al., 2003; Dobash, Dobash, & Cavanagh, 2009; Glass, Koziol-McLain, Campbell, & Block, 2004; McFarlane, Campbell, Sharps, & Watson, 2002).

Affective effects result from changes to emotional experiences, ranging from anxiety and anger to happiness. Extensive research supports a relationship between IPV victimization and higher rates of anxiety disorders, phobias, and depression (Golding, 1999; Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2008), as well as sadness (Boney-McCoy & Finkelhor, 1995), grief (Campbell, 1989), anger/irritability (Taft et al., 2007), and dissatisfaction in relationship (Rhatigan & Street, 2005; L. N. Rosen, Parmley, Knudson, & Fancher, 2002). *Cognitive* effects include changes to forms of concentration and basic perceptions (Straight, Harper, & Arias, 2003), self-esteem (Zlotnick et al., 2006), distraction, suicide ideation (Coker et al., 2000; Golding, 1999), and other volitional processes.

Behavioral effects are changes in activity routines, skills, or functional abilities (Zlotnick et al., 2006), including sexual risk taking (Coker et al., 2000), cigarette smoking (Bonomi et al., 2006), and substance use and abuse (Coker et al., 2000; Golding, 1999). *Resource* effects reflect influences on investments, liquidity, and economic and career security (Riger et al., 2004). *Relational* effects gauge a person's sense, satisfaction, and orientation to personal relationships, including diminished relational and social functioning and stability (Bonomi et al., 2006; Lerner & Kennedy, 2000). *Spiritual* effects represent aspects of faith, trust, and belief systems associated with higher powers, authorities, and institutions (Watlington & Murphy, 2006).

Some research on *general* effects examines many of these as cumulative or additive, reflected in effects such as post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) or influences on general quality of life (M. A. Dutton et al., 2005; Mechanic et al., 2008; Taft et al., 2007) and life satisfaction (Zlotnick et al., 2006). The breadth of traumatic injuries that can result from IPV is extensive (e.g., Sheridan, Nash, Poulos, Fauerbach, & Watt, 2009; Wilson, Dodson, & Halpern, 2009). In a meta-analysis of forms of psychological distress associated with IPV, Weaver and Clum (1995) summarized effects across numerous deleterious factors, including adjustment (r = .17), PTSD (r = .20), stress (r = .24), anxiety (r = .19), phobia/fear (r = .17), borderline personality disorder (r = .63), conduct disorder (r = .16), depression (r = .21), dissociative disorder (r = .39), drug abuse (r = .24), externalizing (r = .28), internalizing (r = .27), social incompetence (r = .45), somatization (r = .10), and suicidal ideation (r = .16). Across all such symptoms of psychological distress, the mean effect was small but significant (r = .24).

These effects can affect an individual and his or her relationships with others. In addition, the members of the victim's social network can experience their own individual effects. For example, as many as 15.5 million U.S. children are estimated to live in households

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in which IPV has occurred (McDonald, Jouriles, Ramisetty-Mikler, Caetano, & Green, 2006). Finally, the effects of IPV can affect the larger institutions (e.g., workplaces and organizations; see, e.g., Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly, 2007; Swanberg, Macke, & Logan, 2006) and society (e.g., costs of law enforcement, medical care, counseling services, popular cultural ideologies, etc.). Comparative economic analyses can estimate the relative costs of IPV and the programs and services associated with it (Corso, 2009; Max, Rice, Finkelstein, Bardwell, & Leadbetter, 2004). Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that in the United States alone, intimate violence costs $5.8 billion in associated societal costs (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2003). The depth dimension formally recognizes that IPV has the potential to influence any of these domains in positive or negative ways. To date, the research clearly indicates that the net effect of IPV tends strongly toward the negative end of the valuation continuum, but research on resilience and unique effects of IPV is beginning to yield important insights into the potential for adverse experiences to produce positive outcomes (e.g., Bogar & Hulse-Killacky, 2006; Draucker, 2003; McMillen, Zuravin, & Rideout, 1995; Seery, Holman, & Silver, 2010; Sheikh & Marotta, 2005). Particular factors are likely to moderate which victims achieve resilience and which victims do not, including sense of self-efficacy and future-oriented purpose, problem-solving skills, coping skills, social support, and healthy family background (Campbell, Sharps, & Parsons, 2009).

Research increasingly indicates that CA has more deleterious and long-lasting psychological effects than IPV does (e.g., Lawrence, Yoon, Langer, & Ro, 2009; L. N. Rosen et al., 2002; Watlington & Murphy, 2006). Some research is beginning to show that CA is associated with decrements in health, psychological well-being, and relationship quality, even when controlling for the effects of physical violence victimization (Baldry, 2003; Coker et al., 2000; Mechanic et al., 2008; Murty et al., 2003; L. N. Rosen et al., 2002; Straight et al., 2003; Street & Arias, 2001; Taft et al., 2007). It seems plausible to conjecture that people tend to know that physical wounds usually heal, but there may be little obvious way of healing psychological wounds (Dailey et al., 2012). There are studies that continue to identify stronger overall effects of IPV relative to CA (e.g., Babcock, Roseman, Green, & Ross, 2008; Duran et al., 2009), suggesting that, at least, these are correlated yet distinct classes of behavior and need to be understood as playing different roles in the cause of effects.

Coping

Given that most IPV emerges out of relational conflict, it stands to reason that more competent management of ordinary conflicts may have the potential for preventing such violence or attenuating the negative effects of such violence when it does occur. Indeed, much of the research on IPV examines conflict management processes in the hope of identifying the tactical moves, physiological responses, and sequential reactions that influence the likelihood of such violence or differentiate violent from nonviolent couples (e.g., Andrews, Foster, Capaldi, & Hops, 2000; Babcock, Jacobson, Gottman, & Yerington, 2000; Babcock, Waltz, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1993; Feldman & Ridley, 2000; Ridley & Feldman, 2003; Rogge & Bradbury, 1999; Ronan, Dreer, Dollard, & Ronan, 2004; Rudd, Burant, & Beatty, 1994). Given that IPV often erupts out of conflict that is initiated by perceived transgressions, it follows that the competent management of account processes

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(Spitzberg, 2010b) and ability to achieve forgiveness (Tsang & Stanford, 2007) may facilitate the avoidance of future IPV. In one study, about half of IPV victims believed that they could predict when IPV was about to occur in their relationships, about half believed there was nothing they could do to prevent it, 30% believed they were responsible for the IPV, and 60% used coping strategies when they believed that the IPV was preventable (Vatnar & Bjørkly, 2008; see also Winstok, 2006). In such a varied interpretive context, it is not surprising that large proportions of IPV victims intend to continue their relationship with their partner (M. A. Dutton et al., 2005). As the presumptions of the past and the newer axioms of recent theory and research emerge, the options and recommendations for managing IPV are likely to evolve rapidly.

The role of communication competence and skills in the management of conflict (e.g., Spitzberg, Canary, & Cupach, 1994) and IPV have been extensively studied (Rogge & Bradbury, 1999; Ronan et al., 2004; Sillars et al., 2002). Research generally indicates that problem-solving skills, anger management skills, argumentativeness, and tendencies to engage in more positive affectionate or collaborative behaviors and fewer negative affective behaviors and negative affective reciprocity are important mediators of whether IPV occurs, and if it does occur (e.g., Ridley & Feldman, 2003), the extent of its deleterious effects on the individual and the relationship (e.g., Hellmuth & McNulty, 2008). Other research indicates that generic communication skills to manage neutral or low-level conflict situations are less important than skills required to manage the specific features of IPV encounters, such as high-affect or -anger and high-conflict encounters (Rogge & Bradbury 1999; Ronan et al., 2004). Given the role of attributional divergence in conflict escalations, learning to employ remedial strategies in the face of threat and transgression may facilitate forgiveness (Morse & Metts, 2011), and thereby the development of relational contexts at less risk of IPV. One of the most important implications of conflict cascade models of IPV is that they suggest several potential points of interactant intervention prior to the eruption of violence (Spitzberg, 2010b). For example, Horwitz, Santiago, Pearson, and LaRussa-Trott (2009) found that IPV tends to occur as an end product of three stages: (1) first signs of conflict (i.e., negative, accusatory, disconfirming statements), (2) stirring the pot (i.e., escalation and increasing aggravation), and (3) point of no return (i.e., externally focused reactivity). The participants tended to recognize the importance of better communication and acceptance of potential fault in resolving or avoiding such IPV episodes.

Speculation outweighs evidence regarding the efficacy of specific interventions to prevent, manage, and cope with IPV (Gondolf, 2011; Wathen & MacMillen, 2003). Given different types of motives, types of violent relationships, and mediating and moderating variables, the challenge of identifying generalizable paths to more productive relationships is daunting. From the review of scientific evidence regarding interventions targeting women victims of IPV, it appears that relatively little evidence supports the value of shelter stays per se, but those who stay in shelters and receive advocacy and counseling services are likely to experience reduced exposure to IPV afterward (Wathen & MacMillan, 2003). Other reviews indicate that 6-month violence recidivism is approximately 30% regardless of intervention approach (Stover, Meadows, & Kaufman, 2009). Comprehensive approaches, in which broad-scale public education is combined with systematic screening and surveillance programs for identifying risk factors and signs of abuse, as well as wider availability and dissemination of promising intervention programs, seem most likely to succeed

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(Howe & Alpert, 2009), especially if many of these educational and intervention efforts are integrated into schools as primary prevention efforts (Whitaker, Hall, & Coker, 2009), and health care settings as primary diagnosis and response efforts (McCaw & Kotz, 2009).

Aggressively Pursuing the Topic of Aggression

Despite numerous ongoing debates about everything from grounding conceptual paradigms to specific approaches to measurement (Winstok, 2011), the scholarly pursuit of IPV has made great strides compared with the state of knowledge only a few decades ago. Furthermore, IPV has become a major social policy issue, ensconced in both the law and in public consciousness. There are, nevertheless, a broad array of perplexing issues that continue to beckon serious attention. Some of these issues, such as the role of sex and gender in understanding IPV, are fundamental and relatively intractable in the short term (e.g., Ehrensaft, 2008). In the hope of identifying a few more tractable tributaries for navigating future research priorities, three specific prospects are suggested that may yield short-term insights.

First, in light of the variegated typology of effects identified here, two relatively straightforward directions seem apparent: (1) measurement development and validation and (2) inclusion of expanded ambivalent measures of effects. There are already efforts underway to formulate measures of resilience (e.g., Hatcher & Rogers, 2009) and the "unique" or positive outcomes of IPV (e.g., Cobb, Tedeschi, Calhoun, & Cann 2006). Such efforts to develop a standardized and relatively comprehensive and psychometrically valid measure of ambivalent outcomes need to be pursued further. Measures exist of most of the currently envisioned potential outcomes, and traditional psychometric approaches to measurement development and validation should proceed with relatively little complication. Further typological development may identify additional relevant dimensions such as chronicity or time, elaborated contextual outcomes such as occupational or reproductive/fertility effects, and second-order social network effects. The availability of such a measure would then permit scholars to establish a standard practice of including such measures in studies as routinely as the ubiquitous CTS is currently used. Including such a measure would begin providing a substantial opportunity to examine the variables differentially associated with negatively and positively valenced outcomes, which would be essential to developing a theory of outcome ambivalence.

A second direction for future research will involve more variegated indirect measures of conflict processes in relation to IPV. Ethical constraints will continue to limit the ability to directly observe violence-related conflict. Current research tends to either study the conflict processes of known groups (e.g., comparing the laboratory-based table talk–induced conflicts of couples known to have experienced violence vs. couples who have not experienced IPV) or use existing survey measures of conflict. As important as both these approaches are, existing measures of conflict can be differentiated in a variety of ways to provide insight into the conflict processes underlying IPV. For example, most approaches to conflict measurement sum tactics in the way the CTS does to assess strategy or style clusters (Cook & Goodman, 2006). More research needs to redirect conflict measures to significant episodes of IPV (e.g., the most recent moderate to severe episode), thereby providing episode-based assessment rather than dispositional assessment of conflict. Furthermore, measures of conflict can begin addressing issues of attribution, defensiveness of conflict reactions, differences in punctuating conflict episodes, and perceived markers of escalation in affect

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and issue expansion (e.g., J. E. Graham et al., 2009; Marshall, Jones, & Feinberg 2011). Such processes hold the potential to provide a much more graduated image of conflict escalation, thereby providing a model with more opportunities for redirecting the course of conflict and subsequent violence.

Third, the roles of physiology and affect must be centrally located in future research and theory related to IPV. With a few significant notable exceptions (e.g., Babcock, Green, Webb, & Yerington 2005), conflict is still ideologically ensconced in models that presuppose cultural and cognitive supremacy. If violence is often a product of accumulated or episodic escalation of affect, then several questions begin to rise to the forefront. To what extent is violence a product of biological dispositions that reflect a lack of executive control processes or regulation? To what extent is aggression a heritable disposition (e.g., Beatty, Heisel, Hall, Levine, & La France 2002; Yeh, Coccaro, & Jacobson 2010)? To what extent do partners "push one another's emotional buttons" in their conflicts (Babcock et al., 2005; cf. Madhyastha, Hamaker, & Gottman 2011)? The body, in both its positive and negative affect regulation processes (Driver & Gottman, 2004), must be returned to a central role in the theory of IPV alongside cognitive processes and behavioral tactics.

Conflict is a vexing human experience—it is considered vital, yet is almost universally disdained. And of all the aspects of conflict, violence is perhaps the most vexing. IPV is surprisingly normal and normative, and yet generally proscribed by law and societal policy. It is traumatizing, and yet can stimulate resilience. There are strong tendencies to attribute responsibility to individuals, and yet research increasingly shows most IPV to be interactionally embedded and entangled. The best management of IPV is likely to be a product of more competent management of the relationship in which it emerges, and the conflict processes that tend to elicit such aggressive reactions.

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8

Family Conflict Communication

Ascan Koerner

Family conflict communication is of great importance to academics, practitioners, laypeople, and everyone who has a family. Family relationships are among the most important, most intimate, and most enduring interpersonal relationships that people have in their lives. Because most persons' overall life experience and satisfaction depends to a significant extent on the quality of their interpersonal relationships, the quality of family relationships has great impact on the overall quality of life for most people (Diener & Diener, 2009). Also, families are children's primary socialization agents (Noller, 1995). As a consequence, the quality of parent–child communication and the communication and relationship skills that children acquire, or fail to acquire, in their families of origin will affect the well-being of children (Steinberg, 2001) and the quality of their interpersonal relationships throughout their lifetime. Finally, unlike most other interpersonal relationships that are essentially voluntary and afford persons the choice of whether to continue or to end the relationship, family relationships are largely involuntary and family members often continue to communicate and interact with one another even when they are very dissatisfied with their relationships. This is particularly true for relationships between parents and children, which makes children especially vulnerable to harmful or abusive behaviors. Society therefore has a legitimate interest in learning about such behaviors and in protecting children from such negative influences.

Although all family communication is important, how families communicate during conflict is of particular relevance. In marriages, couples that manage interpersonal conflict well in their relationships report greater relationship satisfaction, more love and respect for their partners, and greater commitment to their partners (Gottman, 1991, 1994). Similar findings are reported for family conflict. Families that manage their conflicts well have more satisfied parents and children, and children perform better in school and in peer relationships (Sillars, Canary, & Tafoya, 2004). Thus, family conflict is an important determinant of relationship quality and quality of life of family members. In addition, the conflict communication behaviors acquired in families are among the most important behaviors learned

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that affect children's subsequent interpersonal relationships (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997, 2002c), further highlighting the importance of family conflict. Finally, behaviors that emotionally and physically harm family members are more likely to occur during family conflict than during any other time of family communication (Straus & Gelles, 1990).

Reflecting the breadth of the phenomenon, research on family conflict is not easily reviewed and summarized, in part, owing to inconsistent definitions and conceptualizations of family conflict communication. Nonetheless, in this chapter, I briefly discuss how family conflict has been defined and conceptualized and review some of the more consistent findings that broadly describe the phenomenon of family conflict communication and its outcomes. Then, I review some of the properties of family relationships that distinguish family conflict communication from other interpersonal conflict communication and discuss how future research might address these issues. Because another chapter in this handbook specifically addresses conflict in marital and similar adult romantic relationships (Caughlin, Vangelisti, & Mikucki-Enyart, this volume), the focus of this chapter will be primarily on parent–child conflict. The relative absence of marital conflict in this chapter, however, should in no way be interpreted to suggest that marital conflict does not matter to families.

Family Conflict

Defining Family Conflict

Even a cursory review of the literature on family conflict reveals that there is no universally agreed on definition for family conflict (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2006b). In the broadest sense, of course, family conflict is interpersonal conflict among family members and can be defined using the same psychological and behavioral terms that interpersonal scholars use while specifying the relational context of family. One such basic definition of conflict is simply a perceived incompatibility of goals between family members (Fincham, Bradbury, & Grych, 1990). In this exclusively psychological definition, conflict is an internal perception of individual goal blockage that requires neither a manifestation of observable behaviors nor that other family members are even aware of the perception of conflict. A second type of definition combines psychological and behavioral aspects of conflict. For example, Donohue and Kolt (1992) defined conflict "as a situation in which interdependent people *express* [italics added] (manifest or latent) differences in satisfying their individual needs and interests, and they experience interference from each other in accomplishing these goals" (p. 4).

Another frequently used way to further define family conflict has been to focus on the relational outcomes of conflict behaviors and to label them accordingly as either functional/constructive or as dysfunctional/destructive (Deutsch, 1973; Donohue & Kolt, 1992). Focusing on the relational outcomes of conflict is often motivated by the desire to identify and teach "good" conflict communication skills. Because of the inherent ambiguity of the meaning of conflict behavior, the ability to identify such universally good conflict behavior is naturally limited (Sillars & Canary, 2012). Nonetheless, research on constructive and destructive conflict communication has led to the identification of conflict communication skills that often do have positive relational outcomes and that allow families to improve the quality of their problem solving and other conflict communication and ultimately their interpersonal relationships (e.g., Christensen & Jacobson, 2000; Donohue & Kolt, 1992; Gottmann, 1994).

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In addition to the inherent ambiguity of conflict behavior, another important problem in identifying constructive versus destructive conflict behaviors is that behaviors can have multiple outcomes or can affect different family members differently. For example, accusing the partner of not taking one's emotions seriously might be constructive in that it clarifies important value differences that exist between partners, but it might simultaneously be destructive in that it convinces that partner that he or she is not really interested in responding to those emotions and to end the relationship. Furthermore, whether an outcome is positive or negative also depends on from whose perspective the judgment is made (McCoy, Cummings, & Davies, 2009). Locking a teenager into a room to prevent her from seeing a boyfriend could be considered effective from the parent's perspective, while from the child's perspective, the behavior would be considered less positively. Whereas it is relatively easy to make theoretical distinctions that employ fairly abstract concepts such as "interest versus needs centered" and "bolstering versus compromising interdependence" (Donohue & Kolt, 1992) when labeling conflict as either constructive or destructive, judging concrete behaviors using the same abstracts concepts is much more difficult.

A final way to distinguish between different types of conflict is one that is based on observable behaviors rather than more abstract qualities such as relational outcomes. For example, Cahn (1992) identified three types of conflict communication as "specific disagreements," "problem-solving discussions," and "unhappy/dissolving relationships." Similarly, Straus (1990) distinguished between *reasoning, verbal aggression*, and *violence* as types of conflict behaviors, and Adams and Laursen (2001) observed *coercive, constructive*, and *unresolved* conflict. Although much of this work is dedicated to demonstrate the qualitatively different outcomes associated with these conflict behaviors, these typologies are based on the behaviors themselves, not their outcomes.

Differentiating between reasoning, verbal aggression, and physical violence, which essentially groups behaviors into categories along an intensity dimension, is not the only way by which to distinguish between conflict communication behaviors. Sillars et al. (2004), in a recent review of family and marital conflict, found that the different types of conflict behavior identified by researchers can be generally classified as falling into four types that are based on two underlying dimensions. In their model, the first dimension distinguishes direct from indirect communication, whereas the second dimension distinguishes cooperative from competitive communication. The four resulting types are *negotiation* (direct and cooperative), which includes behaviors such as agreement, metacommunication, problem solving, and validating; *direct fighting* (direct and competitive), which includes behaviors such as blaming, coercive acts, confrontation, and disagreement; *nonconfrontation* (indirect and cooperative), which includes behaviors such as facilitation, irreverent remarks, resolving acts, and topic management; and *indirect fighting* (indirect and competitive), which includes behaviors such as denial, equivocation, and withdrawal. In a more recent review, Sillars and Canary (2012) used a similar system to classify conflict messages along the dimensions of directness (direct vs. indirect) and valence (positive vs. negative).

As this short review demonstrates, family conflict communication has been defined in numerous, not necessarily mutually exclusive ways. Each definition highlights specific aspects of conflict and family relationships while neglecting others. In my opinion, a good definition of family conflict from a communication perspective is that family conflict is

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an observable behavior that expresses family members' perceptions of goal incompatibility and/or goal blockage and its associated negative affect and that has high probability to affect the behavior and psychological well-being of family members.

Frequency and Intensity of Family Conflict Communication

Of all interpersonal relationships, for most persons, family relationships are the most conflicted relationships that they have (Shantz & Hobart, 1989), with conflict behavior more frequent in family relationships (including marital, parent–child, and sibling relationships) than in peer or work relationships (Sillars et al., 2004). Furthermore, family relationships are also the most physically violent interpersonal relationships most persons have (Straus, 1990). Despite significant changes in U.S. social norms that have made acts of severe violence (including kicking, punching, and hitting with objects such as belts or paddles) unacceptable or even illegal in spousal, parent–child, and sibling relationships, in 2008, 18% of children and adolescents in a nationally representative survey reported being exposed to physical violence in their homes, 10% reported that they saw a parent being hit by a partner, and 5% reported that their parent was physically assaulted by their partner (Hamby, Finkelhor, Turner, & Ormrod, 2011). In a similar survey, 36% of children and adolescents reported having been physically assaulted by a sibling (Finkelhor, Turner, & Hamby, 2005).

Changes in Frequency and Intensity Due to Child Age

A large proportion of the communication between parents and preadolescent children typically involves parents' attempts to regulate their children's behavior and children initially resisting these attempts, but ultimately complying with the demands of their parents (Laursen, 1993). That is, a large proportion of the parent–child communication that takes place in families with young children fits most definitions of conflict communication. However, because parental regulation of child behavior is such a normative and expected aspect of the parent–child relationship, neither parents nor children perceive their interactions or their relationships as particularly conflicted (Laursen, Coy, & Collins, 1998).

As children grow older and move from other regulation to self-regulation (Burleson, Delia, & Applegate, 1995), the frequency of parent–child conflict decreases. Simultaneously, parents' use of physical punishment decreases as children get older (Straus & Gelles, 1990), which indicates that the physical intensity of conflict also decreases. At the same time, however, family members report an increase in the *perceived* frequency and intensity of family conflict as children reach adolescence (Williams, Conger, & Blozis, 2007). This apparent contradiction can be explained by the changing nature of the parent–child relationship as the child reaches adolescence. Parental influence and guidance, and thus observable conflict behavior, is typical for parents' interaction with young children. Because it is also normative, however, it is not perceived as conflict by family members on the psychological level. In contrast, adolescence is a time of less frequent conflict behaviors. However, because it is also a time of identity formation and separation from the family for the adolescent, the conflict that occurs during adolescence is more salient to family members and is experienced more intensely emotionally (Laursen & Collins, 2004). In addition, adolescents are more assertive and aggressive than younger children during family conflict (Williams et al., 2007).

In relationships involving younger children, both parents and children understand

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the parents' role in the relationship as one that provides guidance and discipline. Both parents and children expect to have these conflicts with one another and see it as an integral and therefore not necessarily salient aspect of their relationship. As a consequence, both parents and children perceive their relationship to be relatively free of intense conflict, even though much of their communication is parents exerting influence over their children's behavior and could objectively be defined as conflict.

Adolescents, in contrast, tend to see themselves as much more autonomous and independent in their relationships with their parents (Noller, 1995) and increasingly come to resent the regulating behavior of their parents (Smetana, Yau, & Hanson, 1991). For them, resistance to parents often becomes an end in itself (Collins & Luebker, 1994), while parents try to maintain their influence on their children. Thus, the influence that parents exert on their adolescent children itself becomes the underlying relational issue that manifests itself in conflict about ostensibly other topics, making these conflicts more intense and both parents and adolescents more aware that they do experience conflict in their relationships (Laursen et al., 1998).

The relative salience of conflict in the parent–adolescent relationship was recognized by Noller (1995), who argued that for adolescents, family communication serves five functions, all of which are mainly achieved through conflict communication. Specifically, she argues that family communication functions (1) to allow adolescents to renegotiate roles, rules, and relationships; (2) to help them explore their identity; (3) to enhance adolescents' self-esteem; (4) to model and teach problem-solving behaviors; and (5) to enable adolescents' decision making. The three functions most obviously related to conflict communication are the renegotiation of roles, rules, and relationships; the modeling and teaching of problem-solving behaviors; and enabling of decision making. Almost by definition, these functions involve intrafamilial conflict communication. For example, it is hard to imagine that renegotiations of parent–adolescent relationships and the rules that accompany them can be accomplished without conflict. In fact, the renegotiation of roles explicitly involves a change in the power relationship from relative dependence to relative independence of the adolescents. Adolescents usually aim for greater independence, and the parents usually aim to maintain the status quo. Because both parents and children are heavily invested in their respective aims, these conflicts are not easily resolved and are often quite emotional. Similarly, for parents to teach and to model conflict behaviors and to teach decision-making skills requires them to engage in family conflict and decision making. There is an old adage that children learn more from how parents behave than from what parents say, and conflict communication is no exception.

Although ostensibly not about conflict, fulfilling the functions of helping adolescents explore their identities and to enhance their self-esteem also are related to family conflict. Exploring identities will almost invariably involve adolescents taking positions and espousing opinions and values that differentiate them from other family members and particularly their parents. According to Harris (1998), during adolescence, children orient themselves toward their peers for their social identities precisely because they allow them to distinguish themselves from their parents. The more different adolescents are from their parents, the clearer are their identities defined for their peers and the greater the social status afforded to them by their peers. As a consequence, the process of identity formation of adolescents often involves their rejection of core values held by parents, which parents

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cannot help but perceive to involve rejections of them as individuals, setting the stage for often intense conflicts.

Socialization of Conflict Communication Behaviors

Families socialize children to adopt particular conflict styles in their interpersonal relationships (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997, 2002c; Noller, 1995; Rinaldi & Howe, 2003). Children learn how to communicate during interpersonal conflict from how their families of origin communicate during their conflicts. They will employ similar communication styles not only in interactions within their families but also in relationships outside the family and in subsequent interpersonal relationships they have as adults as well (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002c; Palazzolo, Roberto, & Babin, 2010). Thus, family conflict communication affects all of the children's conflict communication in current and future relationships.

There is considerable empirical evidence suggesting that children have conflict styles that are very similar to that of their parents. This similarity is not only observed during intrafamily conflict but also during conflicts that children have with persons from outside the family and in the subsequent interpersonal relationships of adult children. For example, Montemayor and Hanson (1985) found that adolescents reported using similar conflict styles in relationships with their parents and in relationships with their siblings. Similarly, in a study of 163 families comparing the conflict styles of family members during dyadic conflict with other family members and that of adolescent children with their romantic partners, Reese-Weber and Bertle-Haring (1998) found that the conflict styles of parents and children were significantly correlated.

Distinguishing among the conflict styles of compromising, attacking, and avoiding, Reese-Weber and Bertle-Haring (1998) found that interparental conflict style was directly related to conflict styles of parents in dyadic conflict with their children. Specifically, results showed that interparental use of compromising was positively correlated with adults' and children's use of compromise and negatively correlated with their use of attack and avoidance for all intrafamily dyadic relationships. Use of attack and avoidance, on the other hand, were positively correlated with one another across all family dyads and negatively correlated with use of compromise. Furthermore, the results of the study also showed that interparental conflict styles were indirectly related to children's conflict style with siblings and their romantic partners. That is, these associations were mediated by parent–adolescent conflict styles. These findings suggest that parents use the same conflict styles in their relationships with one another and in relationships with their children, who in turn use similar conflict styles in their interpersonal relationships within and outside the family.

A study by Rinaldi and Howe (2003) also investigated similarities of conflict styles among family members. Results were similar to the Reese-Weber and Bertle-Haring (1998) study in that family members reported similar use of constructive and destructive conflict styles in all possible family dyads (parent–parent, parent–child, child–child). The researchers' interpretation of the data, however, was somewhat different. In addition to looking at reports of conflict behaviors, these authors also collected family members' perceptions of the conflict styles they employed in other family dyads and found that these perceptions are also highly correlated. From this, the authors concluded that rather than just learning conflict communication styles from one another on a behavioral level, family members also share their perceptions of family communication in general and family conflict in particular. Thus, it is not only specific conflict behaviors

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that children are socialized to in families but rather their entire perception of how families communicate with one another and the role that conflict plays in family life.

My own research (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997, 2002c; Koerner & Maki, 2004) on family conflict and its role in adult children's subsequent interpersonal relationship also supports the idea that conflict behaviors are not learned in isolation, but they are part of the larger socialization of family communication patterns (FCP) in general. Results from this research showed that the conflict behaviors adult children employ in their current romantic relationships depend on the FCP of their families of origin. Specifically, we found that mutually positive, mutually negative, and avoidant behaviors occur in similar frequency in current romantic relationships and families of origin. Along a similar vein, research by Palazzolo et al. (2010) showed strong correlations between reported parental verbal aggression and adult children's reports of intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization, respectively.

Another group of researchers also found that children not only learn conflict communication behaviors from their families of origin but that through conflict behaviors, they acquire beliefs and values that go beyond conflict and involve other aspects of relationships (Burleson et al., 1995). These scholars argue that how parents resolve conflicts with their children teaches them important lessons about other persons and how to relate to them. Specifically, Burleson et al. claim that, in general, parents use two different communication strategies to regulate children's behaviors: (1) a person-centered approach and (2) a position-centered approach. In the *person-centered* approach, parents employ regulating and comforting messages to their children that emphasize how other people are affected by the child's behavior. In particular, person-centered communication focuses on the needs, values, feelings, and psychology of others and how they are affected by the child's behavior. In contrast, the *position-centered* approach employs regulating and comforting messages that emphasize rules and norms that apply regardless of whether or how others are affected by the behavior. In other words, the person-centered approach encourages children to develop communication skills that enhance their ability to be empathetic and to take the other person's perspective on their own behavior. Ultimately, it leads children to develop complex and sophisticated mental representations of themselves, others, and their interpersonal relationships (Burleson et al., 1995; Young, 2009). In contrast, the position-centered approach encourages children to develop communication skills that enhance their ability to identify pertinent rules and norms, but that does not require them to be able to take the other person's perspective into consideration. Ultimately, such communication leads children to develop less complex and sophisticated and more rigid mental representations of themselves, others, and interpersonal relationships (Burleson et al., 1995; Young, 2009).

In sum, the available evidence clearly establishes a significant role of family conflict communication for the socialization of conflict behaviors of children in interpersonal relationships within and external to their families. This socialization, however, is not limited to conflict behavior but is part of a larger socialization process. The socialization of family conflict behaviors is part and parcel of a general socialization process accomplished by families that involves fundamental beliefs about family communication that are shared by family members and constitute family communication schemata (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002b, 2004).

Consequences of Family Conflict

Although family conflict undoubtedly affects all family members and the effects of

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marital conflict are well studied (see Caughlin, Vangelisti, & Mikucki-Enyart, this volume), the effects of parent–child and sibling conflict on parents are not well understood. Parents are usually considered to be responsible for managing family conflict communication and how they perform is assumed to have significant effect on their children. The reverse is seldom considered, probably because of a combination of the belief that parents are more influential on family communication than children with the belief that parents are not as affected by their relationships with their children as children are affected by their relationships with their parents. Because family conflict is regarded as inevitable, in this view, parents are expected to anticipate family conflict and to be able to handle its consequences constructively. The accuracy of this assumption is yet to be determined empirically. Systems theory would suggest that parents are affected by the conflict they have with their children, however.

The outcomes of family conflict for children, in contrast, are much better researched. Historically, children have been cast in the role of passive victims more than in the role of active participant in, or even instigators of, family conflict. This position is not without its problems, but as a result, at least there is a large body of knowledge about the correlates of family conflict and children outcomes. Generally speaking, to the extent to which families engage in conflict communication defined as destructive, hostile, or even violent, family conflict is associated with negative outcomes for children. In contrast, to the extent to which families engage in constructive conflict that is rational and focused on problem solving, family conflict is associated with positive outcomes for children, and in particular adolescents.

Family conflict has negative consequence for adolescents (Smetana et al., 1991), but younger children especially are affected by family conflict (Rhoades, 2008). Young children who are exposed to intense, destructive parental conflict experience fear, sadness, and anger (Cummings, Iannotti, & Zahn-Waxler, 1985) and feel less safe and less secure in the home and outside the family (Gordis, Margolin, & John, 2001). In addition to negative psychological outcomes, children of families that frequently engage in destructive conflict also experience problems in their peer and sibling relationships. For example, Jenkins (2000) reported that intense parental conflict is associated with children's greater aggression and anger in relationships with teachers and peers, and Noller (1995) reported a correlation between intense parental and sibling conflict. Finally, Campione-Barr and Smetana (2010) report that greater frequency and intensity of sibling conflict is associated with lower quality of sibling relationships.

The processes by which parental conflict causes these negative outcomes for children are not exactly known. One possible explanation is that most of the psychological effects and some of the social effects stem from the fact that important security needs that the children have in their relationships with their parents are unmet when parents have frequent conflict, and the negative psychological consequences are the result of these unmet needs (Lindsey, Caldera, & Tankersley, 2009). The social effects, by contrast, are the result of poor parental modeling of communication skills that leads children to behave poorly in their relationships outside the family. In other words, children can acquire poor conflict and other communication skills in their families and, as a consequence, have poorer relationships with others.

Similar causal processes are responsible for the positive outcomes children experience when exposed to constructive parental conflict communication. These children experience both psychological and social benefits from their parents' problem-solving skills. Children

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of parents who exhibit positive problem-solving behaviors report more favorable psychological outcomes (Cummings et al., 1985), are generally better adjusted (Tucker, McHale, & Crouter, 2003), and experience more successful and satisfying peer relationships (Jenkins, 2000). Because children experience safety and security in their relationships with parents, they are psychologically better adapted, have greater self-esteem, and perceive the world to be a more friendly and less threatening place. With regard to social outcomes, the conflict styles they learned from their parents help them manage their relationships with their peers more successfully.

Although the psychological and social benefits seem to be derived through different causal processes, in all likelihood, they are very much intertwined and reinforce one another. In particular, the psychological effects of children's relationships with their parents have long been supposed to be of paramount importance for all social relationships that children have. This means that children who are secure in their relationships with their parents are also more secure in their relationships with others, and children who feel unloved or even threatened in their relationship with their parents feel insecure in their relationships with others. A theoretical explanation of the effect of the parent–child relationship on children's other social relationships is provided by attachment theory (Bartholomew, 1990; Bowlby, 1973; Hazan & Shaver, 1987, 1994; Shaver & Hazan, 1988, 1994).

An alternative explanation to attachment theory is that of shared family communication schemata, which are disproportionably determined by parents (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002a). For example, Reiss (1981) has demonstrated that parents' perceptions of the world and their communication behavior have profound impact on how families, and in particular adolescents, perceive their social environment and their family's role in it. Specifically, he found that the extent to which families regard the world as a friendly as opposed to a hostile place and are open as opposed to closed to the outside world profoundly contributes to adolescents' mental health. Similarly, Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1994) and later Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002a) also conceptualized the family as sharing a perception of the world and the family within it in the form of family communication schemata. Family communication schemata, in turn, not only play a role in how family members communicate with one another but also how they solve problems, coordinate behaviors, and interact in their social relationships outside the family.

Although it is unclear at this point in time how, or even if, attachment styles and family communication schemata are related, it is probable that both simultaneously and independently mediate the relationship between family conflict and children's mental health and social competence. Attachment styles mediate the relationship between conflict and child adjustment, because when conflict undermines secure attachment of children to their parents, it leads children to develop mental models of self or others that diminish children's well-being and simultaneously their ability to relate well to others. Family communication schemata mediate the relationship between conflict and child adjustment because they affect the type of conflict behavior children are likely to employ in their relationships within and outside the family. To the extent that these behaviors are positive, they will lead to good interpersonal relationships. To the extent that these behaviors are negative, they will lead to poor interpersonal relationships.

The Relationship Between Family Conflict and Family Violence

One aspect of family conflict that is often overlooked is that of family violence. Although family conflict does not necessarily lead to

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family violence, the two are clearly related in that family violence is usually preceded by (nonviolent) conflict. In families that experience violence, the role of conflict in family violence is often that of a necessary but not sufficient condition, in so far that without conflict, there would be no family violence. In these families, physical violence is the continuation of interpersonal conflict by different means. Not all family violence, however, is necessarily preceded by conflict. Some forms of violence, such as consistent psychological, physical, or sexual abuse are a function of the predatory personality of a family member and/or the abusive nature of a family relationship and are more a cause of conflict than a consequence of it. Because this type of violence is qualitatively different from violence that occurs in the context of family conflict, it will not be further considered in the present discussion.

One way to formalize the relationship between nonviolent and violent family conflict is to conceptualize family conflict in general as existing along a continuum of intensity, from low-intensity problem solving at the one pole to high-intensity physical fighting at the other pole (e.g., Straus, 1990, 1994). In this conceptualization, violent family conflict can be explained as a function of the same factors that make nonviolent family conflict more intense. Factors that have been associated with increased intensity of conflict have been a greater involvement, that is, personal or relational significance of the conflict issues and frustration resulting from the process of conflict communication itself (Donohue & Kolt, 1992). For example, conflict intensity might increase because the conflict involves a family member's needs rather than interests, where needs are defined as tied to personal and identity goals, whereas interests are defined as tied to instrumental goals. Alternatively, intensity can increase because one or more parties in the conflict get frustrated with the process of conflict communication (Gottman, 1991), or the process itself threatens important needs, such as positive and negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Fortunately, family members can avoid violence in such circumstances by learning certain communication behaviors that prevent conflict from escalating in intensity. Essentially, these are the same strategies that are recommended for communicating during interpersonal conflict in general, for example, those laid out by Donohue and Kolt (1992). First, family members can learn to avoid framing conflict issues in terms of needs and instead frame them in terms of interests. Second, family members should make conflict manifest by acknowledging differences in goals or perceived goal blockage. Third, family members should stress their interdependence by seeking solutions that enhance rather than diminish the relationship. Fourth, family members should remain flexible in their means to achieve solutions. Finally, family members should be committed to all family members achieving their goals, which is particularly important given the inherent power differences between parents and children.

Outcomes of Family Violence

As it was the case for research into the consequences of family conflict, most research investigating the outcomes of family violence has investigated either the outcomes of spousal abuse for the battered spouse (e.g., Johnson & Ferraro, 2000) or the outcomes for children (e.g., Gershoff, 2002). Generally, children of violent families are more likely to enact violence in their peer relationships and their subsequent relationships as adolescents and adults (Carr & VanDeusen, 2002; Salzinger et al., 2002; Simons, Lin, & Gordon, 1998; Straus & Yodanis, 1996; Swinford, DeMaris, Cernkovich, & Giordano, 2000; Whitfield, Anda, Dube, & Felitti, 2003;

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Yexley, Borowsky, & Ireland, 2002). For example, Salzinger et al. (2002) studied the effects of partner violence and physical abuse on children's social behaviors and found that abused children exhibited significantly higher levels of meanness and fighting and were six times more likely to be rated by peers and teachers as antisocial. Similarly, Carr and VanDeusen (2002) examined interparental violence and parent–child aggression as risk factors for intimate partner violence in a sample of college men. They found that witnessing interparental violence and experiencing childhood violence predicted physical violence in subsequent dating relationships.

As is the case for family conflict in general, there are several theoretical explanations linking family violence to the negative psychological and social outcomes for children. Most researchers investigating the effects of corporal punishment and other forms of family violence employ a model of intergenerational transmission of violence that proposes that children who experience violence in their families come to see violence as a normal and expected aspect of interpersonal relationships. In this model, family violence leads children to accept violence as normal in interpersonal relationships and to be more violent in their own interpersonal relationships (Gil-González, Vives-Cases, Ruiz, Carrasco-Portiño, & Álvarez-Dardet, 2008; Simons et al., 1998; Straus & Yodanis, 1996; Swinford et al., 2000). Experiencing violence in families, however, leads children not only to enact more violence in their own relationships but also to be more tolerant of violence enacted by their partner. That is, exposing children to physical violence within the family increases their risk for later victimization and perpetration of interpersonal violence. Whitfield et al. (2003) in a study of violent childhood experiences found that the risk of perpetrating interpersonal violence (for men) or being victimized by interpersonal violence (for women) increased as the number of violent childhood experiences increased.

Conflict and Corporal Punishment in Families

Another form of family violence that is also related to conflict but that is not always related to the intensity of the conflict is corporal punishment (Holden, Miller, & Harris, 1999). In fact, proponents of corporal punishment, such as Trumbull and Ravenel (1996), are adamant that corporal punishment must not be administered during intensive conflict but exclusively in a calm and deliberate manner. In other words, parents' use of corporal punishment should not be a function of the intensity of the conflict between parents and children, but of the seriousness of the behavior the corporal punishment is meant to correct. How well parents are capable of this, however, is undetermined.

Despite the theoretical distinction between corporal punishment and other forms of family violence, the outcomes for children are remarkably similar (but see Baumrind, Larzelere, & Cowan, 2002). In an extensive review of the existing literature on corporal punishment, Gershoff (2002) found that while corporal punishment results in the desired short-term compliance, other outcomes of corporal punishment for children include increased aggression and delinquent and antisocial behaviors, as well as decreased moral internalization, lower quality of parent–child relationships, and mental health problems for children. Negative effects of corporal punishment that follow children into adulthood include increased risks for adult criminal and antisocial behavior and for abusing one's own children (Gershoff, 2002; Straus, 1994). Other research has linked corporal punishment to increased externalizing behaviors (MacKenzie, Nicklas, Waldfogel, & Brooks-Gunn, 2011)

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and delayed cognitive development (Straus & Paschall, 2009).

One explanation for the finding that violent family conflict and corporal punishment have similarly negative outcomes for children could be that regardless of the parents' intensions, the emotional intensity with which parents experience the conflict between themselves and their children determines the use of corporal punishment. Specifically, the more angry or frustrated the parents are in the conflict, the more likely it is that they use corporal punishment. Consequently, most corporal punishment is probably administered by frustrated and angry parents and, thus, represents a form of conflict communication that is both emotional and coercive rather than educational.

Another explanation for the similar outcomes of violence and corporal punishment could be that even though they are distinguishable by the parents' motivation, behaviorally the distinction between violence and corporal punishment is less clear. Straus's (1994) definitions of both corporal punishment and violence illustrate this ambiguity. Straus defines corporal punishment as "the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or control of the child's behavior" (p. 4), whereas violence is defined as "an act carried out with the intention, or perceived intention, of causing physical pain or injury to another person" (p. 7). Thus, for Straus the distinction between corporal punishment and violence is the intention of the parent to inflict injury, even though from the outside, and more important from the children's perspective, these two are indistinguishable on the behavioral level. This suggests that while the parents might be able to distinguish between violence and corporal punishment in terms of their intention, the children might not be able to make this distinction because they necessarily rely on their own inferences and attributions when assigning intent to their parents' behaviors (Sillars & Canary, 2012).

A final explanation for why the negative effects of corporal punishment mirror those of family violence in general focuses more directly on functional correlates of corporal punishment. For example, Straus and Yodanis (1996) argued that the use of corporal punishment tends to preclude the opportunity for parents to utilize other, more socially useful methods of behavior control, such as reasoning and reflection and, therefore, results in children's truncated development of conflict resolution skills. The more parents rely on corporal punishment, the less opportunity a child has to witness and to participate in and, therefore, to learn nonviolent modes of influencing their own and other's behavior, leaving them to rely on physically violent strategies for conflict resolution. In other words, like other types of violent family conflict, corporal punishment teaches children problem resolution and conflict skills that they cannot successfully use in their relationships outside the family and that therefore impede their social competence and functioning.

Conflict and Violence in the Family Context

As the above review showed, there are a number of consistent findings regarding family conflict and violence that identify conflict as a crucial communication process for families that has relatively predictable consequences for families as a whole and for individual members. In particular, findings suggest that families benefit from what might be called constructive conflict communication and that destructive conflict communication can have very negative consequences, especially for children and weaker parents and when the conflict involves violence. As such, this research produced findings very similar to findings in other areas of research of conflict communication, suggesting that conflict communication in families is very similar to and, more

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important from a theoretical perspective, can be explained similarly to conflict communication in other social relationships. This view, however, strikes me as an oversimplification! There are some very important aspects of families that make family conflict communication unique and distinct from other forms of conflict communication. To describe these unique aspects of family conflict communication and also to suggest areas for future research is the purpose of the following section of this chapter.

Uniqueness of Family Conflict Communication

Family conflict communication is a specific type of family communication and therefore subject to the same general principles that govern family communication. Family communication can be broadly defined as all interactive behaviors of family members that establish family roles, maintain family rules, accomplish family functions, and sustain behavioral patterns in families (Vangelisti, 2004)—that is, all verbal and nonverbal behaviors by which family members affect one another and enact their interpersonal relationships with each other. The breadth of this definition makes explicit the fact that family relationships are complex and that virtually any type of behavior can be interpersonally meaningful in the context of family. In addition, this definition highlights some important properties of family communication.

The first and probably the most important of these properties is that family communication is a function of both psychological and interpersonal behavioral processes (Koerner, 2007; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002a, 2004). This means that family communication has an unequivocally empirical component in family members' behaviors that is observable by family members as well as by outsiders, such as researchers or counselors. In addition, family communication also has a psychological component residing within each family member's cognition that is neither observable nor controllable by others. As a consequence, each family member aware of an interpersonal behavior can determine the meaning of that interpersonal behavior individually, regardless of any intentions by the actor or any interpretations of the behaviors by others. Every interpersonal behavior can have multiple meanings in the family context. Family members respond to the behavior of others at least partially based on the meaning that they assign to it. Thus, ambiguity of, or disagreement about, meaning makes coordinated behavior difficult for family members, unless families develop strategies to address the inherent ambiguity of meaning.

To acknowledge that the meaning of communication is inherently ambiguous is to accept at least three consequences for family conflict communication, which can be summarized as follows. *First*, any conflict behavior enacted within the context of a family relationship might or might not be meaningful to family members aware of the behavior. Thus, any given conflict behavior might or might not be meaningful for the actor, might or might not be meaningful for the target of the behavior, and might or might not be meaningful for other family members. *Second*, there can be no certainty about the exact meaning that any given conflict behavior has within the family. It is possible that family members agree about the meaning of a behavior, but it is also possible that different family members assign very different or even contradicting meanings to the same behavior. *Third*, however, because family functioning requires at least a basic understanding (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004; Rueter & Koerner, 2008) and cognitive process exist that motivate family members to agree with one another, families spend a considerable amount of time and energy establishing a shared social reality by negotiating the meaning of their behaviors.

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This ultimately gives the family a key role in determining the meaning of communication behavior, including conflict (Koerner, 2007; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2006a).

To reiterate, families deal with the inherent ambiguousness of the meaning of their behaviors by establishing a shared social reality (Koerner, 2007; McLeod & Chaffee, 1972, 1973; Rueter & Koerner, 2008). This shared social reality allows them to interpret the behaviors of family members consistently and to predict how their own behavior is interpreted by other family members. Shared social reality allows family members to assign similar meanings to their behaviors, to understand one another, and, ultimately, to coordinate their behaviors. Even though family shared social reality is never perfect in the sense that all family members share an identical social reality and there is always an element of idiosyncrasy and uncertainty about meaning that may lead to misunderstandings and difficulties in family relationships, it has a tremendous impact on how conflict behaviors are interpreted in the family context. Ultimately then, family conflict cannot be understood without understanding the relational context of the family (Sillars & Canary, 2012) and the family communication that underlies their shared social reality.

Family Communication Patterns and Family Conflict

Although family conflict is certainly important in shaping families' shared social reality in that roles, expectations, and meaning are often the issues that family conflict revolves around (Sillars & Canary, 2012), the primary determinants of family shared social reality are the communication patterns that characterize the mundane, day-to-day family interaction that family members use habitually in their interactions (Koerner, 2007; Rueter & Koerner, 2008). Only in the context of these patterns can family conflict be understood.

Family Communication Patterns

FCP were first proposed by McLeod and Chaffee (1972, 1973) to explain how families process information, such as mass media messages. FCP theory (Koerner, 2007; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002b) is based on cognitive theories explaining how families achieve intersubjectivity (i.e., shared social reality) through the process of co-orientation, which involves either a concept orientation or a socio-orientation of family members (for detailed descriptions, see Koerner, 2007; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004, 2006a). Concept orientation of families is generally associated with an open and engaging communication style parents have with their children, whereas socio-orientation of families is generally associated with a directive and authoritarian communication style of parents (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972).

In most research on family communication, FCP are measured using Fitzpatrick and Ritchie's (1994; Ritchie, 1991; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990) Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP) instrument (Schrodt, Witt, & Messersmith, 2008). The RFCP is based on McLeod and Chaffee's (1972) original FCP instrument, but it better labels and operationalizes the dimensions as *conversation orientation*, which McLeod and Chaffee had called concept orientation, and *conformity orientation*, which McLeod and Chaffee had called socio-orientation (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Although often moderately negatively correlated with one another, conversation orientation and conformity orientation are conceptually independent from one another and can be used to define four different types of FCP.

Conversation orientation is defined as the degree to which families value and create a climate of open flow of communication and

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exchange of ideas about attitudes, beliefs, and values (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Families at the high end of this dimension freely, frequently, and spontaneously interact with one another about a wide variety of topics. Families at the low end of this dimension interact less openly and less frequently with one another and limit themselves to a narrower range of topics. With regard to conflict, conversation orientation is associated with engaging rather than avoiding conflict, with using supportive communication in conflict situations (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997), and with using positive (i.e., integrative) conflict strategies (Wrench & Socha-McGee, 1999). Members of families high in conversation orientation are also more likely to solicit social support both within and external to their families in conflict situations than members of families low in conversation orientation (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Conformity orientation is the other dimension underlying the RFCP. It refers to the degree to which families create a climate that stresses homogeneity of attitudes, values, and beliefs (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Families at the high end of this dimension value and hold similar beliefs and attitudes and typically engage in interactions that focus on harmony and obedience to the parents. Families at the low end of this dimension value and hold more heterogeneous attitudes and beliefs and engage in interactions that focus on the uniqueness and independence of family members. Conformity orientation in families is positively correlated with conflict avoidance (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997) and negatively correlated with use of positive (integrative) conflict strategies (Wrench & Socha-McGee, 1999). Families high in conformity orientation avoid conflict because they interpret it as a threat to the family system. Because conflict usually highlights differences between family members, it is perceived as undermining the cohesion and conformity that these families value so much.

Interestingly, conformity orientation in families is also associated with a greater frequency of verbal hostility during conflict (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997). The reasons are twofold. First, in conformity-oriented families, initiating or having conflict with family members is generally regarded as a violation of family rules and norms that demand harmony and conformity and, thus, leads to negative reactions by other family members. Second, because conflicts are usually avoided, family problems frequently remain unresolved, and individual family members might perceive their families as unresponsive to their needs, which leads to frustration and hostility on the side of the complaining party (Segrin & Fitzpatrick, 1991).

Family Types

The two dimensions underlying FCP interact in a way that defines four distinct types of families (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972). Families high in both conversation orientation and conformity orientation are labeled *consensual*. Their communication is characterized by a tension between pressure to conform and an interest in open communication. Parents in these families are the ultimate decision makers but, at the same time, are interested in communicating with their children. Children in these families learn not only to value family conversations but also to adopt their parents' values and beliefs.

Families high in conversation orientation but low in conformity orientation are labeled *pluralistic*. Communication in pluralistic families is characterized by open, unconstrained discussions involving all family members. Parents in these families are willing to accept their children's opinions and to let them participate in family decision making. Children of these families learn to value family conversations

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and to be independent and autonomous, which fosters their communication competence in relationships within and outside the family and their confidence in their ability to make their own decisions.

Families low on conversation orientation but high on conformity orientation are labeled *protective*. Communication in protective families is characterized by an emphasis on obedience to parental authority and by little concern for open communication within the family. Parents in these families are the ultimate decision makers and have little interest in explaining themselves to their children. Children in protective families learn that there is little value in family conversations, and they start distrusting their own decision-making ability. In addition, they often lack communication competence in relationships outside the family.

Families low in both conversation orientation and conformity orientation are labeled *laissez-faire*. Their communication is characterized by few and usually uninvolving interactions between family members limited to a small number of topics. Parents in laissez-faire families do believe that all family members should be fairly independent, but unlike parents in pluralistic families, they have little interest in their children and do not value family conversations. Most members of laissez-faire families are emotionally divorced from their families. Children of these families learn that there is little value in family conversation and that they have to make their own decisions; but because they receive only little support from their parents, they question their decision-making ability and often depend on their peers for guidance.

Family Types and Conflict Communication

In an early study of FCP and conflict, Koerner and Fitzpatrick (1997) investigated the influence of conversation orientation and conformity orientation and the four resulting family types on conflict. Conversation orientation had a strong negative correlation with conflict avoidance and a strong positive correlation with seeking social support as a coping strategy to conflict. Conformity orientation was positively correlated with conflict avoidance and expressing negative affect.

With regard to family types, Koerner and Fitzpatrick (1997) found that *consensual families* were characterized by high incidents of their venting of negative feelings and their inclination to solicit social support, which are the result of their high conformity orientation and their high conversation orientation, respectively. That these families often vent their negative feelings seems counterintuitive, because of the potentially harmful consequences for their interpersonal relationships. The venting of negative feelings does not fit our perception of the generally supportive and open communication of consensual families. The reason that venting of negative feelings occurs but does not endanger the closeness of consensual families could be that these families are also high in seeking social support. Generally, the ability to obtain social support is associated with the ability to deal positively with the negative aspects of conflict, such as being insulted or angry.

This possibility is also consistent with the observation that consensual families are in the midrange with regard to conflict avoidance. Consensual families score high on both conformity orientation and conversation orientation and find themselves in the somewhat peculiar situation that they encourage open expressions of conflict, while, at the same time, they consider conflict to be disruptive. It seems plausible that these families are able to strike a balance between these two needs because they are able to find outside support to help them overcome the negative effects conflict has on their intrafamily relationships.

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Overall, consensual families perceive conflict as an inevitable part of family life that needs to be managed in a way that leads to problem solving and maintains the relationships among family members. Their style might be described as symmetrically collaborative and integrative. Open communication is emphasized as an important means of managing conflict, as is the willingness of family members to listen to each other, to be persuaded by good arguments, and to go along with family decisions. Parents have disproportionate influence on family decisions, but the influence is exerted primarily through persuasion, not coercion.

Pluralistic families are characterized by their low conflict avoidance, which is the result of both their high conversation orientation and low conformity orientation. Similar to consensual families in their inclination to seek social support, they are different from consensual families in their low expression of negative feelings. This is surprising because pluralistic families should be less constrained in expressing their negative feelings to one another than consensual families because they do not experience the same desire for harmonic relationships as consensual families. An explanation for this apparent contradiction is that pluralistic families experience much less negative feelings and hostility among family members because they do not avoid addressing conflicts and, therefore, do not have many unresolved conflicts. As a result, these families experience more positive relationships than other families, which are more likely to avoid conflict.

Overall, pluralistic families perceive conflict as an important part of family life that should not be avoided. They engage in conflict communication that is primarily expressive and concerned with problem solving and places less emphasis on relationships. Their style might be described as symmetrically competitive. Open communication is emphasized as an important means of prevailing in conflict, and while family members are willing to listen to each other, they do not feel the need to be persuaded by good arguments nor to go along with family decisions they disagree with. Children have disproportionate influence on family decisions, primarily because the parents are often permissive.

Protective families have one of the most interesting patterns of conflict. These families are characterized by conflict avoidance, compliance with parental authority, and high incidents of verbal hostility. This pattern is much less surprising when one considers that these families are also low in seeking social support. These families lack the mechanisms to productively deal with conflict, either by discussing and resolving conflict with their families or by obtaining social support from outsiders. As a consequence, there are many unmet goals within their families, and members of these families experience hostility and negative feelings toward other family members as a result. These negative emotions are expressed in short, emotional outbursts. Because these outbursts are typically responded to either with forceful repression if they are directed at an authority figure or with silence if directed at a family member of lower status, they do not lead to negatively charged exchanges.

Overall, protective families perceive conflict as a disruption of family life and go to great lengths to avoid it. If they engage in conflict communication, it is primarily to affirm family or social rules, and emphasis is placed on compliance with authority figures. Their style might be described as complementary, assertive, or submissive based on family members' place in the family hierarchy. Open communication is avoided. Rules and norms are evoked as guidelines for behavior or as reason for compliance with parents. Parents are often unwilling to listen to the children but expect them to go along with family decisions, even if they disagree with them. Parents

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have disproportionate influence on family decisions, primarily through coercive means.

Laissez-faire families are characterized by the relative low frequency and intensity of their conflict episodes. These families tend to avoid rather than to engage in conflict and experience few incidents of venting of negative feelings. At the same time, they are low in seeking social support. This pattern is consistent with persons with low investment in their family relationships who often are emotionally divorced from one another. Although these families do not actively avoid conflict because they perceive it not to be threatening to their families, due to the greater independence of family members, they experience less goal blockage from one another and therefore less overall conflict with one another. At the same time, because their family relationships are less important, unresolved conflicts are not particularly taxing to them and, therefore, do not create the hostility experienced and expressed in other families.

Overall, laissez-faire families perceive conflict as less important to their family life and as something that is better avoided than engaged in. When they do engage in conflict communication, it is primarily concerned with problem solving, and there is little emphasis on relationship maintenance. Their style might be described as symmetrically disengaged and acquiescent. Communication is not perceived as an important means to solve conflict. While family members are willing to listen to each other, they do not feel the need to be persuaded by good arguments but tend to go along with family decisions they disagree with. Neither parents nor children have disproportionate influence on family decisions, primarily because all family members perceive family interests secondary to personal interests.

Although family communication pattern theory with its decidedly cognitive focus is very much grounded in a Western view of psychology and family, it has been successfully used in the study of non-Western families. These studies have produced surprisingly similar results, suggesting that the underlying cognitive processes are universal rather than culture specific. For example, for Chinese families, Zhang (2008) found that FCP and children's assertiveness and responsiveness correlate in the same way as in U.S. families. Specifically, with regard to conflict styles of Chinese families, Zhang (2007) found that conversation orientation was associated with a collaborative style, whereas conformity orientation was associated with a competitive conflict style, again mirroring U.S. families. Research using FCP in Iran (Koroshnia & Latifian, 2008), Malaysia (Omar, Mustaffa, & Nordin, 2007), and Japan (Shearman & Dumlao, 2008) produced similar results, suggesting the broad applicability of FCP theory.

Other Unique Aspects of Family Communication

In addition to FCP, there are other unique characteristics of family relationships that make family conflict different from other interpersonal conflict. Among the most important characteristics are the high degree of intimacy of family relationships, the interdependence of family members, and the long history of family relationships and their ongoing and open-ended nature.

Family relationships are among the most intimate interpersonal relationships, typically characterized by genuine affect and care for each other (Vangelisti, 2004). Thus, the experience of conflict communication itself can lead to the realization of divergent interests and, therefore, independent from its particular outcomes, can be stressful to family members. As a result, family members should be more motivated than individuals in other types of relationships to avoid communicating their conflict. In addition, when they are

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communicating during conflict, they should also be more motivated to facilitate each others' goals and, consequently, be more collaborating in their conflicts. At the same time, however, family members might come to expect more acquiescence from each other and react to any type of resistance from family members with more negative affect than individuals in other types of relationships. In either case, conflict is likely to be experienced more emotionally intensely in families than in other types of relationships.

Family members are also highly interdependent on one another, and they control many of the interpersonal resources that individuals strive for. Love, affection, status, information, assistance, advice, and social support are among the many immaterial resources that most persons receive primarily from their family members (Dainton & Zelley, 2006). As such, any particular conflict among family members takes place in the context of multiple interdependencies that are related to other manifest or latent conflicts. Thus, what might be regarded in the context of the current conflict episode a "win" can ultimately result in a "loss" in another area of the relationship. Likewise, what in the context of the current conflict episode might be regarded a "loss" could lead to a "win" in another area. Thus, the behavior of the conflicting parties might very well be motivated by different conflicts than those ostensibly underlying the current conflict episode. For example, a family member could be complying with a request in a current conflict only to obtain a more favorable outcome in another ongoing conflict within the family. Without regard to this big picture of interdependencies, any evaluation of the conflict behaviors of family members and of the outcome of individual conflict episodes is likely to be myopic and incomplete.

Finally, family relationships are different from most other interpersonal relationships in that they have long histories and are essentially open ended. Conflicts often manifest over the course of many interactions that occur between family members. In marriages and families, this phenomenon has been described as "serial arguments" (Bevan, Finan, & Kaminsky, 2008; Roloff & Johnson, 2002), interactions that recur and seem to follow the same script without there being a realistic expectation for a resolution. In families, in particular, these conflicts appear to be proxies for a struggle over dominance and control in relationships, especially between parents and children (Bevan, 2009). Families can afford to engage in these prolonged and essentially indirect power struggles and other types of conflict because these conflicts do not threaten the existence of the relationship. In voluntary relationships, conflict always has the potential to break the relationships apart, which places restraints on the behavior of the conflicting parties. In families, these restraints are often missing, explaining why family conflict is often more verbally aggressive, hostile, and more physically violent than conflict on other interpersonal relationships.

Conclusion

Family conflict is a crucial aspect of family communication closely related to relationship satisfaction and the individual psychological well-being and social functioning of all family members. Although in many ways comparable to conflict in other types of interpersonal relationships, the unique characteristics of family relationships make family conflict unique as well. As a consequence, understanding family conflict requires understanding the unique relationships and attributes of family, which is why family conflict cannot be studied without consideration of family communication more generally.

In addition, family conflict does not occur in isolation from other communication and

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relationship behavior of families. Family conflict is a central part of family communication and affects the communication and relationships of family members even when they are not engaged in conflict communication. Likewise, family conflict communication is affected by how families communicate and relate to each other during times that they are not in conflict, which for many, if not most, families represents the majority of their interactions. Conflict plays an important role in what are among the most important functions of families, including the socialization of children, the development of autonomous and more independent identities of adolescents, and the negotiation and renegotiation of family roles, rules, and relationships. That notwithstanding, to focus on family conflict exclusively when describing these functions and developing theoretical explanations of family conflict in isolation from other communication processes means to miss important parts of the larger picture that is the family. More important, it leads to an incomplete understanding of family conflict as well.

Family conflict is but one part of the larger process of family communication and is best understood in relation to this process. FCP theory is a comprehensive theory of family communication and the processes that constitute it, including family conflict communication. For example, FCP suggest that conflict in more conversation-oriented families is best understood as a behavior that strengthens family relationships because it helps families establish a shared social reality. In contrast, in more conformity-oriented families, conflict is best understood as a behavior that undermines authority relationships and thereby prevents families from establishing a shared social reality. Thus, the very function of family conflict and how family members react to it is affected by FCP and cannot be understood in isolation from them.

Although research has made great strides in understanding family conflict, there is still much to be learned about it. We know almost nothing about the effects of family conflict on the psychological well-being and social functioning of parents. While this lacuna is understandable in its historical context that made parents the responsible and purposeful actors in family conflicts, it is clear that parents nevertheless are affected by family conflict. This is obvious for marital conflict where the involved parties are primarily the parents. But it is equally true for parent–child conflict. Parents spend a significant amount of time and resources on their children and often identify with the parent role. Thus, family conflict has the ability to undermine their self-identity and in itself can be seen as an obstacle to obtain important interpersonal goals in their relationships with their children. Consequently, parent–child conflict should lead to negative affect as well as negative psychosocial outcomes for parents.

Another aspect of family conflict that in my estimation is in urgent need of elaboration is the role that children play as instigators and perpetuators of family conflict. For the same reasons that the effects of conflict on parents have been neglected by researchers, the role that children play in how conflict develops in families has been ignored. While there is at least an implicit acknowledgment in some research on parenting and family communication that some children are "more difficult" than others, a systematic investigation of what child characteristics and behaviors contribute to frequency and intensity of family conflict is lacking. This question is of obvious theoretical importance, but it also has relevance for practitioners who have spent much of the past decades educating parents on how to communicate during family conflict in ways that minimizes conflict's negative effects on children. Maybe by developing strategies to influence children's behaviors rather than

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that of their parents, practitioners can reach those families whose parents have either been resistant to or incapable of implementing the advice they have received.

Finally, we have not paid enough attention to the effect of culture on family conflict communication. From psychological and intercultural research (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998), we know that cultural norms vary widely and have direct effects not only on social norms and behaviors but also on cognitive processes as well. These effects should be particularly pronounced in family relationships, which in most, if not all, cultures are of particular personal and social significance. Because culture has well-established effects on core aspects of family relationships, such as gender roles (Eagly & Wood, 1999) and the power dynamics between parents and children (Claes, Debrosse, Miranda, & Perchec, 2010), as well as in conflict in other interpersonal relationships (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000), we would expect that culture plays an important role in how persons communicate during family conflict as well. Much like the way family conflict can only be understood when the family context in which the conflict occurs is understood, the family context can only be understood if the cultural context in which the family is situated is understood. As of now, this understanding of the cultural context is severely lacking.

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9

It Happens In Real Life

The Complexities of Conflict and Mental Health Within Families

Keri Bolton Oetzel

In 2005, the city I lived in at the time was rocked to its core when a man with a mental illness lost control; lost his ability to communicate effectively with his family, with his mental health providers, and with hospital workers. Within 18 hours, six people's lives were changed forever, as were those of the family members of the six, as well as an entire community and, perhaps, a nation. It started early on a warm summer morning, when the first victim, a 54-year-old grandfather, who worked for the State Department of Transportation, arrived at work for his 6 a.m. shift. He was shot to death, in the back, at close range. After this early morning shooting, the accused killer walked in to the local hospital where he had been treated for years. He was clearly upset—asking for help, making threats to hospital workers, and demanding an appointment. When turned away, he phoned a number to a state agency that manages health care programs. He made an appointment to meet with his caseworkers later that afternoon. Within less than an hour, the accused killer called the state agency again. He was angry, he was agitated, he wanted help. He left a threatening voice message stating that he had a list of people he wanted to kill. He never arrived for his appointment with his caseworkers. Later that day, just before 5 p.m. closing time, the same man went to a motorcycle shop and killed two more people, both employees of the motorcycle shop: a 17-year-old high school student with a bright future and a 26-year-old newlywed and father of a newborn son. The recorded 911 call from the 17-year-old is chilling. After more phone calls by the accused killer to doctors, therapists, and a local hospital, police were dispatched after 9 p.m. that evening to do a "routine" pickup of and hospital transport for a man with mental illness. The connection between the daytime murders and the standard pickup/transport had not been made at this point. A belt recording of one of the officers lasted for 23 minutes. Seven minutes later, one of

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the officers made a frantic call: "Shots fired! Officer down!" Both veteran police offers, who recently rejoined the police force after retirement, were shot dead—one in the head and the other under the armpit of his bullet-proof vest, straight through to his heart. The accused was apprehended just minutes after midnight. He continues to stay incarcerated, deemed unfit to stand trial. "It was one of the worst days in the history of the city, without a doubt" (Wilham, as cited in Stafford, 2007, para. 230).

Within any 1-year period, mental health disorders directly affect about 20% to 26% of adults in the United States (Kessler, Chiu, Demler, & Walters, 2005; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2012). The impacts of these disorders also have far-reaching effects on family members, friends, and communities. Although the true story above has extremes, it also has events that are very typical in the lives of people who live with mental illness; family members who do not know what to do to help, individuals with mental illness who are not able to communicate the extent of their isolation, fears, and needs; and the sometimes inexplicable behavior of people who live with mental illness, which often leads to conflict within families and other interpersonal relationships. After providing some margins to this chapter, which include definitions and descriptions of mental disorders, and specific categories of mental disorders referenced within this writing, this chapter explores the role of race and ethnicity on mental health, the relationship between mental health disorders and family conflict, as well as practical suggestions for providers and families. Throughout the chapter, the opening story and another family's story are referenced in an effort to illustrate how the research findings and definitions are manifested in specific cases.

Mental Health Disorders Defined

Mental disorders are difficult to define largely because there is no single definition that covers all situations and because the term *mental* disorder implies a distinction between one's mental health and one's physical health. Mental health disorders are complex and often do not occur in isolation from physical disorders. Significant amounts of literature demonstrate that physical and mental health are interwoven (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [U.S. DHHS], 2001). Perhaps because of these complexities, our body of literature lacks a "consistent operational definition" for mental disorder (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2000, p. xxx). Although the worthiness/credibility of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) is debated, it is the guiding publication for mental health practitioners. The DSM offers a thoughtful definition of mental disorder and was first published in the DSM-III (cf. APA, 1987). Mental disorder is a

> clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern that occurs in an individual and that is associated with present distress (e.g., a painful symptom), or disability (i.e., impairment in one or more important areas of functioning) or with a significantly increased risk for suffering death, pain, disability, or an important loss of freedom. (APA, 2000, p. xxxi)

The DSM offers an expansion of the definition by clarifying that situationally and/or culturally relevant responses must not be contributing to the disorder. "In addition, this syndrome or pattern must not be merely an expectable and culturally sanctioned response to a particular event, for example, the death of a loved one" (APA, 2000, p. xxxi). It is inappropriate, therefore, to diagnose a person who is grieving the (somewhat recent) death

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of a loved one with depression. Sadness and depression are natural responses to the process of grief, and according to the DSM's definition of mental disorder, a diagnosis must be made independently of an "expectable" response to a given event.

Mental disorders are broad, complex, and encompass many aspects of one's level of functioning. For the purposes of this chapter, therefore, the focus of mental disorders is limited to four areas: (1) depression, (2) anxiety, (3) substance abuse and dependence, and (4) schizophrenia.

Depression

Approximately 10% of the U.S. population suffers from a mood disorder (Kessler et al., 2005). Depression and mood disorders have extensive categories and definitions. For the purposes of this chapter, the definition of a specific type of depression—Major Depressive Disorder—is offered as a general description of what depression looks like for individuals living with this disorder. A Major Depressive Episode is when a person experiences at least 2 weeks of nearly daily feelings of "either depressed mood or the loss of interest or pleasure in nearly all activities" (APA, 2000, p. 349), and it clearly marks a difference from past functioning. In addition, at least four of the following symptoms must also be experienced: "changes in appetite or weight" (increase or decrease); changes in sleep (increase or decrease); changes in psychomotor activity; "decreased energy, feelings of worthlessness or guilt; difficulty thinking, concentrating, or making decisions; or recurrent thoughts of death or suicidal ideation, or plans or attempts" of suicide (APA, 2000, p. 349). Symptoms of depression often include increased levels of stress, lack of or poor social support, decreased or poor coping skills, and the burden of underprivileged socioeconomic status (SES; J. S. Brown, Meadows, & Elder, 2007). Major depression is almost always a precursor to suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and completed suicide.

Anxiety

Approximately 18% of the U.S. population suffers from some sort of anxiety disorder (Kessler et al., 2005). Within the mental health literature, the category of Anxiety Disorders encompasses numerous conditions and includes disorders such as Panic Attacks, Agoraphobia, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Acute Stress Disorder, and Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), among several others. As defined by the DSM-IV-TR, GAD refers to experiencing "excessive anxiety or worry" for the majority of days over at least a 6-month period, difficulty controlling the worry, and at least three of the following symptoms must also be experienced: "restlessness, being easily fatigued, difficulty with concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, and disturbed sleep" (APA, 2000, p. 472). People with GAD also experience impairment in areas of functioning, including work, school, and social settings. A diagnosis of GAD cannot be related to other types of disorders such as panic disorders, social phobias, eating disorders, substance abuse disorders, and/or a general medical condition.

Substance Use Disorders

Approximately 4% of the U.S. population has a substance abuse disorder (Kessler et al., 2005). About 3% have a substance abuse disorder along with a mental health disorder (U.S. DHHS, 2001). Substance Use Disorders are categorized into two areas: (1) substance dependence and (2) substance abuse. Substance dependence refers to a 12-month period of time wherein a collection of "cognitive, behavioral, and physiological

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symptoms indicating that the individual continues use of the substance despite significant substance-related problems" (APA, 2000, p. 192) is manifested. Due to the dependence aspect of this disorder, individuals develop a "pattern of repeated self-administration of the drug," which leads to "tolerance, withdrawal, and compulsive drug-taking behavior" (APA, 2000, p. 192).

Substance abuse is defined as the development of a "maladaptive pattern of substance use" within a 12-month period that results in "recurrent and significant adverse consequences" related to the ongoing use (APA, 2000, p. 198). Substance abuse–related problems include using substances in situations that are dangerous and/or include adverse effects as a result of the substance abuse such as being arrested for driving under the influence, persistent relationship/familial problems, financial problems, and employment difficulties (APA, 2000). An individual can have a diagnosis of substance abuse without having a diagnosis of substance dependence. Substance abuse and substance dependence include the use of alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription medications, and self-ingested toxins.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is the least prevalent mental illness addressed in this chapter. Only about 1.3% of the U.S. population suffers from schizophrenia (U.S. DHHS, 1999). Schizophrenia is classified as a psychotic disorder and is defined as having at least two "characteristic symptoms such as delusions, hallucinations, disorganized or incoherent speech, grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior, or negative symptoms" such as inability to speak or lack of initiative or motivation (APA, 2000, p. 312). These behaviors must persist for a 6-month period and must occur over significant amount of time for a 1-month period. Social and occupational functioning, including interpersonal relationships, work, and personal hygiene are negatively affected a significant amount of time. Finally, the onset of these behaviors cannot be attributed to substance abuse, a general medical condition, and must not be in relation to pervasive developmental disorders (APA, 2000). Box 9.1 includes information about the opening case regarding the accused's mental health status.

Overall, mental health disorders affect nearly 30% of the U.S. population in a given year. The number of people who are affected by mental health multiplies when family members, friends, colleagues, and community members are taken into account. Mental health disorders manifest differently in individual people, and there is significant evidence

Box 9.1 It Happens in Real Life: Diagnosis of Schizophrenia

The 48-year-old accused killer, deemed unfit to stand trial, has been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. He was diagnosed with this disorder long before—years before—the shootings. He was a young adult when he began to struggle with illness. In the months leading up to that dreadful day in August 2005, the man's family noticed marked changes in his behavior. His once stable employment became rocky, and eventually, he was unemployed. He stopped exercising. He began wearing all black clothing and even wore black polish on his sharpened-to-a-point fingernails. He had multiple piercings, including a recent one in his neck. He grew his hair out, long; it was never combed, and it was always dirty. It was always disheveled. His outward presentation was a mirrored reflection of the uneasy, simmering, agitated, desperate man that he was on the inside.

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of how and why mental illness occurs across cultures.

The Role of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture on Mental Health

Race, ethnicity, and culture are complex constructs that are used in research and practice to better understand mental health disorders. Race is a social category that distinguishes people based on physical and social characteristics that are defined as racially meaningful (U.S. DHHS, 2001), while ethnicity is centered on grouping people based on a shared history or heritage (U.S. DHHS, 2001). Culture is

> a learned system of meanings that fosters a particular sense of shared identity-hood and community-hood among its group members. It is a complex frame of reference that consists of a pattern of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols, and meanings that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of an identity group. (Ting-Toomey & Takai, 2006, p. 691)

Trying to tease out these constructs is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the federal government and the research community tend to use race and ethnicity to categorize groups within the United States, while culture is used to discuss the components of these groups. This section uses these distinctions to discuss similarities and differences in the prevalence and experience of mental health disorders.

The U.S. government identifies four ethnic minority groups: African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic American, and Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native/Native Hawaiian and one ethnic majority group, non-Hispanic Whites (specifically Hispanics are described as an ethnicity, while the other groups are described as races). In addition to these overarching groups, there are many subgroups—with unique sets of cultural norms and values—that are underrepresented in terms of mental health needs. Some of these groups include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) individuals, people with physical disabilities or impairments, and veterans returning from combat. Each of these groups has rapidly changing demographics, is underrepresented in health care, and requires culturally competent services and interventions. However, these groups are beyond the scope of this chapter due to space limitations.

Within the United States, ethnic diversity also has implications for financial diversity. Many families from ethnic minority groups have significant financial disadvantages; they are three times more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to fall below the federally recognized threshold for poverty level (U.S. DHHS, 2001). Poor SES, including lack of income, occupational status, and educational level, all have direct, and strong, linkages to poor mental health outcomes (Kessler et al., 2005; U.S. DHHS, 2001). Families in the lowest SES ranks are nearly two and a half times more likely than those in the highest SES ranks to suffer from mental health disorders (Regier et al., 1993). While there are many cultural aspects that merit discussion and examination, this chapter limits discussion to the major U.S. designated ethnic groups. Ethnic group differences are described for three of the four diagnoses described (schizophrenia is not included as there is limited evidence of ethnic difference in part because of the low prevalence of the diagnosis). Then, a summary section reinforces a key message that there is not much difference in the prevalence of mental health disorders between ethnic groups, but there are some differences in presentation of mental health and mental health services utilization.

Depression

There are inconsistencies in studies about ethnic differences and depression. Some findings indicate that African American young

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adults have the highest rates of depression compared with any other group of young adults (Gore & Aseltine, 2003), while other findings conclude that, in general, Hispanics have higher rates of depression than any other ethnic minority group (Gore & Aseltine, 2003; Iwata, Turner, & Lloyd, 2002). One particular study that assessed prevalence rates within a large (N = 5,412), diverse sample of the population found that Chinese Americans had the lowest rates of major depression out of the entire sample population (Roberts, Roberts, & Chen, 1997). However, other studies report both Chinese and Korean Americans have the same or higher rates of depression as non-Hispanic Whites (Choi, Stafford, Meininger, Roberts, & Smith, 2002; Stewart et al., 1999). However, more recent large-scale studies (Beals et al., 2005; Harris, Edlund, & Larson, 2005; National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2008b) illustrate that depression rates are lower for African Americans and Hispanics relative to Whites, while the other three ethnic groups have similar rates of depression. There is evidence that of the ethnic groups, American Indians have the highest rates of suicide (Olson & Wahab, 2006). A recent national study found that American Indians and Whites (7.7% and 7.3%, respectively) had the highest rates of past-year major depressive episode, with African Americans and Hispanics following next (5.8% and 5.6%, respectively) and Asian Americans having the lowest (3.8%) (SAMHSA, 2012).

Anxiety

A review of the literature by Paradis, Hatch, and Friedman (1994) noted that the Epidemiological Catchment Area (ECA) study—a study with more than 18,000 participants—did not find any specific differences in the overall prevalence of anxiety within different cultural groups. Both the ECA study and another group of researchers reported a higher prevalence of specific phobias (i.e., specific categories of anxiety) among African Americans than among Whites (D. R. Brown, Eaton, & Sussman, 1990; Paradis et al., 1994). However, the more recent large-scale studies (Beals et al., 2005; Harris et al., 2005; NIMH, 2008a) illustrate that anxiety rates are lower for African Americans and Hispanics relative to Whites, while the other two ethnic groups have similar rates of anxiety relative to Whites.

Substance Abuse and Dependence

The recent large-scale National Survey of Drug Use and Health in 2010 found some differences in use and dependence/abuse of alcohol and drugs (SAMHSA, 2012). American Indians were found to have the greatest lifetime (i.e., reporting use of a particular substance at any point in one's lifetime) and past-year use of illicit drugs (58.4% and 22.6%, respectively), while Asian Americans had the lowest use (25.2% and 8.7%) (SAMHSA, 2010a). Whites had the next highest lifetime use (50.9%) followed by African Americans (45.1%) and Hispanics (37.2%) (SAMHSA, 2010a). Similarly, American Indians had the highest percentage of dependence or abuse of drugs and alcohol (6.3% and 14.0%, respectively) and Asian Americans had the lowest percentage (1.3% and 3.2%, respectively) (SAMHSA, 2010b). African Americans had the next highest percentage of drug dependence/abuse (4.0%) followed by Hispanics (3.5%) and Whites (2.5%). Hispanics had the next highest percentage of alcohol dependence/abuse (7.6%) followed by Whites (7.4%) and African Americans (5.7%). It is important to note, however, that because this sample does not provide large numbers of some population groups (e.g., American Indians and Asian Americans), the differences in percentages are not considered statistically significant.

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Studies evaluating substance abuse within specific age-group populations have found some pronounced differences. For example, American Indian youth were more likely to report lifetime use of marijuana and cocaine and 30-day use of marijuana, cocaine, stimulants, alcohol, and cigarettes (Beauvais, 1992). In addition, the percentages of university students consuming alcohol in the past 30 days were as follows: Asian Americans (59.1%), African Americans (52.3%), American Indians (73.1%), Hispanics (75.3%), and Whites (75.3%; Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention, 2007). Thus, there appear to be some slight differences in the rates of substance abuse and dependence across ethnic groups.

Summary

In general, most recent researchers and mental health agencies conclude that there are only minor differences in the rates of mental health diagnoses across ethnic groups in the United States. There are slight variations for some specific disorders as noted above, but generally, these are for specific populations (e.g., youth) within ethnic groups.

That is not to say that ethnicity and culture does not matter for mental health. Two areas where culture factors in are within the presentation of symptoms and also in the seeking of services. Cultural-bound syndromes are one example of different presentation (U.S. DHHS, 2001). Cultural-bound syndromes are clusters of symptoms that appear to be more prevalent in one culture than in another. For example, some Caribbean women present with *ataque de nervios*, which includes occurrences of crying, trembling, and verbal aggression (U.S. DHHS, 2001). Such syndromes are being investigated to see if they fit within traditional *DSM* categories or whether they belong in unique categories. Additionally, great caution must be taken by clinicians diagnosing schizophrenia in people who come from ethnic cultures different from their own. Some of the unique characteristics of this disorder (e.g., visual and auditory hallucinations and delusions) are quite common in many parts of the world in the context of traditional ceremonies, religious experiences, and spiritual rituals.

Although there are limited differences in the prevalence of mental health disorders, the majority of published studies have demonstrated that people from underrepresented minority groups utilize mental health services less than Whites and are less satisfied with those services (Harris et al., 2005; Novins, Harman, Mitchell, & Manson, 1996). For example, Harris et al. (2005) examined a large database (more than 200,000 people) and found that American Indians had greater unmet need than Whites, while African Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, and Central Americans used mental health services less than Whites.

Despite some clear cultural differences in aspects of mental health, research is lacking in terms of identifying cultural differences in family conflict and communication. While there are clear differences in family conflict patterns across cultures (e.g., Oetzel et al., 2003), these differences have not been tied to issues of mental health very well in the literature. This is a clear limitation of the literature and a need for future research. For this reason, the remainder of this review will not make large distinctions about ethnicity and culture in family conflict and communication.

The Relationship Between Family Conflict and Mental Health

Regardless of culture, numerous people suffer from depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and schizophrenia. While we do not know

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the exact causes for many mental disorders, we do know that certain factors play a role in all health—both mental and physical. These factors typically do not operate in isolation. Rather, causes of disorders usually result from an interaction between one's biological, psychological, and social/cultural functioning (U.S. DHHS, 2001).

Family is of fundamental importance to the social development and future adjustment of children (Schrodt & Ledbetter, 2007). Family influences are greatest on individual behaviors when it comes to communication behaviors (Koerner, this volume; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002b). Seminal work from the late 1970s put forth the notion that mental health and illness comes from a Biopsychosocial Model of Disease (BMD; Engel, 1977), which posits that mental illness is the result of contributing factors such as genes, parenting, culture, and stressful events as opposed to any one individual factor (i.e., biological factor). Familial communication patterns, level of conflict, stressful events such as marital discord, familial violence, and antagonistic divorce are well established environmental factors in the development of mental health issues in youth and teenagers (Gavazzi, 2006; Kazdin, 1995). Importantly, Kendler, Aggen, Prescott, Jacobsen, and Neale (2004) reported on additional studies that, in fact, have observed numerous aspects of the family environment that actually modify the effects of genetics in many mental health outcomes, including alcoholism, schizophrenia, conduct disorder, and antisocial personality disorder. At the same time, when family members have mental health issues, these issues often create conflicts about the illness, how to treat it, the effects on the family, and other related topics.

The BMD is a well-founded and recognized framework used to understand and conceptualize the complexities of mental health. Because there is no one reason or explanation for the onset of mental illness, I use the BMD to illustrate the connections of substance abuse, depression, and family communication patterns that contribute to poor mental health outcomes. Figure 9.1

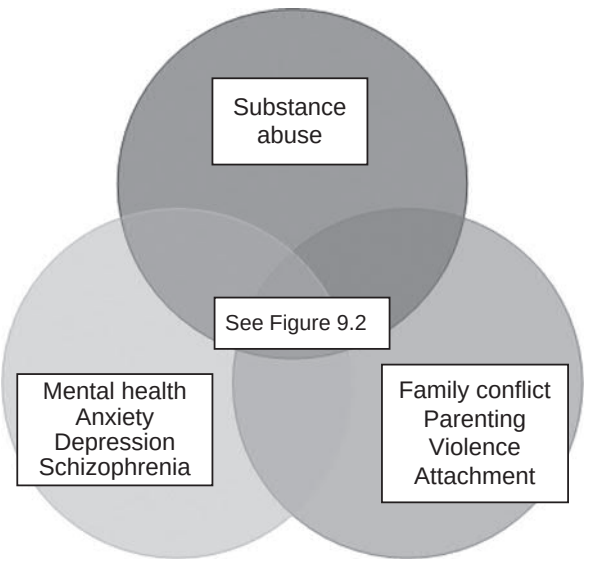

Figure 9.1 Intersection of Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Family Conflict

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illustrates the (noncausal) relationship among family conflict, mental health, and substance abuse as consistent with the BMD. The figure demonstrates an overlap among all of these constructs in that the presence of serious family conflict co-occurs with depression and substance abuse in a number of individuals. However, the model also illustrates that there are unique experiences to each construct. For example, presence of serious family conflict does not always co-occur with depression or substance abuse even though it can be a contributing factor for some individuals. This literature review explores the research that explains the connections among the constructs. The next section discusses the alarming evidence of how family conflict, parenting, violence, and poor patterns of attachment lead to poor mental health and substance abuse and dependence outcomes. It begins with a discussion of family conflict and communication.

Family Conflict and Communication

Family conflict is consistently reported as a top stressor and contributor to children's mental health, particularly suicide (Prinstein, Boergers, Spirito, Little, & Grapentine, 2000). "The more family members dispute with one another, the higher the stress and the lower the level of home satisfaction, a key factor that relates to suicides among young and older adults across nations" (Chen, Wu, & Bond, 2009, p. 134).

Family conflict is described in many ways. Some studies (e.g., Cecil & Matson, 2006) report family conflict as measured by the Conflict and Cohesion subscale of the Family Environment Scale Real Form (FES-R; Moos & Moos, 1993). On this scale, conflict is measured by levels of conflict (disagreement with issues important to the family) among family members, levels of openly expressed anger, and levels of aggression. Other studies (e.g., Fainsilber Katz & Gottman, 1993) evaluate the patterns of marital conflict and how they relate to childhood development. Marital conflict, in part, is described as how partners engage in conflict, how they show agreement and disagreement, the amount of negative affect displayed during a conflict, and how they discuss/resolve conflict (Fainsilber Katz & Gottman, 1993). In sum, family conflict in this context involves various issues including disagreements, discord, aggression, violence, and affect. This section addresses how family conflict via marital discord, parenting, violence, and attachment impact the psychological development of children exposed to this conflict.

Marital Discord and Family Conflict. Marital and family conflict and dysfunction have long been implicated in poor psychological development in children (Kazdin, 1995). Similar to the parenting literature, family communication literature describes parent–child communication patterns in the context of parents having discussions with their children about expectations (conversation orientation) and children conforming to parent's demands (conformity orientation). These communication patterns are reported by Schrodt and Ledbetter (2007) to be connected to numerous mental health implications, including depression, levels of perceived stress, self-esteem, overall well-being, and risk-taking behaviors. These two communication orientations are gauged on continuous scales (i.e., high/low levels of conversation and conformity). Families who rate high on the conversation orientation tend to have open dialogue, limitless topic boundaries, and share thoughts in a safe environment. They participate in shared decision-making discussions and are invited to express concerns (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002a). Families who rate low on this same scale do not invite open dialogue, have fewer interpersonal interactions, and do not readily share private thoughts and intimate

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feelings (Schrodt & Ledbetter, 2007). Families who rate high on the conformity orientation dimension seem to possess a collectivistic approach: They value the family and core beliefs within, they follow a hierarchical set of rules and norms, and the interest of the family comes before any given individual (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002a). Families who are low on the conformity orientation dimension seem to possess an individualistic approach: They value each individual's contributions, beliefs, and opinions; they value—equally—each member of the family, as well as the growth and development of each individual (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002a). Myriad researchers have concluded that conversation-orientated families have healthier conflict management skills and more effective communication patterns than do conformity-orientated families (Schrodt & Ledbetter, 2007). It is important to note, however, that this research reflects values of individualistic societies and, thus, may suggest some cultural bias. Marital conflict and discord are often linked to poor communication patterns and the development of childhood aggression (Connor, 2002). Positive and negative communication patterns affect both the marital relationship and the parent–child relationship.

Given that conversation-oriented families have more effective communication patterns, marriages within these families also tend to have more effective communication patterns. Contrary to some beliefs that divorce alone has negative impacts on children and parent–child relationships, recent studies have focused on comparing mental health outcomes in children from divorced and nondivorced families as well as evaluating mental health outcomes in children from "intact," nondivorced families who have different levels and types of marital discord (Schrodt & Ledbetter, 2007). A major consensus in these studies is that children from "intact," nondivorced families with continuous high conflict and contention have poorer parent–child relationships and poorer overall well-being than do children who come from highly conflicted families who divorce (Schrodt & Ledbetter, 2007). Marital conflict and discord, and specifically, how much the adults enmesh with the children during this process, seem to have a greater impact on the adjustment and well-being of children than divorce by itself.

Parenting. Like many mental health disorders, family history plays a role in contributing to mental health outcomes for future generations. Likewise, parenting styles tend to repeat themselves throughout generations and have also been identified as major contributors to psychological adjustment in children. Although there are numerous theories on parenting and psychological adjustment, many scholars view parenting in terms of levels of control and rejection, and acceptance and warmth (Baumrind, 2005). Three common ways to categorize parenting are authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative.

Authoritarian parents demand a high level of obedience and enforce a high level of control over their children (Baumrind, 2005). These parents tend to have low warmth and nurturing skills. Permissive parents are on the other end of the spectrum and allow children to operate with few rules and boundaries; children are given power to make their own decisions. These parents typically display high levels of nurturing and are supportive of their children; they have high levels of warmth and low levels of control (Baumrind, 2005). Authoritative parents fall somewhere in the middle of authoritarian and permissive parents. This parenting style allows for boundaries within the context of expectations, while also providing experiences for children to learn and grow within those boundaries. They set clear limits, enforce guidelines, and offer support and encouragement. Authoritative parents have appropriate levels of warmth and

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find a healthy balance with levels of control (Baumrind, 2005).

Children whose parents display an authoritative style of parenting tend to have better psychological adjustment than children with either authoritarian or permissive parents (Baumrind, 2005; Rothrauff, Cooney, & An, 2009). Parents who display high levels of rejection tend to have children who suffer from depression (McLeod, Weisz, & Wood, 2007), while parents who display high levels of control have children who have high levels of anxiety (McLeod, Wood, & Weisz, 2007). Furthermore, poor effective communication as demonstrated by children's perceptions of their parents as hostile and controlling are more likely to experience higher levels of stress, lower levels of self-esteem, and more depression than their peers without the same perceptions (de Man, Lebreche, & Leduc, 1993).

Family Violence. An extreme area of marital conflict with more acuity, perhaps, is family violence and aggression. Children's future levels of depression, anxiety, maladjustment, and poor behavioral outcomes are also affected by family violence. Family aggression, violence, and related dysfunction have been implicated in poor behavioral problems in children. Specifically, domestic violence (DV) between parents negatively affects not only future behavioral problems but also interpersonal relationships and psychological functioning (Edleson, 1999). Findings from one large study illustrate that adults who witnessed DV as teenagers had higher levels of depression, anxiety, and aggression than did adults who did not witness DV as adolescents (Straus, 1992).

Several reasons for this relationship exist. The first reason is modeling (Diamond & Muller, 2004). Social learning theory suggests that children learn behaviors through observation of and modeling from people within their environment (Bandura, 1973). Children who witness violence learn maladaptive ways of functioning in future interpersonal relationships (Zimet & Jacob, 2001). Parents who model violence for their children teach them how to behave in other contexts of their lives—whether it is being violent, or being the victim of violence, in future interpersonal relationships. Likewise, a study on suicidal ideation in youth found that parents who have ineffective communication and poor problem-solving skills are less likely to model adaptive reactions to stressful situations and, thus, model maladaptive coping strategies (Chen et al., 2009).

The second reason for the relationship between DV and poor future psychological outcomes is enduring feelings of insecurity within the family unit (Diamond & Muller, 2004). Children who are exposed to chronic feelings of insecurity in terms of the stability of the family are likely to develop insecure levels of attachment and, thus, develop maladaptive psychological patterns as adults (Diamond & Muller, 2004; Zimet & Jacob, 2001).

A third compelling notion for the interaction between DV and poor psychological outcomes is the child's attribution of the violence. How a child attributes the violence affects the coping strategies she or he employs throughout life and, thus, leads to poor psychological adjustment such as depression and anxiety (Snyder, 1998). Specifically, if children in violent homes attribute the violence to their own actions (e.g., the child overhears arguments that involve or regard him or her), they often feel an overwhelming sense of responsibility and guilt for the violent behavior. Internalizing the family violence (i.e., carrying the burden of feeling responsible for family violence) can lead to poor coping strategies, such as the initiation of substance use, feelings of depression, and/or increased levels of worry and anxiety.

The final postulation that DV between parents has a lasting, negative impact on psychological functioning is the impact that the violence, aftermath, communication, and

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high levels of stress have on the parent–child relationship. Parents in violent relationships may be communicating (nonverbally or otherwise) that they are emotionally unavailable to the child and may be displaying a lack of attention and responsiveness to the child (Diamond & Muller, 2004). This physical and emotional unavailability contributes to a deterioration in the parent–child relationship and invites children to develop their own coping strategies, which often includes coping by using substances to mask the anxiety and depression.

Attachment. Parent–child attachment has implications for many mental health outcomes, and poor parent–child attachment has also been named as a cause for the development of anxiety in children. Attachment is defined as a long-lasting emotional bond between a child and an attachment figure (Ainsworth, 1989). A child develops a secure sense of attachment when he or she perceives that the attachment figure responds in an emotionally and physically available and consistent way. It is from this secure place that children launch to explore the world and have confidence that the secure "base" will be there when needed (Ainsworth, 1989). Children develop insecure patterns of attachment—either ambivalent or avoidant—when the attachment figure responds in an inconsistent, unavailable, and insensitive manner (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). Children are less likely to seek respite and comfort from this insecure "base" in times of need. The quality of early-life parent–child attachment is said to influence development of personality later in life (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby (1969) suggested that children develop anxiety when they have concerns about the inability to rely on the unavailable and inconsistent attachment figure. Anxiety typically arises for these children when they are unable to predict when the inconsistent attachment figure will respond. If the prediction is incorrect, the child

Box 9.2 It Happens in Real Life: What About His Family?

The accused killer is one of two children. His younger brother, Robert, remembers typical sibling rivalry stuff and also, as a child and young adult, how smart and well rounded his brother was. Robert looked up to his brother. Neighbors remember him as friendly; helping out whenever he could. Robert recalls that his big brother was better (than he) at everything, was a National Merit Scholarship finalist, and could have attended any college of his choice on scholarship. He came from a family of privilege—he went to a private high school; he is remembered as being a charming and handsome young adult. His family was baffled when he decided not to attend college at all. Instead, he took time off from school and went to live on the family ranch in a neighboring state.

In his early 30s, the accused had minor cosmetic surgery on his face—he had a mole removed. After the mole was removed, the accused became certain that doctors changed his face in a substantial way—that his face was no longer his. He told his brother, Robert, that people were following him. Robert knew something was amiss. This behavior was not at all typical. "I remember calling my mom and saying 'This is not about alcohol and drugs, this is a mental illness.' And she was just floored. We had no experience. We didn't know what to expect. What do you do?" (Hyde, as cited in Stafford, 2007, para. 183).

Although his mental illness was successfully controlled for much of his life, as the days, months, and years went on, the accused's mental health became less stable. Doctors changed. Medications changed. The accused changed. Tragedy unfolded in 2005. Robert says about breaking the news of the shooting spree to his mother: "And you just never think that that would ever happen in your life that you'd have to say something like that to your mother" (Hyde, as cited in Stafford, 2007, para. 227).

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responds with fear and anxiety (Brumariu & Kerns, 2010).

In summary, this section examined four types of communication and conflict issues in families: (1) family communication and marital conflict, (2) parenting, (3) family violence, and (4) attachment. They represent general patterns of communication and conflict with conflict embedded in each. The effects on mental health for each of the four types of communication and conflict issues were also identified. In the next section, the effects of mental health disorders—both for family conflict and for other aspects of mental health—are discussed.

Mental Health

Depression. Depression and anxiety are the two most common psychological disorders in youth (Costello et al., 1996). Depression is a costly illness and worldwide is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality (Gladstone & Beardslee, 2009). Far more than monetary costs, it is the precursor to suicidality. "Youth depression is quite common and is associated with negative long-term psychiatric and functional outcomes, including impairment in school, work, and interpersonal relationships, substance abuse and suicide attempts" (Gladstone & Beardslee, 2009, p. 213).

Parental depression has extensive and serious implications on family members. Depression affects childhood mental health well-being as well as mental health outcomes later on in life (Solantaus, Paavonen, Toikka, & Punamaki, 2010). Depression in parents often translates to parents who are emotionally distant or unavailable toward their children, and depression in children often stems from depression in parents. Specifically, depression in children whose mothers suffer from depression is significantly greater than rates of depression in children whose mothers do not have depression (Goodman, 2007). Rates of depression in young children and teenagers whose mothers are depressed range between 20% and 41%, with several factors accounting for the variability. Some of these factors include the level of severity of the mother's depression, depression levels in fathers, as well as other social and demographic factors (Goodman, 2007).

Suicide is a tragic aspect of depression that people often avoid talking about. Suicide is a complex issue, and risk factors vary by age, race/ethnicity, and family history of mental disorders. Although preventable, in 2007 in the United States, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death among all people (NIMH, 2010). The national average of death by suicide is 11.3 deaths per 100,000 people (NIMH, 2010). Some risk factors for suicide include depression and other mental health disorders, family history of substance abuse, substance abuse, family history of suicide, prior suicide attempts, and family violence (NIMH, 2010). Interestingly (because of the rates of depression reported above), non-Hispanic Blacks (5.1 per 100,000), Hispanics (6.0 per 100,000), and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (6.2 per 100,000) have the lowest rates of death by suicide, while Native Americans/American Indians (14.3 per 100,000) and non-Hispanic Whites (13.5 per 100,000) have the highest rates of death by suicide. People above the age of 65 (14.3 per 100,000) have the highest rates of suicide, while non-Hispanic White males above the age of 85 have the highest rates of suicide among all ethnicities and age-groups (47 per 100,000; NIMH, 2010). Box 9.3 recounts a true and recent event and illustrates the tragic ending of life by suicide. This person was a 40-year-old Hispanic male.

Anxiety. Like depression, family history plays a large part in the development of anxiety and anxiety-related disorders. Anxiety is one of the most common psychological disorders found in youth (Hudson, Dodd, & Bovopoulos, 2011). Because it has become such a common theme among children and

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Box 9.3 Another Case of It Happens in Real Life: Death by Suicide

While preparing this book chapter for publication, we got word that our former neighbor in a city in which we used to live, Martin, died by suicide. As an electrician by trade, Martin spent several hours at our home over the years helping with repairs. He was a funny man; he made lots of self-deprecating jokes, had everyone around him laughing. He was jovial; he whistled and sang songs while he worked, and talked out loud to himself—and to whatever it was he was trying to fix (something I always found particularly charming). And, most important, he was a partner and a dad. He left his wife and his darling three children. He mustn't have known that in that instant, when he took his life, that he permanently, forever after, increased the risk of his young children's risk for death by suicide. His son, only 2 years old, will likely never remember his dad. He will not remember his love, his humor, his wit. He will not remember that his dad didn't work on Mondays because that was Martin's day to have special father-and-son time. He will only know his legacy. He will know the stories that people tell him. His two girls are school aged. His girls used to chase our sons around the front lawns of our homes . . . something Martin joked about (saying he will keep an eye out on our sons as they all get older). His girls will remember their dad. They will remember his love, his smile, his humor, and they will remember his death. Like the rest of us, they will always wonder why. They are old enough to witness their mother's grief, anger, and confusion. They are old enough to experience their own grief, anger, and confusion. They are old enough to ask questions. Observing death by suicide from the angle of three small children and a partner, we must recognize that, to Martin, the demons felt insurmountable. Martin made a phone call just hours before his death. He called the person who taught him how to be an electrician. He called his father. Sadly, his dad didn't realize that Martin was calling because he didn't know where to turn or what to do. His dad was busy and asked to call him back later. He will live with the guilt forever; he had no way of knowing that this call was "the call." I knew Martin well enough to know that he would not have wanted to leave his wife and children grieving. He smiled brightly when he talked of his three children and his wife. He would not have wanted to increase their risk of depression or death by suicide because of his own actions. The pain was too great; he couldn't imagine a tomorrow, and in that moment, he didn't know how to ask for help.

adolescents, the study of anxiety, its causes, and treatment modalities has increased over the past few years. Although there are still many unanswered questions, the literature points to several issues that have been concluded from the research, namely, parental anxiety, parenting styles, and attachment.

Children whose parents have anxiety are seven times more likely to develop an anxiety disorder than are children whose parents do not have anxiety (Turner, Beidel, & Costello, 1987). Similarly, anxious children are more likely to have a parent with anxiety than are nonanxious children (Cooper, Fearn, Willetts, Seabrook, & Parkinson, 2006). Although the diffusion of anxiety from a parent to child is often thought of as a genetic influence, anxiety in children is also attributed to parental modeling of anxiety and also parental communication about anxiety (Hudson et al., 2011).

Parents who have anxiety demonstrate high control and low warmth to their children (Hudson et al., 2011; Laraia, Stuart, Frye, Lydiard, & Ballenger, 1994), and these types of behaviors (high control, low warmth) have the potential to lead to broader negative outcomes for children and also influence mental health outcomes when these children become

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adults. Children whose parents demonstrate high control, or over involvement, typically do so in perceived high anxiety–producing situations. These children, therefore, do not develop strategies for dealing with anxiety, have a fear of anxiety-producing (threatening) situations, and have an increased perception of, and desire to avoid, threatening situations (Hudson et al., 2011). Perhaps along the lines of family environment, and levels of warmth and control, high levels of family conflict have also been linked to childhood anxiety (Barnow, Lucht, & Freyberger, 2001).

Schizophrenia. Just as noted with each of the disorders above, schizophrenia is something that has higher rates of prevalence within families. "First degree, biological relatives" of people with "schizophrenia are 10-times" more likely to develop the disorder than the "general population" (APA, 2000, p. 309). Interestingly, identical twin studies show that environment plays a large role in the onset of schizophrenia. Studies have demonstrated that identical twins raised in the same and different environments have different outcomes, illustrating that genetics is not the only factor that leads to schizophrenia. The level of stability within one's environment can either protect against, or facilitate, the onset of schizophrenia (APA, 2000; U.S. DHHS, 1999).

The context of family makes up a large part of the environment for an individual living with schizophrenia. Although, for many years, the study of schizophrenia focused on the strong biological foundation, more recent efforts have turned attention to the importance of family and social support. Family behaviors relate to the course and treatment of schizophrenia (Lopez et al., 2004). Families' reactions to an individual with schizophrenia posthospitalization have implications for recovery and relapse (Butzlaff & Hooley, 1998). Specifically, patients who enter an environment with families who demonstrate high levels of hostility, emotional overinvolvement, and criticism on discharge are more likely to relapse than patients who enter an environment with families who demonstrate low levels of hostility, emotional overinvolvement, and criticism (Butzlaff & Hooley, 1998). Additional research found that the level of warmth displayed within an environment is directly related to relapse as well. Patients, posthospitalization, who return to an environment that displays high levels of warmth are less likely to relapse than patients who return to an environment that displays low levels of warmth (Ivanovic, Vuletic, & Bebbington, 1994).

Substance Abuse and Dependence. Family environment and familial relationships each have a robust connection to the onset and continuation of substance abuse among adolescents. "Specific aspects of family life and family relationships have strong and consistent connections to the initiation, exacerbation, and relapse of drug problems" (Rowe & Liddle, 2003, p. 97). Regardless of culture, numerous familial factors consistently predict adolescent substance abuse over time (Rowe & Liddle, 2003). Familial relationship factors such as poor parent–child relationships predict adolescent substance abuse (Brook, Brook, Arencibia-Mireles, Richter, & Whiteman, 2001), while parenting styles that encompass low levels of monitoring and poor parent–child communication are predictive of substance abuse initiation and continuation by adolescents (Liddle, Rowe, Dakof, & Lyke, 1998).

Existing mental health disorders also play a role in adolescent substance abuse. People who have two mental health diagnoses are considered to have "dual diagnosis," and people with three or more diagnoses are considered to have "multiple diagnosis disorder." Mood disorders (depression) and anxiety disorders are commonly diagnosed as a dual diagnosis, with the other diagnosis being substance abuse (Greydanus & Patel, 2005).

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Not surprisingly, a review of the literature by Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller (1992) demonstrated that many of the same environmental and familial characteristics that lead to depression, anxiety, and even the relapse of schizophrenia are also linked to the onset and continued use of substances. Some of these factors include parenting styles that are too permissive, overly critical, inconsistent with expectations, fail to monitor behavior, and lack of maternal warmth; high levels of family conflict; and low parent involvement in child engagements and low parental warmth.

In summary, there is a great deal of overlap among the mental health disorders addressed in this chapter. One commonality is that each of these disorders can be viewed from the BMD meaning that biology, parenting, communication, marital discord, culture, and levels of stress, and environment each play a role in the process of these disorders. No one area can be labeled as the cause of a given mental health disorder, and we have seen how culture plays a role in the way people experience, communicate, and even define mental illness. A second commonality is that substance abuse and dependence is often a co-occurring disorder in people struggling with mood disorders (e.g., depression), anxiety-related disorders, and schizophrenia. A third commonality among these disorders is that family members often do not know how to support an individual with mental illness. They do not know how to effectively communicate with the individual who is ill; they do not know how to communicate with providers about their observations and fears; and they are often at a loss for ways to demonstrate support. A fourth commonality among these disorders is that family matters. In some cases, we have seen that parenting styles and family violence lead to maladaptive behaviors for children as they enter adulthood (high levels of depression and anxiety). We have also seen that high levels of hostility, emotional overinvolvement, and criticism by family members have a direct impact on the recovery process for someone with schizophrenia. Additionally, evidence suggests that higher levels of warmth displayed by family members also have a positive impact by reducing the chances of relapse for someone with schizophrenia. It seems, then, that sometimes family environment can shape the outcome of the onset of some types of mental illness, as well as be a critical part of the recovery process. The next section will address another way that families can affect the role of mental illness: prevention and treatment.

Prevention and Treatment for Family Conflict and Mental Health

Without placing blame on family members for mental illness, it is important to recognize that families do play a large role in the environment in which we live. It is necessary to recognize the influential relationship that family members hold. As illustrated in the sections above, regardless of genetics, families can support and also hinder mental well-being. The beauty of the role of the family is that they can contribute in a major way to prevention and treatment of mental health. However, family members are often at a loss for how to help their loved ones when dealing with mental illness. Resources are scarce, they do not know who to ask for help, and they fear creating more distance between themselves and the individual who needs support. Furthermore, because of evidence that demonstrates the importance of family environment, and in an effort to address the critical and harmful responses from family members, treatment programs for families include psycho-educational training in effective communication and problem-solving skills (McFarlane et al., 1995). This section discusses numerous studies that identify ways

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Box 9.4 It Happens in Real Life: Families Dealing With Mental Health Disorders

The accused killer's family knew that things were wrong—very wrong, in fact. Up until this August day, the accused killer never had a violent episode in his life. He was a standout high school student—earning scholarships that would allow him to attend any college in the country. He was a very high-functioning member of society—caring for his frail mother, attending his medical appointments, and volunteering at the hospital to support other people with the same diagnosis. His younger brother said that things began to unravel 10 months prior to the killing spree. His psychiatrist changed, his diagnosis changed, his medications changed. One morning, his brother and his brother's girlfriend woke to each of their cars having a slashed tire—from a knife. On another occasion, the accused cut the brakes in his brother's car. And, on yet another occasion, the accused locked his severely arthritic mother in her house. The police were called, and they responded to each of these situations. At the time, to those who didn't know him best, he seemed stable and didn't sound any alarms. The accused killer wrote an open letter to the hospital pleading for a new psychiatrist and new medications (it is unknown if he ever sent the letter). His family wrote letters to the psychiatrist treating him, they made numerous phone calls. The accused was becoming more agitated, more bizarre as the days and months went on. He began asking for guns and weapons. Finally, in April, the hospital agreed to an evaluation. He was held for 4 hours at the hospital and then released. The hospital staff told the family that there was nothing to be done: "We are going to have to wait until he escalates." "We did not know what to do," his younger brother said during an interview.

in which families can be involved in prevention as well as the process of treatment of mental health illnesses organized around the four diagnoses.

Figure 9.2 illustrates the essential aspect of families in the prevention of and treatment for mental health disorders. It also illustrates the complex—and unanswered—dynamics between family conflict, mental health disorders, and substance abuse. Specifically, the treatment and prevention of poor mental health outcomes should happen within the family context. Given the overlap of family conflict, mental health outcomes, and substance abuse, the family dynamic must be integrated within treatment and prevention methods. Individually focused prevention and treatment models (e.g., individual therapy) do not effectively address the problems in a holistic, comprehensive manner, as demonstrated in the BMD. Thus, the center of the figure represents the important roles of family in the prevention and treatment of poor mental health outcomes. While there is substantial



Figure 9.2 Prevention of, and Treatment for, Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Family Conflict

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evidence that excessive family conflict negatively affects mental health disorders and substance use, we lack knowledge about specific pathways (find more discussion on this point in the Future Directions section, below). Thus, the arrows connecting family conflict, mental health outcomes, and substance abuse are designed to illustrate a co-occurrence and not a linear progression.

A review of the literature divulges that both prevention and treatment models for each of the four mental health diagnosis categories discussed in this chapter (depression, anxiety, substance abuse and dependence, and schizophrenia) are all strikingly similar. They all conclude that family interventions are more successful than other interventions (e.g., individual, group). Therefore, as opposed to discussing prevention and treatment in all four domains of mental illness discussed in this chapter, the discussion below will highlight some of the commonalities of specific aspects of prevention and treatment models used to address these areas of mental health.

Prevention and treatment models for depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and schizophrenia all consider the challenges and needs of engaging in family therapy. These models define the roles that family members have in supporting prevention, treatment, and recovery processes. For more than two decades, researchers have realized that environmental factors, such as family, are critical in terms of recovery from substance abuse and posthospitalization for a person with schizophrenia. Family has also been identified as a critical, necessary component of the treatment of depression and anxiety (Hughes & Asarnow, 2011; Maid, Smokowski, & Bacallao, 2008).

The goals of prevention and treatment programs center on improving various interaction skills to better manage family conflict in order to avoid mental health problems. For example, the intentions of many of the programs are the following: (a) prevent initiation of disorders by identifying subclinical symptoms, (b) increase resiliency in children, and (c) improve skill building for families. Specifically, these interventions increase the parents' awareness of the impact of poor mental health on children and their spouses and improve communication skills within the family (Gladstone & Beardslee, 2009).

To achieve these intentions, prevention and treatment programs use a variety of approaches. Communication skill building is an effort to allow families to better understand the experiences of depression and to assist children in reducing self-blame for parental symptoms and ancillary behaviors (Gladstone & Beardslee, 2009). Commonalities across these successful interventions include "social support, detailed education on clinical aspects, direct guidance, and training in coping skills" (McFarlane et al., 1995, p. 679). The notion of many intervention and prevention studies in schizophrenia is to reduce family conflict, increase family warmth, improve family communication through communication training, and improve problem-solving skills (Lopez et al., 2004; McFarlane et al., 1995). Furthermore, high levels of family warmth seem to have positive implications for the prevention of relapse in people with schizophrenia. "Identifying family behaviors associated with warmth may contribute to identifying family strengths" (Lopez et al., 2004, p. 437).

Given that family conflict and dysfunction is often a major factor contributing to the disorders discussed (anxiety, depression, substance abuse and dependence, and schizophrenia), treatment modalities that include the family can be challenging. However, several rigorous, clinically based interventions have demonstrated that family-based treatment (a) increases treatment retention and attendance (over other types of standard treatments in substance abuse and dependence treatment), (b) increases engagement by heavy-using and resistant adolescents

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into treatment, (c) increases engagement of homeless and runaway youth (Rowe & Liddle, 2003), (d) reduces substance abuse compared with other treatments (Waldron, 1997), and (e) reduces substance abuse during the course of treatment (Waldron, Slesnick, Brody, Turner, & Peterson, 2001). In addition to recognizing that families have a critical role in inhibiting and preventing mental health disorders, these interventions have also demonstrated that family relationships, in both adolescent and adult treatment processes, are vital to enhancing treatment outcomes (Heath & Stanton, 1998; McCrady & Ziedonis, 2001). Because family engagement in substance abuse treatment has shown so much promise, researchers continue to observe clinically sound ways to improve a wide variety of treatment outcomes. Furthermore, investigations of family-based treatment of comorbid substance abuse and other mental health issues, including school attendance and performance, have provided evidence of the importance of family intervention (Rowe & Liddle, 2003). Family functioning, in terms of this literature, includes a decrease in family conflict, an increase in family cohesion, and an improvement in parenting styles (Rowe & Liddle, 2003; Waldron et al., 2001). Additionally, family-based interventions decrease the risk of relapse with people recovering from hospitalization for schizophrenia (McFarlane et al., 1995). In fact, family-based psycho-educational models have been shown to be more effective than either individual treatment or medication alone (McFarlane et al., 1995).

As with each of the mental health illnesses discussed in this chapter—anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and schizophrenia—poor family functioning (e.g., high conflict, poor communication, abuse, and permissive parenting) seems to be a risk factor for the initiation and maintenance of the disorder. At the same time, the strengths of the family have the capacity to prevent these same disorders and/or are part of the treatment process. There is likely no other single prevention or treatment entity that can encompass the power of the family.

Specifically, family-based interventions such as multisystemic family therapy (MFT) offer a high level of individualized family- and home-based treatment options that address multiple layers within the context of the individual. These treatments address the individual, the family, the community, and societal aspects that influence development and behavior (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Henggeler, Melton, & Smith, 1992). Functional family therapy (FFT) also addresses individual problem behavior within the context of the family. The central notion of FFT is to impact individual dysfunctional behavior by improving family relationships and changing family interactions (Alexander & Robbins, 2010). FFT and MFT are similar to one another in that they are both systems approaches that take biological, social, and ecological contexts into consideration. These two frameworks offer intervention strategies that match the BMD's framework of mental illness. Furthermore, the interventions are solidly grounded in the belief that addressing family functioning and family conflict will substantially improve mental health outcomes.

Practical Suggestions for Providers and Families

Mental health disorders are complex and often difficult to treat. Mental health research receives a great deal of funding from the U.S. federal government in order to determine the most cost-effective, culturally appropriate, and applicable ways to treat and prevent mental illnesses. In all of the areas explored in this chapter, family members play an instrumental role in the prevention, onset, and continuation of many disorders. Families also play an

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Box 9.5 It Happens in Real Life: What Is Life Like Now?

The accused killer is currently being held in a state hospital, until the day he is deemed fit to stand trial. He is "incompetent," meaning he is unable to stand trial, unable to understand the proceedings, and unable to assist in his defense. A trial will only happen if his competency improves. His case, and competency, will be reviewed every 2 years. If his level of competency changes, as deemed so by the court or the hospital staff, he will stand trial. It is most likely, however, that he will be locked in the state hospital for the rest of his life. Although he wasn't able to stand trial, his attorneys and the judge agreed that the prosecution provided overwhelming evidence identifying him as the person who committed the crimes. For this reason, in August 2007, just 2 years after the shooting spree, a judge sentenced the killer to 179 years: Five counts of First Degree Murder, 30 years for each of the five individuals who lost their lives (150 years); one count of Child Abuse, 18 years; one count of Armed Robbery, 9 years; Firearm Enhancements on the Child Abuse and Armed Robbery charges, 2 years. He remains in a "medically fragile" state. He is on a minimum of six psychotropic medications a day, and years later is unable to return to a stable state. He wanted help. He asked for help. His family wanted help. They asked for help. No one knew how to support him, how to intervene. No one knew how to effectively communicate—not family, not friends, not medical providers. Lives—multiple lives—were lost that day, and not just those who were killed. Hundreds more were affected: parents, spouses, children, siblings, grandchildren, colleagues, friends, and countless community members. Surely, everyone involved wishes events leading up to this day would have been handled differently. Indeed, it was "one of the worst days in the history of the city."

instrumental role in the recovery. The latest indication for recovery in depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and schizophrenia is family-based treatment. Family members are being retrained in communication skills, problem solving, and parenting. They are also being educated in new ways in regard to mental health disorders. They are being given more information about the disorders and are being given concrete guidance on behaviors that support well-being. Practitioners and families alike can take advantage of free resources on the Internet (see Appendix 9.1) and participate in funded clinical trials. Oftentimes, when participating in clinical trials, families can receive free treatment and providers can receive free, in-depth training.

Future Directions

Several future directions in research will help unite existing literature with areas yet to be thoroughly explored. One area for further understanding is assessing culture within the context of family conflict and mental health outcomes. There is evidence presented in this chapter about the consequences of family conflict on mental health outcomes. However, what is lacking is a better understanding of what family conflict looks like among cultures and how that conflict affects mental health outcomes. For example, Lopez et al. (2004) found that family warmth is a protective factor for relapse to schizophrenia in Mexican American families, while criticism is a risk factor for relapse to schizophrenia in White families. Future research can examine the degree to which different family conflict patterns are associated with mental health outcomes and whether the conflict about mental health is managed differently in different cultures.

A second, and quite complex, area of study that warrants a close look is teasing out the pathways of poor mental health and

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substance abuse/dependence outcomes and family conflict. Through mostly retrospective evidence, researchers have demonstrated that family conflict negatively affects mental health. What is missing in the literature, however, is an understanding of the impact that mental health has on family conflict; and an understanding of what comes first (is it the mental health that leads to family conflict or the family conflict that leads to mental health). For example, Awad and Voruganti (2008) examined the "burden of care" for caregivers of people with schizophrenia. The burden of care includes economic, physical, social, and emotional consequences, including factors such as shame, guilt, self-blame, and embarrassment. This "burden of care" likely creates conflict within families and between caregiver and patients. In support of this point, Kung (2003) found a positive association between burden of care and family conflicts in Chinese American caregivers. A longitudinal study assessing these factors will allow newfound clarity on the subject and will benefit the development of prevention measures and also provide knowledge of how to manage conflict during the treatment process.

A final area of research (and perhaps for practical prevention programs), is a better understanding of, and an offering of support to, families who have a family member with a mental disorder. Stories like Martin's (Box 9.3) are tragic and, sadly, not uncommon. Identifying ways to include family members in a network of support services prior to—or exclusive of—the individual receiving treatment would go a long way in gaining an understanding of the family's needs as a whole and also would provide a unique opportunity to support the individual as well (via his or her family). I wonder if the ending would have been different if Martin's family had a network of professionals assisting them as they attempted to support Martin through his severe bout of depression.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter examines the relationship of mental health and conflict on families. Specifically, this chapter provides definitions and descriptions of four mental health disorders—depression, anxiety, substance abuse and dependence, and schizophrenia; explores the role of race and ethnicity on mental health; explores the relationship between mental health disorders and family conflict; and, finally, offers practical suggestions for providers and families.

While evaluating the relationship between mental health disorders and family conflict, several constructs emerged: (a) marital discord and family conflict, (b) parenting, (c) family violence, and (d) attachment. The literature provides overwhelming evidence that excessive marital discord and family conflict, poor parenting styles—either authoritarian or too permissive—family violence, and developing poor styles of attachment all lead to poor mental health outcomes for children and spouses. Additionally, the literature also provides evidence that parents who have mental health disorders (such as the ones addressed in this chapter; anxiety, depression, substance abuse/dependence, and schizophrenia) are more likely to have children who also suffer from mental health disorders than are parents who do not have these mental health disorders. Finally, the chapter discusses the important role that families have in the initiation, maintenance, and also treatment and recovery of mental health disorders. These disorders occur within the individual, although come about in the context of the family. Therefore, family members have the ability to play a critical role in the treatment process.

Through effective family-based prevention and treatment interventions, we have the capacity to prevent another massive shooting spree, another death by suicide, by people suffering from mental illness. We have a long way

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to go in determining all of the nuances of mental health disorders. For certain, however, we know that the role of family is an important one. Future research, theory, and practice need to be integrated in order to develop, evaluate, and implement effective, culturally relevant, family-based interventions. Theory, research, and practice in isolation will not be sufficient to address the complex family dynamics and mental health outcomes in our society.

Appendix 9.1 Useful Website Resources for Family Members and Practitioners

Organization	*Website*	*Useful Tools*[a]
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth	Provides public health information on mental illness; includes data, statistics, publications, and information on resources and organizations
Mental Health America	www.nmha.org	Complete a 3-minute screening tool to assess your own levels of depression, anxiety, PTSD, and bipolar disorders; stay current and get involved with policy making; find treatment, support groups; obtain information on specific mental health areas; and find information in Spanish
National Institute of Mental Health	www.nimh.nih.gov	Offers links to "finding help for mental illness," multiple publications on vast mental health problems, and NIH-funded studies that are currently recruiting participants
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org	Provides information on how to help others who are in need; offers a lifeline 1.800.273. TALK (8255), as well as information on warning signs and resources.
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	www.health.org	Provides thorough information "Issues, Conditions, and Disorders" common with substance abuse, as well as information on "Types of Substances" and a detailed listing of "Treatment, Prevention, and Recovery" resources; offers helpful links for professionals as well
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (website specific for mental health)	www.mentalhealth.va.gov	Access information on PTSD, suicide prevention, anxiety, alcohol abuse (along with many other areas of concern); find resources for a free and confidential crisis line phone number (1.800.273.8255, press 1) and confidential online chat: VeteransCrisisLine.net, or text: 838255.

NOTE: PTSD = post-traumatic stress disorder; NIH = National Institutes of Health.
a. Items listed under the "Useful Tools" section are not exhaustive. Each website has an abundant amount of information that is not listed here.

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10

Managing Conflict in a Competent Manner

A Mindful Look at Events That Matter

Daniel J. Canary, Sandra G. Lakey, and Alan L. Sillars

By now, the reader has learned the importance of conflict. Our focus concerns how individuals can gain greater control of their conflict interactions by managing them competently. In this chapter, we consider how people can become more competent in managing conflict by becoming more mindful of various "events" that occur during conflict episodes. The competence-based approach we adopt emphasizes how parties in close relationships negotiate their important personal goals.

First, we present a brief rationale for our conceptual framework. Next, we examine what is meant by competence in conflict management, emphasizing how people can become much more mindful of the manner in which they engage in conflict interaction. Then, we present a model of strategic conflict that locates events where people can mindfully establish objectives for their management of conflict. Following each event, we offer implications for the competent management of conflict. Finally, we present conclusions.

Competence in Managing Conflict

Although several reasons warrant the approach taken herein, we offer three. First, people should adopt a code of conduct to guide their actions when other people appear to confront them. A competence-based approach that emphasizes both persons' rights to pursue their goals implies that neither person should exploit the other, harm the other, or even ignore the other (Lakey & Canary, 2002). In other words, a competence-based approach suggests that people treat each other in an ethical manner.

Second, the competent management of conflict can preempt the felt need to use aggression and violence in close relationships. Approximately, a quarter to a third of marriages experience physical, sexual, or verbal (psychological) harm within the previous year (e.g., Marshall, 1994; see also Spitzberg, this volume). Several conflict scholars have identified that the most likely reason for such

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"common couple violence" (Johnson, 2001, p. 98) focuses on how these people lack the communication skills to engage each other competently (Marshall, 1994; Sabourin, Infante, & Rudd, 1993).

Third, competence in managing conflict dramatically affects the quality of close relationships. How partners manage conflict affects marital satisfaction and stability (e.g., Gottman & Levenson, 2000; Huston, Caughlin, Houts, Smith, & George, 2001). Moreover, the manner in which people manage conflict dramatically affects parent–child, friendship, and sibling relationships as well (Afifi, Aldeis, & Joseph, 2010; Canary, Cupach, & Messman, 1995; Messman & Canary, 1998). Importantly, partner assessment of the other person's competence in managing conflict affects such relational outcomes. For example, Canary and Cupach (1988) found that assessments of competence filtered the effects of cooperative and competitive strategies on trust and control mutuality (i.e., the extent to which both parties agree on who has the right to influence the other). The point is that message behaviors do not directly affect outcomes; rather the evaluation of those messages in terms of competence criteria most directly affect outcomes.

Identifying Competence

Some researchers consider competence as the ability a person has to enact goal-directed behavior. However, other researchers view competence as a quality, an attributional judgment (Spitzberg, 1993). Also, in some circumstances, the word *competence* references minimal performance (Larson, Backlund, Redmond, & Barbour, 1978; McCroskey, 1984). However, in most communication research, the term *competence* indicates high or even superior levels of performance (Wiemann & Bradac, 1989). Moreover, competence occurs in degrees. It can range from "unacceptable, to minimally functional, to adequate, to proficient, to masterful" (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1989, p. 7).

Two primary criteria of interpersonal communication competence, as defined by Spitzberg and Cupach (1989), are *appropriateness* (i.e., following relational and social "norms, rules and expectations" [p. 7]) and *effectiveness* (i.e., successfully achieving one's goals). Spitzberg and Cupach noted that most current views of competence recognize the importance of these two criteria, but this was not always the case. Some early conceptualizations of competence equated it to only effectiveness. Rubin (1990) stated that both effectiveness and appropriateness are now generally accepted as central to the concept. Although other dimensions for competence exist, the dual criteria of appropriateness and effectiveness appear to be robust for examining not only relationships but cultures as well (e.g., Ting-Toomey, 2010; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001).

Including both effectiveness and appropriateness affects understandings of interpersonal communication competence in two ways. First, it emphasizes that communication can be judged as competent only within the context of a relationship or situation because the context determines the standards of appropriateness that must be met (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Price & Bouffard, 1974; Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984, 1989). Second, as Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) noted, the inclusion of both concepts is central to the definition of interpersonal competence because communication can be appropriate without being effective and effective without being appropriate. Although the two concepts can occur individually, effectiveness and appropriateness are interdependent. Even in conflict, when the interactants' goals are perceived to be at odds, appropriateness and effectiveness are positively correlated (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987, 1990). This paradox occurs because communication that is effective in

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achieving goals also tends to produce positive feelings about the interaction (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). Likewise, Parks (1994) explained that people realize that offending a partner or inhibiting a partner's goal achievement by behaving inappropriately would negatively affect their own goal achievement.

The moment-by-moment production of communication behavior challenges one assumption of the competence-based approach—namely, the extent to which social actors are aware of their repertoire of behaviors and can rationally use them. People make decisions about messages anywhere from a deliberately conscious choice about a means to an end to an intuition about what to say at the other end (Andersen, 1986; Howell, 1982; Sanders, 1991). Conflict interactions in particular work against a rational, skills-based approach for several reasons (e.g., the structure of conflict communication is often ambiguous; see Sillars & Weisberg, 1987). Despite the fact that conflict taxes people's ability to edit their communication behavior (Zillmann, 1990), we believe that social actors can improve the ways in which they interact with each other. We concur with Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001; Ting-Toomey, 2009, 2010) that being mindful of one's actions during conflict is necessary for competent conflict management.

Mindfulness and Mindlessness

The differentiation between *mindfulness* and *mindlessness* (Langer, 1989a, 1989b) helps explain differences in levels of consciousness and their effects on conflict communication behavior. Langer (1989a, 1989b) defined *mindlessness* as minimal information processing that relies on information from past experiences to determine present action. This state of mind relies on existing categories, previously drawn distinctions, and reduced attention. According to Langer, mindless behavior is pervasive: People function with reduced cognitive activity and consider the current environment based on their past experiences with similar situations. As a result, mindless behavior involves treating information and ideas as if they are context free—true regardless of the situation (Langer, 1989a, 1989b).

According to Langer (1989a, 1989b), *mindfulness* constitutes a state of alertness and activity that relies on information from the current situation to determine behavior. Ting-Toomey (2009) provides additional information to the term when she refers to the Eastern understanding of mindfulness as "being fully present—attending to our own and our partners' desires interests and rising emotions" (p. 32). When they are mindful, people can identify their own emotions and their partner's emotions and communicate those emotions more clearly to their partners. Because they are less judgmental and more responsive to their partners' behaviors, partners move more smoothly through emotional interactions (Wachs & Cordova, 2007).

People tend to be mindful when (a) an action requires more effort than it has required in the past, (b) mindless behavior produces failure, (c) external factors interfere with the completion of a behavior, or (d) behavior produces unexpected consequences. Langer (1989a, 1989b) considers mindfulness as a way for people to realize their full potential. Langer also recognizes, however, that people cannot be mindful at all times about all aspects of interaction. Rather, they can be mindful on a global level but perform certain actions mindlessly. Mindful thinking includes consideration of the context of an interaction; it emphasizes cognitive flexibility. Because people consider various ways to behave in the situation, they realize that their first thought might be only one way of reacting to the situation. They attempt to create additional options that

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reflect the situation, thereby demonstrating creativity, flexibility, and adaptability (Brown & Langer, 1990). We believe that people can become more mindful of the manner in which they enter, negotiate, and exit conflict encounters strategically.[1]

Conflict episodes are not routine, and they carry some importance. Therefore, as Langer (1989a) contends, people will pay more attention than they will in more routine and mindless episodes. Mindfulness characteristics can be quite useful during conflict. Creating new categories (Langer, 1989b) helps people find ideas that they might otherwise overlook. Also, cognitive differentiation (Langer, 1989b) causes people to look at more specific, detailed ideas rather than settle for global assessments that are less useful in managing the conflict. Together, creating new categories and cognitive differentiation allows people to develop a better understanding of the conflict. Additionally, multiple views on the situation likely lead to increased sensitivity to the other person's goals. Several studies have found that a nonjudgmental attitude and attention to the present, which characterize mindful behavior, help people understand more clearly their partners' reactions to emotions, thereby increasing their empathy (Block-Lerner, Adair, Plumb, Rhatigan, & Orsillo, 2007; Wachs & Cordova, 2007). Conversely, many of the conscious inferences reported by spouses involve interpretation of specific communicative acts and pragmatic intentions based on one's own perspective, for example, whether the partner is presumed to be listening, empathizing, criticizing, or evading a point (Manusov & Koenig, 2001; Sillars, Roberts, Leonard, & Dun, 2000; Sillars, Smith, & Koerner, 2010).

Mindlessness, though, results in rigid behavior; people are less likely to go beyond their initial reactions. They often fail to recognize other views or uses for information and continue to insist that their first reactions are correct (Langer & Piper, 1987). These people also tend to see fewer options for managing the conflict because they view the conflict as resulting from simple causes. Obviously, when people use mindless behavior, they are less open to integrative solutions (Langer, 1989a).

In sum, being effective in conflict (i.e., achieving one's goals) is positively associated with being appropriate (i.e., fulfilling the partner's expectations). Social actors routinely pursue instrumental, relational, and self-presentation goals both automatically (mindlessly) and strategically (mindfully). They function at various points along a continuum of consciousness during different interactions; people will display higher levels of consciousness during conflict but still must make an effort to be mindful. People also are more mindful when they deal with new information, but they will function at much lower levels when dealing with information they have learned many times before (Langer, 1989a, 1989b).

Now that we have discussed the rationale for our framework and the presumption of mindfulness over mindlessness, we can present our model of strategic conflict. The following material relies on a recently published material that outlines how people can react at various stages to prototypical conflict to maximize their personal and relational outcomes (Canary, 2003; Canary & Lakey, 2006, 2013). That model is presented in Figure 10.1. We briefly review each event in the model and discuss implications for the competent management of conflict.

A Model of Strategic Conflict

First, the model describes how each event in the model points to different features of conflict that one wants to control (Canary & Lakey, 2013). These include *episode control, personal control, attribution control, goal control, strategy control*, and *interaction*

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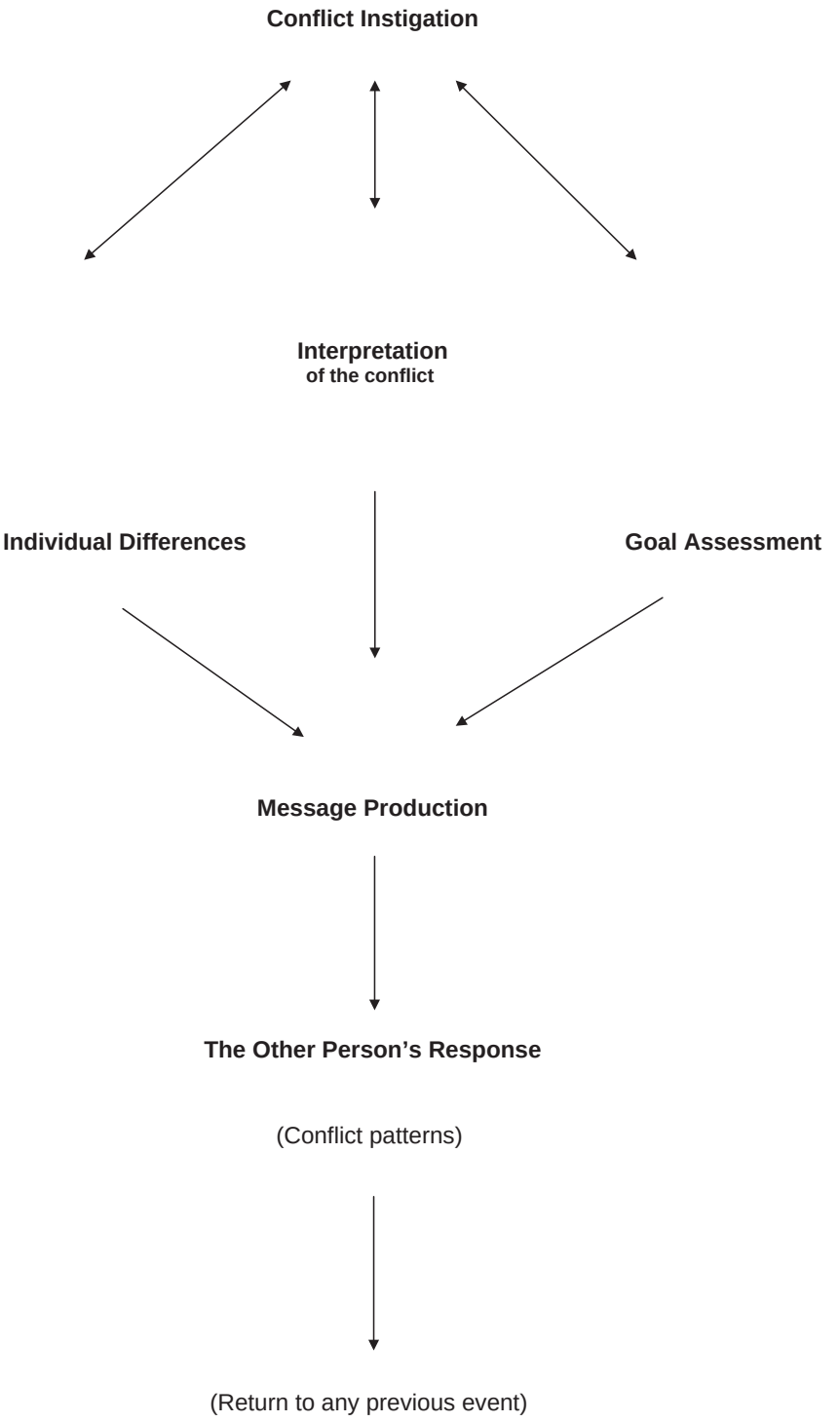

Figure 10.1 Model of Strategic Conflict

NOTE: Adapted from Canary (2003; Canary & Lakey, 2006).

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Table 10.1 Conflict Events and Related Strategic Objectives

Conflict Event	*Strategic Objective*
Conflict instigation	*Episode control* of factors that start conflict
Individual differences	*Personal control* of individual differences
Interpretation of conflict	*Attribution control* of how to explain issues and behaviors
Assessment	*Goal control* of how to obtain and maintain desired goals
Message production	*Strategy control* over communication approaches
Patterns of communication	*Interaction control* within conflict episodes
Return to previous point(s)	Strategic objective is based on *which event is revisited*

NOTE: Adapted from Canary and Lakey (in press).

control (terms suggested by Brant Burleson). Each conflict event has its own strategic objective. The idea is that people try to take control of conflict events as they occur. Table 10.1 summarizes conflict events and their related strategic objectives.

Conflict Instigation

Conflict instigation refers to the start of the problem in the actor's experience. Not all conflicts emerge in a clear and clean manner. As Sillars and Weisberg (1987) noted, conflicts often "hitchhike" on other events. Sometimes people become angry with each other because they are under stress, because they are uncomfortable, because they are crowded, or simply because the air is polluted. Moreover, using alcohol or other drugs promotes conflict because people have decreased ability to interpret other people's behavior and limited ability to edit their own (Zillmann, 1990).

The emotion most people associate with conflict is *anger*. Anger is a common response to situations during which we perceive people as interfering with our goals. Conflicts often occur when one person is seen as frustrating another person's goal in a blameworthy fashion (e.g., not returning e-mail or mistreating another person's possessions). Indeed, these two elements—frustrating another person and doing so in a blameworthy manner—constitute causes for "pure" anger (Clore, Ortony, Dienes, & Fujita, 1993). According to Clore et al. (1993) pure anger involves rage, exasperation, and indignation.

Although anger is a legitimate emotion in response to a blameworthy action, too frequently anger increases beyond reason as conflict escalates. When people behave mindlessly during anger, they can quickly escalate to rage (Retzinger, 1991) and emotional flooding (Gottman, 1994). As with alcohol, but in a very different way, anger overrides the executive functions of the brain, usually leading to intense direct conflict confrontation (Martin, Anderson, & Horvath, 1996).

Uncontrolled anger often leads to impulsive comments and behaviors during which people might have no awareness of the consequences of their communication choices. However, people can learn to manage their

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anger and exercise *episode control*, or control over situations where people can become more mindful in advance. Because of its nature, anger is actually well suited for the application of mindful behaviors so people are more aware of their behavioral choices (Wright, Day, & Howells, 2009). If people behave mindfully, they can use strategic communication to diminish their anger and de-escalate a situation. If they mindfully recognize when their anger begins to increase, they can reduce their emotional level or even leave the conflict until they are able to regain control.

Another common event that precipitates negative interactions with others is *stress*. Repetti (1994) and Repetti and Wood (1997) found support for the hypothesis that daily stressors on the job lead to withdrawal from family life. Repetti and Wood found that objective ratings of mothers' interactions with their preschoolers indicated that the mothers paid less attention to their children, spoke infrequently, and offered less care and love on days when these mothers reported high work load (vs. low). Repetti's (1994) research on air traffic controllers found similar results.

Ironically, interpersonal interactions constitute a primary source of stress. Bolger, Delongis, Kessler, and Schilling (1989) found that job stress was directly linked to interpersonal interaction. When Bolger et al. asked romantic partners to report daily work and nonwork stressors and mood, they found that interpersonal conflict was the most upsetting of all daily stressors. Also, Smith and Sulsky (1995) surveyed morethan 600 people from three organizations and found that approximately 25% of the respondents selected interpersonal issues as their most bothersome job stressor.

The point of this discussion is to anticipate conflict situations to exercise *episode control*. Research has shown that anticipating one's negative reactions to potential conflicts can help people limit them when they arise (Zillmann, 1993). So, for example, people often arrive to work in a negative state primed for conflict because they have spent the past hour in traffic. Anticipating such negative reactions would help increase the likelihood of responding to other people in a mindful, competent manner. Taking a moment to think about a rude and stress-producing comment before they go into the office or their homes can help people become more mindful so they will not vent their frustrations on people who had nothing to do with the initial stressful event. They will be more aware of the immediate context and process information more mindfully.

Three Factors Affecting Strategy Choice

Conflicts do not simply emerge and then lead directly to communicative behavior. Instead, people must process the emergence of conflict and decide how to manage it. The model in Figure 10.1 specifies that three factors filter the link between the onset of conflict and a person's communication behavior: (1) *individual differences*, (2) *interpretation of the conflict*, and (3) *goal assessment*.

Individual Differences

Several individual difference factors can potentially affect the way in which people manage conflict, including narcissism, attachment style, neuroticism, agreeableness, and so forth (Canary & Lakey, 2013). Here, we emphasize locus of control. Given our objective to provide information for the mindful management of conflict, locus of control appears to be one individual difference that can be most readily learned (as opposed to, e.g., attachment styles).

Locus of control refers to the extent that people take responsibility for their own

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successes and failures (Lefcourt, 1982). People who believe that their outcomes are due to their ability and effort have an internal locus of control, whereas people who see their outcomes as due to chance or powerful others have an external locus of control (Canary, Cunningham, & Cody, 1988). Recent applications of this construct have been domain specific—that is, germane to particular domains of life, such as health, politics, and even relationships. Conflict locus of control refers to people's internal and external beliefs regarding the outcomes of conflict. Individuals who hold an internal orientation toward their interpersonal conflict are more likely to use direct and cooperative conflict behaviors, whereas people who adopt an external orientation toward their conflicts more likely engage in direct and negative tactics or avoidance (Canary et al., 1988; Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2000).

In a similar manner, Doherty (1981) argued that *efficacy* concerns the extent to which people ascertain they successfully manage their interpersonal problems. Fincham and Bradbury (1987) used Doherty's (1981) notion of efficacy to explain attributions of conflict causes. Fincham and Bradbury (1987) found that people's efficacy was negatively related to beliefs that their partner was responsible for conflict, and efficacy was negatively associated with perceived stability of conflict.

The implication of this research is that people need to have greater faith in their efforts. In other words, people should exercise *personal control* by adhering to the belief that conflict can be managed in ways that bring about positive outcomes. First, individuals need to recognize his or her personal role and responsibility in the process. Admitting that they have a hand in the cause of the conflict empowers people to change the paths of the conflict. Blaming other people and acting the victim reflect a lack of personal control. Mindful behavior helps people consider more information and additional ideas related to the cause of the conflict by identifying new categories; mindless behavior causes people to remain focused on a single and simple cause (Langer, 1989a). Second, people should be mindful of behaviors that can be used for productive outcomes, and we discuss these below (see Message Production section). In brief, they engage in problem solving, information exchange, and other cooperative and direct behaviors. Active processing of information and cognitive differentiation (Langer, 1989a, 1989b) will help people because they will gain new information and options. By thinking more mindfully about what to do, people explore options beyond their first response and often develop more effective approaches to a conflict. Finally, people need to remind themselves throughout the process that their own outcomes are determined largely by their own abilities and actions. Believing that one can negotiate with a high probability of success is a critically important component in managing conflict effectively and appropriately.

Interpretation of the Conflict

The theoretical perspective that we have used in this research derives from attribution theory (e.g., Canary & Spitzberg, 1990). In short, attribution theory is concerned with the explanations that people derive from events. Moreover, attribution theory has been used by many researchers who want to examine conflict in close personal relationships. Accordingly, we believe that people can manage conflict more competently if they engage in *attributional control*.

The heart of attribution theory concerns who might be responsible for conflict and whether the person responsible causes the conflict in an intentional manner. Research indicates that when people accept responsibility for the conflict, they tend to enact more cooperative behaviors (e.g., offering and seeking disclosure). For example, Sillars (1980)

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observed that college students who attributed the cause of the conflict to themselves were likely to use cooperative actions and were likely to respond to their roommates' behavior in a cooperative manner. But students who blamed the root cause of the conflict on their roommates were likely to engage in competitive conflict behaviors and to reciprocate competitive behaviors.

Naturally, people often hold self-serving biases. Self-serving biases function to protect self against indictment, so that one's own behavior in conflict is seen as more worthy than other people's behavior (de Dreu, Nauta, & van de Vliert, 1995). In a self-serving manner, people tend to attribute competitive tactics to the internal properties of the other person, and they tend to attribute cooperative behaviors to oneself (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Moreover, people tend to recount their own cooperative behavior while selectively recalling the other person's competitive or avoidant (Canary & Spitzberg, 1990) behavior. Moreover, people tend to interpret their internal reactions to the conflict largely on the basis of their *field of vision*, which is external to them (i.e., people's sensory input comes from the immediate environment; Storms, 1973). In this manner, both people in conflict tend to be aware of the other person's competitive and avoidant behaviors, while each might simultaneously be thinking they are more cooperative and competent.

Attribution researchers have identified several dimensions that characterize the explanations that social actors construct. According to Fincham, Bradbury, and Scott (1992) and Gottman (1994), the most important dimensions regarding conflict in close relationships appear to be the following: *global/specific* (i.e., the cause explains many or few behaviors), *stable/unstable* (i.e., the cause continues over time), and *internal/external* (i.e., the cause of conflict resides as part of the person or are separate from the person). Other relevant dimensions include *intentional/unintentional, selfish/unselfish*, and *blameworthy/praiseworthy* (e.g., Fincham et al., 1992; Sillars, 1980). Generally, when referring to negative conflict events, people who explain the conflict causes and behaviors using global, stable, and internal causes tend to handicap themselves and their partners in terms of productive conflict management. That is, their explanations place the causes and/or behaviors regarding the conflict in a rather locked position that the partner can do little to change. Personality factors are especially difficult to change and present insults when indicted. On the other hand, explaining conflicts with attributions that are specific to the conflict at hand, unstable over time, and external to the partner tend to produce more productive outcomes.

Indeed, Gottman (1994) argued that adopting negative attributions reflect "an abrupt flip in the perception of [one's own] well being. . . . This is the initial catastrophic change" (p. 335) in the interpretation of behavior that leads to separation and divorce. After all, once you decide that you live with the devil, managing conflict in a cooperative fashion probably appears to be a soul-threatening exercise. Sanford (2006) argued that

> one type of appraisal that may guide behavior during marital conflict is the attributions a person makes regarding the extent to which one's spouse caused, is responsible for, or should be blamed for a negative relationship event. In making attributions, a person can determine whether or not it is necessary to employ aggressive or defensive strategies to protect oneself against intentional ill-treatment by a partner. (p. 256)

In some instances then, clearly, one's attributions about the causes of conflict would lead to self-defensive and protective tactics. On the other hand, when partners try to explain conflicts using causes that are specific,

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unstable, and external to the partner, then more flexibility for interpretation occurs.

Given this discussion, we argue that people should engage in *attributional control*. That is, to maximize the possibility for productive outcomes, people should more often use attributions that are not self-serving and that do not blame the partner. In this light, Zillmann (1993) advised his readers to

> preattribute annoying events and information about such events—to the extent possible—to motives and circumstances that make the induction of annoyance appear unintentional and nondeliberate, and . . . to reattribute annoying events and information about such events in the same manner. (p. 382)

In addition to withholding blame, people should postpone using global, stable, and internal causes so they might find informational value in the partner's explanations for the conflict (Gottman, 1994).

Mindfulness helps people consider more reasons to explain the partner's actions. They are not locked into attributing the conflict to a simple and seemingly obvious cause; rather, they can process information actively, create new categories of information, and use multiple perspectives (Langer, 1989a) to help them become more sensitive to and understanding of the partner's approach to the conflict. This increased attention to the goals of the partner will also help people behave ethically and with personal integrity. The needs and rights of both people involved in the conflict are valued and considered in the decisions made about how to conduct the conflict and what strategies and tactics to employ. People do not become self-focused and self-serving.

Goal Assessment

A goal is generally defined as an idea or state that people want to achieve at some point in the future (Dillard, 1990a; Pervin, 1989). In addition, goals have cognitive and affective features that influence the activation and organization of behavior. Because of these features, goals also can be understood as the beginning point of a sequence that includes plans and actions (labeled the GPA [goals-plans-actions] sequence by Dillard, 1990a, 1990b). Plans, which follow from goals, determine what behaviors should be enacted to achieve the identified goal. Locke and Latham (1990) explain that understanding a goal as both the motivator of action and the outcome of that action may seem contradictory. However, a person's conception of and desire for a goal or his or her idea of the goal is what motivates the action, which is then directed toward the future and the achievement of the desired outcome (or goal).

Goals vary in their content. Clark and Delia (1979) presented a now generally recognized tripartite typology of goals based on content: (a) *instrumental* goals, which require a response from the partner to deal with a specified problem (usually a request for a resource or favor); (b) *identity management* (a.k.a. *self-presentation* or *face*) goals, which involve presenting a particular image to the partner; and (c) *relational* goals, which concern defining the nature of the relationship with the partner. Clark and Delia argued that some aspect of all three goals is present to some degree in all communication encounters. According to Waldron (1997), researchers dealing with cognitive properties of conversation have provided confirmation that conversational goals are "multiple and fluid" (p. 205). The instrumental, identity, and relational goals also represent the functions of strategic communication that "frame a communication event and that relationship partners expect to achieve as they negotiate definitions and understandings" (Newton & Burgoon, 1990). We adopt the tripartite goal system found by Clark and Delia (1979) but use

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the more common terms *instrumental, self-presentation*, and *relational*.

Goals lead to the initiation of action, provide people with standards against which to measure the outcomes of their interactions, and give meaning to interaction. Goals also help people understand, at least to some extent, why other people enact certain behaviors and continue to enact them (Dillard, 1990a). Berger (1997) claimed that social goals (those that involve interaction with another person) are necessary for people to conduct numerous daily activities. He adds that goals serve as the foundation for the planning and plans people must have to achieve their objectives for any interaction. Goals also influence and constrain behavioral choices (Clark & Delia, 1979). According to Dillard (1990b), the primary (influence) goal predicts both cognitive and behavioral effort, whereas secondary goals provide standards of behavior that affect behavioral choices. From a communicative perspective, however, the most important impact of goals is that when people know what they want to achieve through their interactions, they are more easily able to choose relevant communication behaviors (Clark & Delia, 1979). For example, one study found that people who emphasized relational escalation and maintenance goals engaged in cooperative and direct conflict tactics, whereas people who were primarily concerned with defending their self-presentation more readily used competitive behaviors (Canary et al., 1988).

Goal control refers to the extent to which social actors know what they want and are sensitive to their partner's goals. People tend to be more successful if they have clear goals and standards for knowing when such goals are met versus when having only a vague idea of what they want and no clear indicates of achievement (Bandura, 1989). Of course, remaining clear about one's goal is not easy because goals often shift during conflict (Sillars & Weisberg, 1987). As conflicts escalate, issues of relationship and self-presentation often become the focus more so than instrumental objectives (Schönbach, 1990; Zillmann, 1993). This shift in goals helps explain the common observation that a conflict can begin about one topic (e.g., paying rent on time, an instrumental concern) and end on a completely different matter (e.g., questioning one's responsibility and commitment, which implicates relational and self-presentation goals). In brief, the competent communicator is more likely to have a clearer vision of his or her goals.

Conflict interactions grow in situations in which people perceive that their partners have goals that clash with their own. Even so, as the interaction begins, both participants want to be seen as competent—that is, as trying to achieve their goals in a way that doesn't offend the other person (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). However, as conflict begins to build, people begin to behave more mindlessly and less strategically. They begin to focus on defensive communication (Canary et al., 1988); they also become less likely to be polite (Schönbach, 1990). People begin to personalize the conflict and make negative comments about the other person (Hample & Cionea, 2010; Hample & Dallinger, 1992). They also begin to defend their preferred image and even bring up relational issues completely unrelated to the issue at hand (Donohue & Kolt, 1992).

Competent communicators are mindful of their partner's goals that might be at risk. We found that being mindful of one's own goals was positively associated with being perceived as appropriate and effective (Lakey & Canary, 2002). More critically, however, perceptions that the individual was sensitive to the partner's instrumental, relational, and self-presentation goals were strongly associated with assessments of the individual's appropriateness and effectiveness. That is, the more sensitive the other person was to one's goals, the

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more that person is seen as appropriate and effective. Of course, showing one's sensitivity to the partner's goals requires people to communicate in a cooperative manner, listen to the other without evaluation, and verify one's interpretation of the partner's goals with the partner, all of which reflect the active thinking, use of multiple perspectives, increased sensitivity, and awareness of context that are characteristic of mindful thinking (Langer, 1989a). Additionally, people behaving this way will use their heightened awareness of the partner to behave more ethically and with greater integrity. The choices they make are more likely to reflect their concern for both themselves and their partners. In brief, being competent in conflict means being sensitive to the partner's goals as well as having a clear idea of one's own goals, or what we refer to as *goal control*.

Mindfulness allows people to remain primarily focused on the instrumental goal and to choose behaviors related not only to that goal but to their relational and self-presentation goals that will lead to a productive outcome of the interaction. Mindful behavior also helps people interpret conflict in ways that are more constructive. When behaving mindlessly, people tend to perceive someone who disagrees with them as biased; in contrast, they tend to perceive themselves as objective. As a result, people become more competitive and move further into conflict (Kennedy & Pronin, 2008). Actually, people develop subjective versions of events that reflect their understanding of what happened. They forget that they are dealing with only their perception, one that is affected by every stage of the perception process (perceiving different information, organizing information differently, interpreting and evaluating information differently, and recalling memories that add or omit bits of information).

In sum, three factors mediate the link between conflict instigation and the enactment of conflict messages: (1) individual differences as represented by a person's locus of control, (2) interpreting the cause of the conflict using attributions, and (3) ascertaining what goals are at stake. We suggest that people can become more competent to the extent that they become more mindful regarding their efforts to increase personal control, attributional control, and goal control. The following section specifies how people's choices lead to conflict strategy use and interaction sequences.

Message Production

Theory and research indicate that people make two choices regarding how they communicate to the other person in conflict (e.g., Putnam & Wilson, 1982; Sillars & Wilmot, 1994; van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994): first, people must decide how direct or indirect to be; and second, people must decide how cooperative or competitive they will be. That is, and given the preceding events, people typically rely on judgments of directness/indirectness and cooperation/competition when selecting conflict behaviors. These choices lead to the selection of various strategies (general approaches) and tactics (behaviors that institute the strategies). Sillars, Canary, and Tafoya (2004) found it easy to classify various conflict observational coding schemes into the four quadrants implied by the crossing of these two dimensions: (1) direct and cooperative, (2) direct and competitive, (3) indirect and cooperative, and (4) indirect and competitive. Using van de Vliert and Euwema's (1994) terms, direct and cooperative behaviors are called *negotiation* and direct and competitive behaviors are called *direct fighting*; indirect and cooperative tactics are called *nonconfrontation* and indirect and competitive tactics are called *indirect fighting*. Subsequently, Sillars and Canary (in press) edited these behaviors into a more parsimonious group. Table 10.2 reports the Sillars and Canary typology of conflict codes.

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Table 10.2 Communication Codes

Negotiation: Direct and Cooperative
Accept responsibility (Weiss, 1993)
Statement that "I" or "we" are responsible for the problem
Analytic remarks (Sillars, 1986)
Descriptive statements, disclosive statements, qualifying statements, soliciting disclosure, soliciting criticism
Approve (Weiss, 1993)
Statement that favors couple's or partner's attributions, actions, or statement
Cognitive acts (Rausch, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974)
Opening the issue/probe, seeking information, giving information, suggesting course of action, giving reasons, exploring consequences
Conciliatory remarks (Sillars, 1986)
Supportive remarks, concessions, acceptance of responsibility
Mindreading/positive (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981)
Beliefs about the partner's internal states, said with positive or neutral affect
Problem description (Weiss, 1993)
Problem-solving/information exchange (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981)
Propose change (Weiss, 1993)
Compromise, negative solution (proposal for termination or decrease of behavior), positive solution (proposal for initiation or increase of behavior)
Reconciling acts (Raush et al., 1974)
Accepting blame or responsibility, showing concern for other's feelings, seeking reassurance, attempting to make up, offering help or reassurance
Resolving acts (Raush et al., 1974)
Accepting the other's plans, ideas, feelings; introducing a compromise, offering to collaborate in planning
Summarizing self/summarizing other (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981)
Direct Fighting: Direct and Competitive
Avoiding blame or responsibility (Raush et al., 1974)
Blame (Weiss, 1993)
Criticize, mindread negative (statement assuming a negative mindset or motivation of the partner), put-down, threat, hostile or negative voice tone
Coercive acts/personal attacks (Raush et al., 1974)
Using external power, commanding, demanding compensation, inducing guilt or attacking other's motives, disparaging the other, threatening the other
Confrontative remarks (Sillars, 1986)
Personal criticism, rejection, hostile imperatives, denial of responsibility, presumptive remarks
Denying validity of other's arguments (Raush et al., 1974)
Excuse (Weiss, 1993)
Interrupt (Weiss, 1993)
Mindreading/negative (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981)
Beliefs about the partner's internal states, said with negative affect
Rejecting acts (Raush et al., 1974)
Recognizing other's motive as a strategy or calling the other's bluff, rejection

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Table 10.2 (Continued)

Nonconfrontation: Indirect and Cooperative
Changing the subject (Raush et al., 1974)
Denial and equivocation (Sillars, 1986)
Direct or implicit denial (that a conflict exists), evasive remarks (failure to acknowledge or deny the presence of a conflict following a prompt)
Disengage (Weiss, 1993)
Expressing the desire not to talk about an issue
Off topic (Weiss, 1993)
Topic management (Sillars, 1986)
Topic shifts (terminating discussion before it has reached natural completion), topic avoidance (statements that explicitly avoid or limit discussion)
Indirect Fighting: Indirect and Competitive
Dysphoric affect (Weiss, 1993)
Affect communicating depression, sadness, self-complaint, or whiny voice
Giving up or leaving the field (Rausch et al., 1974)
Hostile jokes and questions (Sillars, 1986)
Turn off (Weiss, 1993)
Withdrawal (Weiss, 1993)
Polysemous: Variable Meanings
Agreement/disagreement (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981; Raush et al., 1974; Weiss, 1993)
Appealing acts (Raush et al., 1974)
Appealing to fairness, appealing to other's motives, offering something else to win one's goal, appealing to other's love, pleading or coaxing
Communication talk (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981)
Communication about communication
Compliance/noncompliance (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981; Weiss, 1993)
Expressing feelings about a problem (Gottman, 1979; Notarius & Markman, 1981)
Facilitation (Weiss, 1993)
Assent (listener states "yeah," nods head), humor (lighthearted, not sarcasm), metacommunication (statements that direct the flow of conversation), question, paraphrase/reflection
Friendly joking (Sillars, 1986)
Noncommittal remarks (Sillars, 1986)
Noncommittal statements, noncommittal questions, abstract remarks, procedural remarks

NOTE: Adapted from Sillars and Canary (in press).

The reader might wonder which of these behaviors are seen as optimally competent. The answer to that question is not always obvious. We will discuss the answer in a moment; however, we first want to make a point about the multiple meanings of messages.

Importantly, message codes are not behaviors in a literal sense (i.e., mere sounds readily subsumed to van de Vliert & Euwema's,

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1994, categories). The functions of some acts are always contextual (Duck, 2002), subject to negotiation (Montgomery, 1992), resting heavily on interaction and ambiguous to some degree (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). Although the codes vary in degree of ambiguity, all are *polysemous* to an extent (Sillars & Canary, in press). Polysemous references how the same code can reflect multiple contexts, functions, and meanings. For example, a single message (e.g., "That's not going to work") can potentially serve as criticism, stonewalling, problem solving, or even validation, depending on how the statement is positioned within the interaction and other factors. To resolve this ambiguity, the listener or observer must go beyond surface features of the message and infer speaker intent utilizing implicit cultural and contextual knowledge (Jacobs, 2002). Various biases may affect the way participants in conflict interpret speaker intent.

Certain codes in Table 10.2 appear to open more than one interpretation. So we (Sillars & Canary, in press) refined the Sillars et al. (2004) typology to include those categories that clearly qualified as "polysemous." For example, consider how appeals to fairness or to one's motives can reflect a very face-threatening message event or an appropriate point to be raised that implies no face threat ("This argument does not consider how many years one has been here"). Note as well how metacommunication can function for positive ("well said") or negative ("that was stupid") purposes. Finally, consider how noncommittal statements/questions may represent a circumspect and face-honoring point of view or the opposite given the issue and context ("Let me think about it"). The point is that certain conflict communication codes can appear more fluid, context dependent, and open to multiple meanings compared with other conflict communication codes. With the idea that some communication codes are more open to interpretation, we can now discuss the relative effects of message behavior directness and cooperation.

In terms of *directness*, people often state a preference for being direct. However, as indicated above, some research indicates that being indirect is more functional for people with certain self-concepts, in certain kinds of relationships, and in particular kinds of cultures, as indicated previously. For example, people who have an *interdependent self-construal* are more likely to use directness than individuals with an *interdependent self-construal* (Kim & Leung, 2000; see also Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001, for a description of *bioconstruals* and *ambivalents*). Interdependent people see their own identities as tied to other people, whereas independent persons view themselves more as isolated agents. In addition, the use of indirectness can be functional in relationships that contain affection, though it is dysfunctional in relationships where avoidance is used to mask ongoing tensions and problems (Sillars et al., 2004). Finally, indirect communication appears to be more desired in cultures that value collectivistic versus individualistic tendencies (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001), though the research on this point has been mixed (Cai & Fink, 2002).

In terms of *cooperation*, most research indicates that cooperative conflict is positively linked to assessments of communication competence and that competitive messages are usually seen as both inappropriate and ineffective (e.g., Lakey & Canary, 2002). One major category of conflict behavior identified by van de Vliert and Euwema (1994) is negotiation, which includes tactics that are positive and direct. People choose tactics that will not offend or cause the other to respond in a hostile manner and therefore are likely to be viewed as effective and appropriate. This approach allows people to maintain emotional regulation and to retain dignity.

Some research, however, indicates that competitive communication in terms of demanding

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conversation and showing anger can be functional insofar as issues are dealt with and relationship quality increases as a result of such confrontations (e.g., Gottman & Krokoff, 1989). Fincham and Beach (1999) speculate that a curvilinear relationship exists between conflict competitiveness and relational quality, such that too little competitive confrontation and too much competitive confrontation lead to poorer outcomes. An alternative explanation is that people learn how to balance their negative and competitive behaviors with more positive and cooperative behaviors. As a radical example, Marshall, Weston, and Honeycutt (2000) found that the use of positivity by husbands who abused their wives verbally, physically, or sexually almost entirely filtered the effects of abuse on relational satisfaction. That is, the wives of abusive husbands who showed love, stated how proud they were of their wives, were gentle, and so forth did not experience declines in relational satisfaction as the result of being abused. Referring to nonabusive marriages, Gottman (1994) found that satisfied couples engaged in a 5:1 ratio of positive/negative conflict behaviors, whereas dissatisfied couples engaged in a 1:1 ratio of positive/negative behaviors, underscoring the salving quality of positivity.

In short, people make strategic choices that become manifest in conflict tactics and related nonverbal behaviors. Accordingly, individuals should exercise *strategy control*. When behaving mindfully, people have more information, more options, and, therefore, more understanding of the conflict and the partner. These characteristics of mindful behavior should help people choose tactics and nonverbal behaviors that work with the partner and provide increased possibility for compromise and cooperation. If a person had to place a bet, then cooperative behaviors (direct or indirect) are clearly seen as more competent than competitive behaviors. In addition, cooperative actions are functional in limiting the negative effects of competitive behaviors.

Patterns of Communication

People tend to reciprocate behavior. This norm of reciprocity holds in several domains of inquiry, including self-disclosure, liking, and conflict. In terms of behavioral patterns, dissatisfied couples tend to reciprocate competitive behaviors (Gottman, 1994; Schaap, 1984). Such reciprocation can reflect symmetrical or asymmetrical exchanges. That is, people can mirror each other's behavior or complement each other's behavior. Gottman (1982) identified several patterns of negative symmetrical communication. These include the exchange of complaints (i.e., complaint–countercomplaint), reciprocation of negative metacommunication, and proposal–counterproposal without any acknowledgment of the partner's initial proposal.[2]

Competitive Patterns

Various forms of symmetrical and complementary competitiveness have been reported (e.g., Revenstorf, Hahlweg, Schindler, & Vogel, 1984; Ting-Toomey, 1983). The following example illustrates a symmetrical disagreement–disagreement pattern that lasts approximately 15 turns.

Turn	*Speaker*	*Message*
94	Husband	Well, look at what you did. Look at the scene you made!
95	Wife	Yeah, well, you deserved it.
96	Husband	No, I didn't . . .

(Continued)

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Turn	*Speaker*	*Message*
97	Wife	Everybody fights.
98	Husband	deserve that.
99	Wife	So . . .
100	Husband	No, everybody
101	Wife	Yeah, everybody fights dear. 'cause if they don't . . .
102	Husband	Yeah, but not in the presence of company. Not when, honey, we had 15 people.
103	Wife	See, I'm a very prompt [*sic*] person. I don't care.
104	Husband	But I do.
105	Wife	I knew everybody there.
106	Husband	Yes, but I DO.
107	Wife	And most of them was [*sic*] your family, and I couldn't care what they think anyway.
108	Husband	Well, I do.
109	Wife	Well, I don't!
110	Husband	Well, then I shouldn't care what your family thinks.

Reciprocation of negative behavior can also be reflected in complementary messages. Consider two attack–defend exchanges. In turns 225 to 229, the wife wants the husband not to shout at the children regarding their watching too much television, and then, in turns 230 to 232, the husband attempts to take the offensive.

Turn	*Speaker*	*Message*
225	Wife	And you might ask nicely just as many times as you do unnicely [*sic*] and end up with the same results. Whether you ask them five times . . .
226	Husband	I don't agree with that, because I ask them once nicely and they don't comply, and then I bark and then they comply.
227	Wife	And you know what? You *taught* them "I don't have to comply unless dad barks at me. Until dad's voice changes and he's pissed, then I *have* to comply!" And you've trained them to do that.
228	Husband	No.
229	Wife	What you have to do is retrain them and we have to retrain them to show we're serious.
230	Husband	How do we do that?
231	Wife	One day at a time.
232	Husband	That is not an answer.

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And such sequences can continue for some time. For example, Ting-Toomey (1983) found that people in maladjusted relationships more frequently engaged in up to 10 sequences of attack–defend patterns.

The Demand–Withdraw Pattern

Currently, the most widely studied pattern of conflict communication is the demand–withdraw pattern. This pattern has been connected to important conflict outcomes in several ways. With the demand–withdraw pattern, one person demands change on the partner's part, and the partner resists the requested change. Several demand and withdrawal communication tactics exist, and we briefly elaborate on these, paying attention to the specific tactics that compose demanding and withdrawing communication.

The demand–withdraw pattern can be viewed as both a symmetrical and a complementary phenomenon. The first view holds that these behaviors are asymmetrical and complementary; that is, one person demands, and the second withdraws. Although the research shows that the person who wants change tends to engage in more demanding behavior, women still tend to want change more frequently. Consider the following passage that illustrates demand–withdraw complementarity.

F1.1:	*Cooking meals, let's just start with cooking meals.*
1.2	Okay, I'll make you a deal. I'll make you a deal on cooking meals.
M2:	[loudly] NO! I AM NOT GOING TO STOP WATCHING (brief pause, softer) baseball games just because . . .
F3.1:	[interrupting] No, I wasn't go to say that.
3.2	I wasn't going to say that.
M4:	It's not like . . . Okay . . .
F5.1:	I mean, do you want to solve the cooking meal problem
5.2	or do we just want to fight about it.
M6:	No because . . .
F7.1:	[interrupting] Would you like me to make the meals?
7.2	Then I want something back,
7.3	that's all.
7.4	I'll make you a deal.
M8.1:	No!
8.2	I think you just do it,
8.3	because it's your responsibility if you had, you know, kids to feed and stuff.
F9.1:	Why do you say that kids to feed thing?
9.2	We have one kid;
9.3	he's a grown-up.
9.4	He can cook for himself.

A second way to understand the demand–withdraw pattern is as a reciprocal one; that is, partners take turns in mirroring each other's demanding and withdrawing behavior (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 1999, 2000). Such symmetry in men's and women's behavior suggests that partners find the other person's behavior wanting while defending their own

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behaviors. Consider the following segment that continues the dialogue from above. Note how the husband takes a demanding role in Turn 10 and then indicates that she should go to the store in Turn 12. However, he uses accusations as a form of demand (whereas she used negotiation in her demanding behavior):

F9.4	*He can cook for himself.*
M10.1:	He is 16!
10.2:	He's cooking for himself all the time.
F11.1:	He *doesn't* all the time.
11.2	Anyway, I mean, we are supposed to discuss our problem so I . . .
M12:	[interrupting] At least you could, um, go grocery shopping.
F13:	I buy *lots* of ready-to-eat things . . .
M14:	yeah [sarcastically].
F15:	that people don't eat.
M16.1:	Like WHAT? [loudly]
16.2	Like, like corn in a baaaag (in disgust).
F17.1:	That's not true!
17.2	There is T.V. dinners in there.
17.3	There's pot pies.
17.4	There's . . .
M18:	[interrupting] Burritos.

Moreover, demand–withdrawal patterns often increase in their intensity. Continuing with the same interaction, notice how the wife becomes more negative in her responses to his interruptions, especially in Turns 21 and 23, where she uses a combination of *put-down* and *sarcasm*.

M18:	*[interrupting] Burritos.*
F19.1:	[acknowledging] Burritos.
19.2	There's plenty of sandwich meat and, and stuff.
19.3	There's lot of things if people would take 10 minutes they can make their own meal.
19.4	Nobody is starving here.
19.5	I think you just need to see me cook for some reason.
M20:	I just, it's just that I grew up eating nice, full, healthy, well-balanced meals.
F21:	You don't need full meals anymore, Mike—you need *little bitty meals*.
M22:	Don't say my name. This is going to be broadcast on the Internet.
F23.1:	(laughing) You don't need big meals—you need *little* meals.
23.2	You need to have *salads* for dinner.
23.3	That's it. I'll make a salad.

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In our view, the demand–withdraw pattern is harmful because it reflects a more abstract underlying phenomenon that Morton, Alexander, and Altman (1976) referred to as a deficit of mutuality of control. *Mutuality of control*, or control mutuality, refers to the manner in which partners' agreement on who has the right to influence the other manifests in communication behavior across close relationships. Morton et al. made a persuasive case that all crises in relationships stem from a lack of control mutuality, which, in the case of demand–withdrawal, suggests a lack of consensus about whether to engage or avoid conflict.

Interaction control refers to the extent that people learn how to become aware of the patterns of conflict and their role in perpetuating them. It is certainly understandable why people reciprocate negative behavior—when faced with hostility, people tend to act defensively, which then provides a warrant for the other person to continue using a competitive strategy. Perhaps the most difficult challenge for communicators is not to perpetuate negative patterns of interaction. However, competent communicators generally do not rely on a strategic fallback position of simply reciprocating what the other person says. Instead, they consider their strategic options. They engage in mindful thinking and create new categories, gather new information, and develop more options than the behaviors that they would otherwise mindlessly enact. They then focus on the process rather than the outcome and develop greater sensitivity and flexibility (Langer, 1989a).

In sum, people can exercise *interaction control* by not reacting in an impulsive manner. Rather, competent communicators edit their reactions, slow the communication process for greater control, and rely more on a variety of cooperative tactics. By doing so, they also increase the probability that they will behave ethically and with integrity. Mindful responses consider the various characteristics of the context and include a wider range of ideas and information.

The Ongoing Nature of Conflict

Finally, the model in Figure 10.1 indicates that parties in conflict will *return to any previous event*, from becoming angrier, to assessing goals, to reformulating strategic options, and/or deciding how to respond to one's partner. In other words, the conflict episode does not necessarily end. The goal of the model is to focus on those events where people can make unilateral strategic decisions to manage it more competently—that is, effectively and appropriately.

In terms of characterizing the ongoing nature of conflict, Sillars and Wilmot (1994) examined the various properties of conflict. They proposed that five features can be used to characterize ongoing patterns of conflict: (1) variety, (2) continuity, (3) symmetry, (4) stationarity, and (5) spontaneity. *Variety* concerns the extent to which social actors can modify their behaviors. *Continuity* refers to the range of topics that parties discuss. As discussed above, *symmetry* concerns the reciprocity of behavior. *Stationarity* concerns phases of conflict that are observed across conflict episodes. Although particular couples might engage in various phases within a given encounter, their tactical patterns are similar in different conflict encounters. *Spontaneity* refers to the extent to which the parties in conflict are not being overly strategic and guarded in what they say (Sillars & Wilmot, 1994).

Sillars and Wilmot (1994) implied that the most competent management of conflict would entail both an awareness of these five characteristics of conflict and a moderate amount of each feature. For example, Sillars and Wilmot indicated that being focused on

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one issue or too many issues over time works against the resolution of conflict; so people in conflict should exercise moderation in continuity. Mindful behavior during conflict helps people avoid rumination about past events because they are in the present and focused on the current conflict (Wachs & Cordova, 2007). Likewise, in terms of spontaneity, Sillars and Wilmot (1994) argued that "ideally, one would be spontaneous enough to be responsive enough to be collaborative, but strategic enough to modify destructive patterns when they arise" (p. 182).

In sum, competent communicators know that they need to engage in the process of conflict by realizing that conflicts are not often resolved but managed. Moreover, competent persons might be able to take a broader look at the patterns of recurring behavior to determine if they are caught in particular conversational ruts or have too much variation or not.

Conclusions

We realize that, in some respects, the ideas we have discussed can appear idealistic and apart from the context of the real world. Admittedly, we present a rather simple model that can be taken as rather demanding. However, mindfulness requires no more effort than mindlessness once people have switched from an automatic and mindless approach to a situation to a more mindful one (Langer, 1989b). Also, some people might balk at the notion that social actors can ever truly "control" such events at the onset of conflict or the patterns of interaction that come to define so many relationships. Certainly, people can never control events completely; however, mindfulness provides more control than people would have if they simply reacted mindlessly with familiar behavior. At the same time, we argue that the various elements of the model provide a useful method of taking personal stock and of becoming more mindful of where and how people can become more mindful of what happens when they feel obstructed by another human. Control grows from understanding interpersonal conflict interactions, recognizing more options, and being sensitive to the partner. Developing this control may not be easy, but the benefits clearly are worth what must be done to become more mindful. Learning to become more mindful involves understanding when mindless behavior is appropriate and when it can lead to negative consequences (Langer, 1989b) that can negatively affect how people manage conflict.

Increased mindfulness can be achieved through viewing the world from a more conditional perspective. Rather than assuming that they have the answers or know how something should be done, people approach a situation conditionally and look for new possibilities. In fact, mindfulness shares some of the characteristics of creativity (Langer & Piper, 1987). Mindful people are more flexible because they recognize the existence of multiple options; likewise, they are more accepting of change (Langer, 1989a). During conflict, mindfulness helps provide a way for people to deal with and even overcome old habits for handling conflict interactions; they can mindfully recognize that the old habits have not been productive and search for alternatives that will help them manage their conflicts. And mindful people tend to be more satisfied with their conflicts and their relationships (Barnes, Brown, Krusemark, Campbell, & Rogge, 2007; Burpee & Langer, 2005).

Also, we acknowledge that our model is silent with regard to psychological remedies that could very well be needed to complement the suggestions we provide. For example, once married partners fix on negative attributions

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for each other's behavior, specialized clinical treatment is necessary to help these people relearn how to think about each other. Also, some people are so depressed and anxious that they might need therapy or medical intervention.

At the same time, from a communicative point of view, it is clear that the research over the past 50 years has provided a basis for making claims about what people might consider useful. To build on this basis, and using mindfulness as a focus, future research might consider what people can do to become more mindful in conflict. If people have the motivation, knowledge, and skill to handle conflict appropriately and effectively (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984), can they learn to become more mindful when they realize a conflict is beginning?

We do not conclude with a list of "10 behaviors that we have personally discovered will improve your relationships." After all, providing a set of rules would be incompatible with the active information processing, flexibility, and focus on context that are characteristic of mindfulness (Langer, 1989a). Elsewhere, we do offer research-based suggestions (Canary & Lakey, 2013). For this chapter, however, we conclude with the hope that future research will inform the various elements of the model so that people might become more mindful and derive more appropriate and effective strategies to manage their interpersonal conflicts.

Notes

1. In spite of its positive connotations, mindfulness is not consistently preferable to mindless behavior. Langer and Weinman (1981) explained that both states of consciousness can have negative consequences when enacted inappropriately. Langer and Weinman's research reveals that mindlessness can have negative effects when people fail to process new information with clear attention. For example, people become less fluent when they must address a new issue with little time to think about it. Conversely, these authors also found that mindfulness can create difficulties when someone attempts to perform an overlearned behavior with conscious attention. In separate studies, Langer and Weinman (1981) and Berger, Karol, and Jordan (1989) found that people become less fluent in their communication when they take time to think before discussing an overlearned idea.
2. Interestingly, the reciprocation of cooperative behaviors does not appear to discriminate satisfied couples from dissatisfied couples. For example, Schaap (1984) reported that partners in dissatisfied couples (vs. satisfied couples) are more likely to reciprocate competitive behaviors. However, Schaap found that dissatisfied partners were *more* likely than satisfied couples to engage in reciprocations of positive and cooperative behaviors. Gottman's review (1979, 1994) reflects the same possibility that the reciprocation of cooperation may not necessarily reflect relational quality. Instead, the relative amount of negative to positive behaviors is what matters more, a point reviewed above.

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SECTION 2

ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

JOHN G. OETZEL AND STELLA TING-TOOMEY

Managing conflict is time-consuming and inevitable. One classic study estimated that managers spend 20% of their time managing conflicts (Thomas & Schmidt, 1976). A more recent study suggests that the actual hours spent managing workplace conflict for all employees (not just managers) is around 5%, or 2.1 hours per week (CPP, 2008). Moreover, 29% of employees in this study deal with conflict frequently (with 36% of U.S. employees reporting frequent management of conflict). These figures suggest the inevitability of conflict in the workplace.

More important, unresolved and poorly managed conflict in organizations is costly. The 2.1 hours per week is the equivalent of $359 billion in paid working hours (CPP, 2008). In addition, there are other cost factors such as opportunity costs, reduced decision quality, loss of skilled employees, restructuring, sabotage/theft/damage, lowered job motivation, lost work time, litigation costs, and health costs. Some of the findings related to costs from CPP's study of 5,000 employees in nine different countries (Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States) include the following:

- 27% have experienced or witnessed a conflict escalate into a personal attack
- 25% have been ill or missed work due to a conflict
- 1 in 10 has seen conflict lead to project failure
- 1 in 6 has witnessed a recent conflict escalate in duration or intensity

For these reasons, and the potential benefits that conflict can produce, conflict has been a popular topic of research and practice in the workplace.

Organizational conflict is often referred to as an expressed struggle or disagreement between and among people who work together to achieve common goals. Organizational

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conflict is often described as occurring in a particular workplace setting, such as a place of business, or an organizational sector, such as manufacturing or health care delivery. In this sense, research focuses on conflict within an organizational container (the physical and psychological boundaries of the workplace; Deetz, 2001). On the other hand, organizational conflict also occurs in the process of people organizing toward a common goal. During this organizing, individuals and entities engage in conflict as they coordinate work patterns, policies, and practices. This process is often identified as the constitutive feature of communication (and conflict) in organizations (Deetz, 2001). Conflict research findings are often applied to a particular workplace or sector as that is easier to "visualize" and to identify. The conflict that occurs in the process of organizing is messy and blurs boundaries, and yet it is more likely the reality of work. The authors of the chapters in this section review, critique, and synthesize literature on conflict in various facets of organizational life and sectors and blend the container and constitutive elements approaches in their reviews.

In addition, organizational conflict is often researched in terms of levels of analysis moving from micro to meso to exo to macro. The *micro* includes the individual perceptions and attitudes of employees and managers and the interpersonal communication among coworkers and managers. The *meso* includes the organizational climate and family interactions that shape the way we work and think about work. The *exo* considers the policies and structures of organizations. The *macro* is the larger political, historical, cultural, ethical, and economic features that shape organizational life. The majority of chapters in this section also consider multiple levels of analysis. Organizational conflict does not take place in a vacuum, and organizational scholars often look at these multilevel aspects in any phenomenon.

All of these chapters consider different types of organizational conflict, and a couple of them focus on particular organizational sectors. We begin with the chapters that focus more solely on the micro- and mesolevels in negotiation and workgroup conflict. We then present the chapters on workplace bullying and work–life conflict as these topics involve exo- and macrolevels as well. The next two chapters examine conflict resolution education and health care delivery—that is, organizational conflict in particular sectors. The final chapter considers conflict management systems across all types of sectors. We provide a brief overview of each of the specific chapters in order of presentation.

The opening chapter of this section (Chapter 11) examines negotiation in the workplace. Teucher, Brett, and Gunia explain that negotiation is a social process used when achievement of goals cannot be done without cooperation of others. They provide a focused review of research around the notion of joint gains. They include four lenses that have been used to study negotiation and achieving joint gains. The first lens is outcome and centers on the outcome of negotiation, and the key question is "How can we conceptualize negotiation strategy and outcomes?" The second lens is process or the achievement of joint gains; the key question is "How does negotiation strategy affect joint gains?" The third lens is culture and emphasizes cross-cultural variation in strategy and joint gains: "How does culture affect negotiation strategy and joint gains?" The final lens is time or the development of negotiation strategy over time: "What are the dynamics of negotiation strategy?" Teucher et al. review the key conclusions in each of these lenses and also the potential connections between the lenses. They explore these lenses using the case study of IBM's $1.75 billion sale of their PC-manufacturing to the Chinese company Lenovo.

In Chapter 12, Garner and Poole examine conflict in workgroups, which are the basic building blocks of today's organizations. The authors explain that a workgroup is a set of

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three or more people who carry out common tasks in an organization. Garner and Poole identify three scholarly traditions for the study of workgroup conflict. Historically, each perspective has developed independently, and there is little integration of the perspectives. The instrumental perspective views workgroup conflict in terms of its effects on group performance and related outcomes. They considered aspects of diversity, technology, and networks within this framework. The developmental perspective views conflict as a natural part of workgroup development; conflict is treated as a phase in a group's life cycle that offers an opportunity for growth to the group and its members. The political perspective views conflict as a struggle for power in the workgroup. The authors review research and note the shortcomings in each of these areas. Since the first edition, they note that there has been much more integration of the perspectives, and Garner and Poole highlight this recent research to illustrate the benefits of a multiperspective approach to the study and practice of workgroup conflict.

In Chapter 13, Lutgen-Sandvik and Fletcher identify a unique type of conflict in the workplace—bullying. Workplace bullying is a pattern of communication that involves repeated hostile behaviors and has severe personal and organizational consequences. The authors explain that bullying is communal and involves bullies, targets, and bystanders. Lutgen-Sandvik and Fletcher use multiple goals theory and conflict management tactics to identify a framework of motivation to study the three involved parties. The authors review research on the profiles, motivations, and tactics for each of the parties to identify core patterns in workplace bullying with the goals of creating understanding about bullying conflicts and being able to identify effective interventions. They use a case study of a bully at a youth development center to weave a compelling thrice-told tale of bullying from the perspective of bullies, targets, and bystanders. They also identify future research directions in this area.

In Chapter 14, Kirby, Wieland, and McBride review the extensive literature on "conflict" between working and family/personal life. They review and critique the interdisciplinary (outcome-oriented) and communication (process-oriented) literature about work interfering with life and life interfering with work from a multilevel perspective. From the macrolevel, they examine political, economic, historical, and social structures that shape work–life conflict and also introduce cross-cultural analyses of how work–life conflict is addressed in the United States and other countries. At the formal organizational-institutional level, they consider workplace policies, standards, and procedures. At the interpersonal-network level, they consider the relationships of how supervisors, coworkers, family, and friends negotiate and influence work–life conflict. At the microlevel, they consider individual perceptions and experiences of stress and the actual management of work–life conflict. Kirby et al. view the levels as interdependent and that microinteraction and macrostructures are "mutually constitutive."

Chapter 15 examines conflict in schools; this is an organization that is not often studied by organizational conflict scholars but is critical given the focus on training people how to manage conflict constructively. Jones begins by explaining the problem of violence in schools and attributes a large part of the problem to the fact that students are not taught how to deal with conflict and, in particular, to develop the emotional and social competence of youth. The chapter accomplishes three goals. First, she reviews and critiques programs under the umbrella of conflict resolution education, which includes peace education, multicultural education, and social and emotional learning. Second, Jones highlights a few exemplary programs to identify "best practices" in conflict resolution education. Finally, she offers guidelines for creating and implementing conflict resolution

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education systems with a focus on teacher education and global initiatives. She presents the Conflict Resolution Education in Teacher Education program as a model.

In Chapter 16, Jameson and Albada review conflict in another specific organizational context: health care. The goal of the authors is to summarize and critique the literature on conflict communication in health care delivery at three overlapping levels of analysis: interpersonal, group, and organizational. The authors address this goal in three core sections. First, they synthesize the cause of conflict between health care providers and patients and family members. The causes of conflict between providers and patients are generally attributed to providers' "bedside manner," expectations of patients' roles and decision making, power, and contributions of the patient's characteristics and illness. The conflict issues between patients and family members are information based, institutional/structure oriented, and relationally oriented. Second, they examine conflict among health care providers in health care teams and within health care organizations and identify the core issues as the following: status inequities, organizational/professional culture, competing discourses, communication structure, tensions of autonomy and connection, and role ambiguity. Finally, Jameson and Albada address conflict prevention and management in health care delivery. The prominent forms include training for improved communication skills; education and training for physicians, nurses, and patients; coaching/mentoring; and dispute system design.

In the final chapter of this section (Chapter 17), McAllum and Simpson focus on conflict management systems, or the structures, policies, and procedures an organization creates to address conflict. They utilize a system perspective to identify the differences in the philosophy of different conflict management systems. They analyze three clusters of conflict strategies that can be adopted or adapted by organizations. The first is *law based*, a confrontive and closed system that aims to confront transgressions of rights and focuses on processes. The second is *management based*, an internally contained system that aims to solve problems and focuses on outcomes. The third is *participation based*, an open system that aims to encourage collaboration and focuses on relationships. They compare and contrast the key elements of these clusters in terms of the following: objects (people, structures, processes, and policies), attributes, internal relationships, environment, and aim of the system. The authors use a New Zealand health care organization case study involving multilevel conflict within an organization to illustrate these different approaches.

In sum, these chapters illustrate the wide variety of conflict communication that is addressed in organizational contexts. Organizational conflict can emphasize the microlevel interaction as well as the broader policy and societal-level structures. The chapters in this section demonstrate both the negative and positive features in organizations and provide a rich tapestry of organizational conflict life. Furthermore, they illustrate the importance of collaboration for managing conflict and achieving coordinated goals.

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11

Negotiation

Brosh M. Teucher, Jeanne M. Brett, and Brian C. Gunia

In the 20th century, negotiation research has investigated a vast array of topics. This chapter is a focused, not an exhaustive, review of research on the relationships between negotiation strategy, outcomes, and culture. We open by defining negotiation strategy and explaining why a critical outcome of negotiation—joint gains—is important. Next, we review the literature through four lenses, each encompassing a distinct set of theorizing and research in negotiation strategy: The outcome lens includes the foundational theories of negotiation strategy; the process lens identifies the behaviors underlying these negotiation strategies; the cultural lens extends the process lens beyond its North American origins; and the time lens examines negotiation strategy as it unfolds and transitions. Table 11.1 summarizes these four lenses. Our review reveals not only common ground across the lenses but also a number of gaps and inconsistencies that we address in a concluding theoretical integration that aims to bridge these differences, unify the domain, and set the stage for future research. Throughout the review, we illustrate the four lenses with reference to a real world example: the sale of IBM's $1.75 billion PC-manufacturing business to the Chinese company Lenovo (Spooner & Kanellos, 2004).

Why Joint Gains Are Important in Negotiations

Negotiation is a social process that occurs whenever people cannot achieve their own goals without the cooperation of others (Thompson, Wang, & Gunia, 2010). Negotiation outcomes include the individual gains of the negotiators and their joint gains, defined as the sum of all negotiators' individual gains over and above their Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA; Fisher & Ury, 1981). Thus, joint gains measure the total value "created" by negotiating. Joint gains maximization has been the primary criterion for evaluating negotiation outcomes since Luce and Raiffa's (1957) *Games and Decisions*. Economists and psychologists who study negotiations emphasize joint gains maximization for several reasons. Achievement of joint gains implies that (a) value has not been left unclaimed on the table; (b) trade-offs satisfying both parties' interests have occurred; (c) agreements are more likely; and (d) agreements will promote harmonious, long-term relationships.[1]

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Table 11.1 The Four Lenses of Negotiation Research

Lens	*Outcome*	*Process*	*Culture*	*Time*
Question	How can we conceptualize negotiation strategy and outcomes?	How does negotiation strategy affect joint gains?	How does culture affect negotiation strategy and joint gains?	What are the dynamics of negotiation strategy?
Focus	Outcome of a negotiation	Realization of joint gains	Cross-cultural variation in strategies and joint gains	Development of negotiation strategy over time
Insight	There are two elemental strategies: integrative and distributive.	• Distributive strategy hinders insight and detracts from joint gains. • Integrative strategy leads to insight and joint gains. • Aspiration level positively relates to insight and joint gains.	• Cross-cultural variations in communication style and trust affect the use of negotiation strategy and the relationship between strategy and joint gains. • Strategy is most clearly conceptualized by focusing on concrete behaviors: Substantiation and Offers (S&O) a.k.a. positional negotiating, and Questions and Answers (Q&A) a.k.a. information-sharing.	• Negotiations often open with a focus on positions and then move to information-sharing once it becomes clear that there is no agreement based on positions. • Negotiators blend different strategies in complex patterns as they progress through negotiation toward the end state—agreement or impasse.

The Outcome Lens: What Is Negotiation Strategy?

The IBM–Lenovo deal, announced in 2004, appeared to be a "win" for both companies. IBM shed a relatively low-margin business for access to China's ballooning services market. Lenovo paid $1.75 billion but won access to a global brand, distribution system, and managerial talent pool (Spooner & Kanellos, 2004). Thus, the deal appeared to create substantial gains for both parties (Hamm, Roberts, & Lee, 2005).

The individual and joint gains that negotiators achieve or fail to achieve depend largely on the negotiation strategies that they deploy.[2] A negotiation strategy is a set of goal-driven behaviors applied, consciously or unconsciously, by negotiators (Weingart, Thompson,

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Bazerman, & Carroll, 1990). The outcome lens is our term for the classic negotiation research that considers the effectiveness of different strategies for achieving individual versus joint gains. Scholars have offered several frameworks that conceptualize the negotiation strategy–outcome link in terms of underlying goals. These frameworks are competitive versus cooperative processes, distributive versus integrative processes, concern for self versus others, and claiming versus creating value. Though not always couched in the language of strategy, each theoretical perspective helps deepen our understanding of negotiation strategy.

Competitive Versus Cooperative Processes

Deutsch (1949a, 1949b, 1973) proposed that social interactions, including negotiations, are predominantly competitive or cooperative. In competitive situations, the goals of the parties are negatively correlated: One party can only attain its goal to the extent that another party does not. In cooperative situations, the goals of the parties are positively correlated: One party can only attain its goal to the extent that the other party does too. Deutsch also highlighted a third situation, in which the goals of the two parties are independent. Overall, he suggested that situational factors define goal interdependencies among the parties, and these interdependencies predetermine their interaction dynamics (strategies). However, he pointed out that most real situations involve mixed sets of goals and interdependencies, and parties' psychological representations of their situation could differ from objective reality, possibly with behavioral effects (Deutsch, 1949b).

Distributive Versus Integrative Processes

Based on case studies of labor–management negotiations and personal experience,[3] Walton and McKersie (1965) proposed a behavioral theory of labor negotiations. They identified four distinct bargaining subprocesses. The first was *distributive bargaining*—a set of competitive behaviors intended to influence the division (distribution) of limited resources and attaining a party's goals, under the assumption that the focal party's goals conflict with the counterparty's goals. The second was *integrative bargaining*—a set of problem-solving behaviors intended to identify, enlarge, and act on shared interests and attain goals believed to be at least somewhat compatible. The third was *attitudinal structuring*—activities attempting to influence the parties' attitudes toward each other. The last was *intra-organizational bargaining*—attempting to achieve consensus within one's own organization.

According to Walton and McKersie (1966), negotiations are often "mixed motive," as they always include a distributive element and, in many cases, also an integrative element. Such situations require complex strategies because parties must adapt their opening behaviors, subsequent behaviors, and overall sequencing and behavioral intensity to satisfy goals of self-interest and, potentially, congruent interests. Complicating a party's strategic choices are the strategic choices of the counterparty. Moreover, Walton and McKersie noted that shifting from an integrative to a distributive approach or vice versa is problematic. Information provided to further integrative goals could give the counterparty a distributive edge, and opening distributively could hamper subsequent integrative outcomes. Walton and McKersie (1965, 1966) concluded that, at least in mixed motive situations, negotiators need to apply both integrative and distributive strategies in various sequences and with varying degrees of intensity.

Concern for Self Versus Others

Pruitt (1981) proposed a strategic choice framework for understanding negotiators' behaviors and conflict management processes (see also Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). Following Blake and

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Mouton's (1964) Dual Concern Model, Pruitt suggested that a negotiator's strategic choices will be based on the strength of two orthogonal (rather than opposing) concerns: concern about own outcomes (self) and concern about the counterparty's outcomes (other). When both concerns are strong, negotiators are likely to choose a problem-solving negotiation strategy, aiming to find solutions that will satisfy the interests of all parties. When negotiators are most concerned about their own outcomes, they will choose a contending strategy, aiming to advance only self-interest. However, when negotiators are most concerned about the other's outcomes, they will choose a yielding strategy. Finally, when negotiators are not concerned about either person's outcomes, they will choose not to negotiate (withdrawal). According to Pruitt (1981), negotiators can apply the first three strategies interchangeably, sequentially, and at varying degrees of intensity (vigor) to elicit joint gains.

Claiming Versus Creating Value

Lax and Sebenius (1986) proposed that negotiators need to master and jointly apply two basic negotiation moves: value claiming and value creating. Similar to the distributive processes of Walton and McKersie, value claiming is a set of competitive behaviors that aims to gain individual advantage. Individual advantage means winning in a win/lose contest by claiming as much as possible of the deal value perceived to be fixed. Thus, by claiming value, a party is trying to "get a bigger slice of the pie." Value creating is a set of cooperative behaviors that aims to create joint value (i.e., to locate joint gains). In other words, value creation behaviors "expand the pie" to be distributed among negotiators.

According to Lax and Sebenius (1986), value creating and value claiming are separate but interlinked elements of a negotiation. When value is created, it also needs to be distributed; when value is not created, fixed value still needs to be distributed. From this situation, Lax and Sebenius derive the "negotiator's dilemma": Even though value creation creates resources beneficial to both parties, it is individually rational for negotiators to resort to value claiming. However, value claiming tends to discourage value creating, as the former tends to obscure joint gain opportunities. To manage this dilemma, to avoid competitive deadlock, and to overcome the trap of excessive value claiming without value creation, Lax and Sebenius (1986) suggested applying a "conditionally open" strategy. This strategy aims to foster communication and cooperation, while protecting against excessive claiming by the other side.

Summary of Negotiation Strategies

Recognizing the similarities (and acknowledging the differences) of these four frameworks, we collapse them (as most negotiation scholars do) into two broad classes of negotiation strategies, based on the outcome that each promotes. The first class focuses on expanding overall value (through cooperative processes, integrative bargaining, concern for both other and self, and value creation), while the latter class focuses on realizing the deal's value (through competitive processes, distributive bargaining, concern for self alone, and value claiming). Following Walton and McKersie's (1965) framework, we refer to these two broad classes of negotiation strategies as integrative and distributive. Table 11.2 summarizes the characteristics of these two classes of strategy and their sources.

The Process Lens: How Does Negotiation Strategy Affect Joint Gains?

IBM and Lenovo engaged in a series of negotiations to reach their agreement. At each round of their negotiations, they undoubtedly used a variety of strategies. For example, IBM appeared to invite bids from an alternate buyer at one point (Hamm

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Table 11.2 Two Classes of Negotiation Strategy and Their Sources

Negotiation Strategy	*Integrative*	*Distributive*
Outcome	Expanding deal value	Realizing deal value
Source		
Deutsch (1949a, 1949b, 1973)	Cooperative processes	Competitive processes
Walton and McKersie (1965)	Integrative processes	Distributive processes
Pruitt (1981)	Concern for self and others	Concern for self
Lax and Sebenius (1986)	Creating value	Claiming value

et al., 2005) —a strategy associated with improving their power position. The focus of this section is the correspondence between negotiators' strategies and their outcomes.

The two classes of negotiation strategies, and their associated outcomes, provide an overview of negotiators' high-level objectives and approaches. However, they say little about the specific behaviors underlying each strategy or the psychological processes that support those behaviors. How, specifically, do negotiators reach joint gains? Why do some reach higher joint gains than others? This section provides further detail on these issues, identifying the specific components of distributive and integrative strategy and discussing a third factor known to influence the creation of joint gains: aspiration level (Kimmel, Pruitt, Magenau, Konar-Goldband, & Carnevale, 1980; Pruitt & Lewis, 1977). Figure 11.1 summarizes the factors found to influence joint gains by early behavioral research (see also Teucher, Brett, & Gunia, 2009). The following sections discuss these factors in more detail.

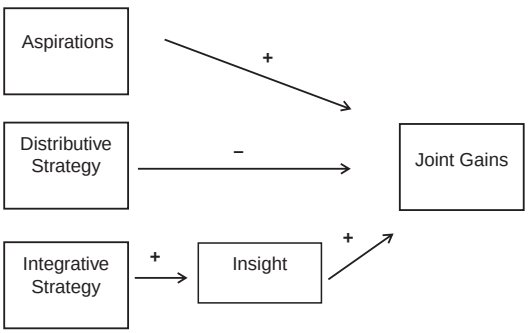

Figure 11.1 Model of Negotiation Strategy and Joint Gains

SOURCE: Teucher, Brett, and Gunia (2009).

Distributive Strategy

As noted, distributive strategy aims to maximize a negotiator's own gains. According to Walton and McKersie (1965), distributive bargaining includes any and all efforts to persuade a counterparty to make concessions (e.g., making threats or positional commitments, or withholding information about preferences). Similarly, Pruitt and colleagues described pressure tactics like threats, positional commitments, arguments, and status bolstering as indicative of a distributive orientation (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1980; Pruitt & Lewis, 1977). A long line of research documents that distributive strategy used primarily, or in isolation, has a negative impact on joint gains (Carnevale, Pruitt, & Briton, 1979; Carnevale, Pruitt, & Seilheimer, 1981; Kimmel et al., 1980; Lewis & Fry, 1977; Pruitt, 1981; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975; Schulz & Pruitt, 1978).

Subsequent empirical research on distributive strategy grouped the underlying behaviors into two major sets: substantiation (e.g., persuasion and influence) and offers (Gunia, Brett, Nandkeolyar, & Kamdar, 2011; Pruitt, 1981; Weingart et al., 1990). For short, we refer to these behaviors, which early behavioral research thought to form distributive strategy, as "S&O" (substantiation and offers;

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Teucher et al., 2009). Substantiation includes all forms of justification, rational and emotional appeals, arguments, and threats to support a party's own position and reject the other party's position (Olekalns & Smith, 2005). The goal of substantiation is to motivate the other party to honor those demands by making concessions. Commonly, parties use substantiation in combination with their own offers, justifying their position while translating that position into terms on the negotiable issues. Thus, S&O are empirically as well as theoretically linked (Weingart, Brett, Olekalns, & Smith, 2007; Weingart, Hyder, & Prietula, 1996).

Integrative Strategy and Insight

Integrative strategy is intended to maximize joint gains. Two related routes to integrative agreements have received the most attention. The first, called "bridging" (Pruitt, 1981), originates from Follett's (1940) description of the creative process by which negotiators reframe issues and generate new options for agreement. The second is the familiar "logrolling," by which negotiators trade concessions on low-priority issues for gains on high-priority issues.

Negotiation strategies used to reach integrative agreement via logrolling have received substantial research attention (Pruitt & Lewis, 1975; Weingart et al., 1990). The earliest behavioral research on logrolling documented that negotiators could reach logrolling agreements if they combined high and relatively rigid aspirations for individual gain with a flexible problem-solving orientation aimed at identifying a mutually acceptable agreement (Pruitt & Lewis, 1977).

Specifically, Pruitt and colleagues identified two sets of behaviors that lead to integrative, logrolling agreements: heuristic trial and error and information exchange (Carnevale et al., 1979; Kimmel et al., 1980; Lewis & Fry, 1977; Pruitt, 1981; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975; Schulz & Pruitt, 1978). Heuristic trial and error is the process by which parties trade multi-issue offers until the offers no longer increase one party's gains without harming the other (Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). Information sharing, at least in Western cultures, involves a process of asking questions and providing answers (hence, "Q&A"; Adair & Brett, 2005; Kimmel et al., 1980; Olekalns & Smith, 2003; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975; Weingart et al., 1990). "Questions" are interrogative statements to elicit information sharing, and "answers" connote information sharing about preferences, priorities, and interests (Weingart et al., 1990; Weingart et al., 2007). Due to the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), those who ask questions are expected to answer questions as well. Indeed, behaviorally and empirically, it appears that negotiators who engage in questioning also share information about preferences, priorities, and interests (Weingart et al., 2007).

Early behavioral research identified an important link between Q&A and joint gains, calling it "insight" (Thompson & Hastie, 1990; Weingart et al., 1990). Insight is the understanding that an opportunity exists to benefit both negotiators (Brett, Shapiro, & Lytle, 1998; Olekalns & Smith, 2003, 2005; Pruitt, 1981; Thompson, 1991; Thompson & Hastie, 1990). Q&A helps reveal information that leads to insights about bridging or logrolling opportunities, which in turn lead to joint gains.

Bridging and logrolling require slightly different kinds of insight. Follett (1940) illustrated bridging with the example of two sisters, each of whom wants the entire, single orange left on the kitchen table. Their "wants" are their positions, and the immediate solution is to halve the orange. However, if the sisters transcend positions by discussing their interests—one sister wants the juice, while the other wants the rind—they discover that

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a bridging opportunity exists. A new solution can fulfill 100% of each sister's underlying interests. Insights that lead to bridging frequently arise when negotiators decompose a single, seemingly incompatible issue into multiple, more compatible issues (i.e., by revealing that the pie is not "fixed").

Logrolling occurs when parties initially hold a "fixed pie" view of all issues in a multi-issue negotiation (e.g., the two, hungry sisters negotiate the division of an apple, a pear, and a banana, where each wants all of them to some extent). The apparent solution would be a "fair" 50/50 split of all three fruits. However, this solution is only optimal if the two sisters value the three fruits exactly the same. Recognizing that they have divergent preferences among the issues (i.e., reaching insight) could lead the parties to a value-creating solution. For example, if both sisters like bananas, but one likes apples better than pears, while the other prefers pears to apples, then a trade-off is possible. They can split the banana and give the full apple and pear to their respective adherents. More generally, logrolling requires each party to make a concession on an issue of low value to themselves but high value to the counterpart, in exchange for the same. Thus, each party gets a bigger share of what is more important and a lesser share of what is less important. This fulfillment of preferences creates value, relative to suboptimal solutions like cutting the three fruits in half. Overall, behaviors that promote insight lead to logrolling and joint gains.

Aspiration Level

Follett (1940) argued that negotiators are most likely to identify and adopt integrative solutions when they firmly uphold their viewpoints, unless and until they are convinced that these views are not viable. Walton and McKersie (1965) stressed the importance of motivation in achieving joint gains. According to Pruitt and Lewis (1975), aspirations (goals concerning *what* and *how much* the negotiator wants to gain from the negotiation) affect joint gains attainment. These authors and others clearly indicate that negotiators who hold higher aspirations negotiate higher joint gains. Aspirations keep negotiators motivated throughout the negotiation to identify an agreement that fulfills those aspirations; aspirations also deter satisficing[4] and motivate search (Galinsky, Mussweiler, & Medvec, 2002; Hamner & Harnett, 1975; Kimmel et al., 1980; Pruitt, 1981; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). Thus, aspirations stand alongside distributive and integrative strategies as important determinants of negotiation outcomes.

In sum, the process lens focuses on joint gains and attempts to identify how negotiation strategy affects joint gains. Research shows that distributive strategy hinders insight and detracts from joint gains, whereas integrative strategy increases the odds of achieving both. In addition, research points out that aspiration level positively affects joint gains, because it motivates search and minimizes satisficing.

The Cultural Lens: What Are the Relationships Between Culture, Negotiation Strategy, and Joint Gains?

In many ways, the IBM–Lenovo deal covered new and sensitive cultural territory. The two companies had to work together, closely and cooperatively, to assure the U.S. government that handing IBM's PC business to a Chinese company would not compromise U.S. security. Although the two companies appeared to navigate these particular cultural sensitivities well, cultural slipups still occurred. For example, IBM executives once failed to meet their Lenovo counterparts at the airport, a major cultural faux pas because it signalled disrespect for the Chinese negotiators (Hamm et al., 2005). Undoubtedly, cultural differences also

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introduced some challenges at the negotiation table itself. Cultural differences in negotiating strategy are the focus of this section. The prior section reviewed negotiation strategy research primarily conducted in Western cultures—especially the United States. However, recent research has begun to explore negotiation strategy across cultures. This section reviews some of the striking influences of culture on strategy.

Culture is the distinct character of a social group (Lytle, Brett, Barsness, Tinsley, & Janssens, 1995). It is composed of observable behaviors and institutions and of largely unobservable psychological elements such as values, beliefs, and norms (Brett, 2007). Culture emerges as a functional solution to group members' most commonly encountered dilemmas and problems of social interaction (Trompenaars, 1996; Turner & Trompenaars, 1993). Thus, culture provides commonly accepted strategies of action expected to be effective in particular social situations. Research on the impact of culture on negotiation has primarily addressed two questions associated with the model in Figure 11.1. First, do negotiators from different cultures achieve similar levels of joint gains? Second, do negotiators from different cultures use negotiation strategies similarly?

Do Negotiators From Different Cultures Achieve Similar Levels of Joint Gains?

Brett (2007) reported on the intracultural negotiation performance of managers from 11 cultures. Her data were collected using a standardized, quantifiable negotiation simulation with integrative potential.[5] She reports that, across cultures, managers seldom maximize joint gains (i.e., they frequently leave value on the table). Moreover, managers from the United States achieve about the same level of joint gains as managers from Brazil, Germany, Israel, and Japan. However, managers from Hong Kong, China, Russia, and India reach lower joint gains. We discuss possible explanations for these differences later in the chapter.

Do Negotiators From Different Cultures Use Negotiation Strategies Similarly?

Substantial research documenting the frequency of Q&A and S&O usage in six cultures indicates that negotiators from different cultures use both Q&A and S&O in negotiation but that they use them with different frequency and effects (Adair et al., 2004). A series of studies contrasting Japanese and American[6] negotiators illustrates major differences in the use of negotiation strategy. Japanese negotiators generate the same level of insight and joint gains as American negotiators (Brett & Okumura, 1998), but they use S&O more and Q&A less frequently than American negotiators (Adair, Okumura, & Brett, 2001; Adair, Weingart, & Brett, 2007). Furthermore, Japanese negotiators who use S&O early in a negotiation perform better than Japanese negotiators who fail to do so (Adair et al., 2007). In contrast, American negotiators who open with S&O negotiate lower joint gains than those who save their offers for later, after collecting information via Q&A (Adair et al., 2007).

Overall, comparative, cross-cultural research provides two important qualifications to our knowledge of negotiation strategy based on Western data. First, Q&A is not the only set of behaviors that underlie integrative strategy. Some negotiators (e.g., the Japanese) can use S&O to generate insight and joint gains. Second, S&O behaviors do not exclusively serve a distributive strategy. These results raise three questions: (1) How do Japanese negotiators gain insight through S&O? (2) To what degree are the prototypical S&O (Japanese) and Q&A (American) strategies emblematic of

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other cultures' strategies? (3) Why do Japanese negotiators rely on S&O to generate joint gains, while American negotiators rely on Q&A?

1. *How do Japanese negotiators gain insight through S&O?* Three observations about Japanese negotiators' approach seem to explain their effective use of S&O. First, despite exchanging many single-issue offers and related substantiation attempts early in the negotiation, Japanese negotiators, unlike American negotiators, do not seem to anchor on rigid positions (Adair et al., 2007).[7] In other words, Japanese negotiators, using S&O, do not lose sight of their own and the counterpart's interests, despite an explicit focus on positions. Second, Japanese negotiators seem to work on each issue without fully resolving the others. In other words, they exchange offers and weigh substantiation attempts without settling any issues. Last, when moving to a new issue, Japanese negotiators seem to remember the discussion of previous issues. Overall, several factors may help Japanese negotiators evaluate the relative importance of issues to the other side: how strongly an offer is substantiated, how extreme the offer is, the other party's willingness to make concessions, and the size of those concessions (Adair & Brett, 2005; Adair et al., 2001; Adair et al., 2007; Brett, 2007; Brett & Okumura, 1998).

2. *To what degree are the prototypical S&O (Japanese) and Q&A (American) strategies emblematic of other cultures' strategies?* Adair and Brett (2005) investigated the relationship between S&O, Q&A, and communication style across Western and Eastern cultures. Communication norms in Western cultures stress direct communication and are considered "low context." In contrast, communication norms in East Asian cultures are indirect and considered "high context" (Gibson, 1998; Hall, 1976). Communication in low-context cultures is relatively explicit, with meaning clearly contained in the words or the surface of a message. Communication in high-context cultures is more implicit, with subtle meaning embedded behind and around the spoken or written words. Deriving meaning from communication in high-context culture requires second-level inferential skills. For example, when a negotiator makes a multi-issue proposal, a low-context counterpart will hear the explicit words and extract direct information about what the first negotiator wants. In contrast, a high-context counterpart may use information in the first negotiator's multi-issue proposal along with information in previous proposals and reactions to extract indirect information about the first negotiator's priorities. Social interaction in high-context cultures hones these second-level inferential skills to a greater extent than does social interaction in low-context cultures.

Comparing intracultural negotiators among eight cultures that prior theory and research (e.g., Gibson, 1998; Hall, 1976) had characterized as low context (Germany, Israel, Sweden, and the United States) or high context (Hong Kong-ethnic Chinese, Japan, Russia, and Thailand), Adair and Brett (2005) reported significant differences between the two groups in the use of S&O and Q&A throughout the negotiation. Specifically, negotiators from low-context cultures used Q&A more frequently than negotiators from high-context cultures. Moreover, negotiators from high-context cultures used offers more frequently in the first three quarters of the negotiation than negotiators from low-context cultures did (Adair & Brett, 2005). Findings regarding substantiation were less clear-cut. Negotiators from low-context cultures paired information sharing with affective persuasion (i.e., emotional appeals or references to social norms) early in the negotiation more than negotiators from high-context cultures did. In contrast, negotiators from high-context cultures paired rational influence (appeals based on task-relevant factors like market data) with

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offers, particularly in the negotiations' third quarter, and more than low-context culture negotiators did.

Despite these differences in Q&A and S&O usage, Adair and Brett (2005) did not find significant differences in joint gains between negotiators from high- and low-context communication cultures. The key to insight and joint gains across cultures was "getting off on the right foot": that is, the use of culturally appropriate information-sharing methods in the first quarter of the negotiation (Brett, 2007). Consistent with the American and Japanese findings above (Adair et al., 2007), joint gains in negotiations between high-context partners depended on making offers early in the negotiation (Adair & Brett, 2005; reanalyzed in Brett, 2007). Similarly, joint gains in negotiations between low-context partners depended on Q&A early in the negotiation. Thus, Adair and Brett's (2005) findings strongly suggest that negotiators from a variety of cultures use Q&A and S&O differently (but systematically) to gain insight and attain joint gains.

3. *Why do Japanese negotiators rely on S&O to generate insight, while American negotiators rely on Q&A?* A culture's reliance on one versus another negotiation strategy seems to derive from the norms that govern communication style and predilection to trust. In the section below, we first present more detail on how cultural communication styles may influence the application of Q&A and S&O. Next, we discuss how trust in general affects the use of Q&A and S&O. Last, we review recent research on the cultural norms underlying trust and their impact on negotiators' behaviors.

Culture, Mind-Set, and Negotiation Strategy. Many East Asian cultures are high context, and most Western cultures are considered low-context cultures (Hall, 1976). The low-/high-context dimension captures differences not only in verbal communication but also in nonverbal communication and cognitive functioning (Gibson, 1998). Theorizing and research on the cognitive functions underlying cultural differences in language usage describe East Asians as relational thinkers with a holistic mind-set and Americans as analytic thinkers with a linear mind-set (Ji, Zhang, & Nisbett, 2004). According to this line of theorizing and research, East Asians pay particular attention to the field (or context) and to the relationships between objects and events. In contrast, Americans pay attention to objects, decontextualize the objects from the field, and focus on their properties to establish category membership (Ji, Peng, & Nisbett, 2000; Nisbett, 2003; Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001).

The holistic mind-set associated with high-context culture seems to facilitate a search process that can transform the information contained in patterns of offers and substantiation into the insights necessary for realizing joint gains (Brett, 2007). A holistic mind-set seems to deter negotiators from separating an issue from the context of the other issues. It focuses negotiators' attention on the relationships between issues. Thus, negotiators with a holistic mind-set do not need to (and may not want to) engage in direct Q&A to infer others' interests and detect possible trade-offs. They can continue to see the forest of interests from the trees of S&O.

In contrast, the linear mind-set associated with communication patterns in low-context cultures may help negotiators detect possible trade-offs from Q&A. Linear thinkers are comfortable moving sequentially and systematically through a set of issues. Because Q&A presents information in a sequential and systematic fashion, it may "fit" with a linear mind-set, allowing negotiators to discover fundamental interests rather than surface-level positions. Thus, negotiators with a linear mind-set may need to engage in Q&A to discover underlying interests (Adair & Brett, 2005).

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Culture, Trust, and Negotiation Strategy. Whether Q&A or S&O are normative in a culture may depend on trust (Gunia et al., 2011). Trust is one party's willingness to accept vulnerability based on favorable expectations of the other party's behavior (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Trust is critical in negotiation because negotiators are usually vulnerable to the actions of their counterpart; the counterpart can typically exploit the information that a negotiator shares (Butler, 1999). In our previous example, if one sister learns that the other prefers the apple to the pear and banana, she can demand extreme terms on the less preferred fruits (the full pear and banana) in return for giving up the most preferred fruit (the apple). Low-trust negotiators fear that their counterpart will take advantage by doing something just like that. Trusting negotiators believe that counterparts will use shared information in a mutually beneficial way (e.g., by sharing their own fruit preferences; Butler, 1999; Zand, 1972). At least in Western cultures, the reverse is true too: Negotiators who share information are viewed as trustworthy and inspire reciprocal information sharing; negotiators who withhold information seem untrustworthy and their behavior discourages reciprocal information sharing (Butler, 1995).

Q&A would seem to require trust because both questions and answers could allow the counterpart to take advantage (Butler, 1999). Questions reveal what a negotiator does not know; they also make it more likely, based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) that the questioner will eventually have to answer questions (Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). Answers reveal the potentially sensitive information that the negotiator does know (Kimmel et al., 1980; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). As the research above has shown, negotiators need to understand each other's priorities to reach insight and achieve joint gains. High trust should support the use of Q&A by making vulnerability more palatable.

Low trust should discourage the use of Q&A by making vulnerability seem dangerous. Indeed, low-trust negotiators may see Q&A as an ill-advised invitation to take advantage of them. If asking questions reveals incomplete knowledge, and the counterpart will not answer honestly anyway, then asking makes little sense. If answering questions reveals private preferences, and the counterpart will probably take advantage of that information, then neither would answer. By withholding information, low-trust negotiators can avoid risk, but risk avoidance may carry the cost of insufficient Q&A and low insight (Butler, 1995).

In contrast, neither substantiation nor offers require trust, because neither reveals anything particularly telling about the negotiator (Adair et al., 2007; Brett, 2007; Kimmel et al., 1980; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). Rather than a glimpse at the negotiator's Achilles heel, S&O may simply offer a glimpse at the negotiator's competitive stance (Bazerman & Neale, 1992; Fisher & Ury, 1981). In sum, high trust may encourage Q&A and low trust S&O.

People from different national cultures vary in their willingness to trust one another (Ferrin & Gillespie, 2010; Inglehart, Basáñez, & Menéndez Moreno, 1998; Johnson & Cullen, 2002). Broadly speaking, Westerners (i.e., North Americans, Western Europeans) tend to make the "swift trust" assumption in many situations: that others deserve to be trusted until they prove otherwise (Dirks, Lewicki, & Zaheer, 2009; Meyerson, Weick, & Kramer, 1996; Weber, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2005). Easterners (i.e., East and South Asians) generally not only display less trust (Delhey & Newton, 2005; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994) but also base their trust decisions on the situation (Branzei, Vertinsky, & Camp, 2007).

Gunia and colleagues (2011) tested propositions about culture, trust, and strategy by comparing the negotiation behavior of Indians and Americans. They found that Indian negotiators

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trusted their counterparts less than American negotiators, that low trust was strongly related to S&O and high trust (less strongly) to Q&A, and that Q&A positively predicted and S&O did not predict insight and joint gains. These studies offered little evidence that negotiators (from either culture) who used S&O could infer priorities and negotiate trade-offs to create joint gains. Conversely, both Indian and American negotiators who relied on Q&A routinely generated insight and joint gains. Thus, the major cultural difference in this study was a reliance on S&O by Indian but not American negotiators—a difference that could be explained by trust. Overall, Indian negotiators' widespread reluctance to trust and resulting reliance on S&O produced relatively poor joint gains. The Gunia et al. (2011) study provides initial support for the proposition that a culture's propensity to trust helps explain relationships among culture, negotiation strategy, and joint gains.

Two other studies, albeit with Japanese data, provide further evidence on the importance of trust in mediating these relationships. Adair et al. (2007) have argued that Japan, like India, is a low-trust culture in negotiations. Japanese negotiators' heavy reliance on S&O is consistent with this conclusion. In addition, when Japanese do use Q&A, it does not seem to generate insight and joint gains. Indeed, Japanese who used early Q&A in the Adair et al. (2007) study realized low insight and joint gains. In an earlier study, Japanese and American negotiators negotiating interculturally used about as much Q&A as American negotiators did intraculturally (Adair et al., 2001). However, intercultural negotiators failed to generate insight or joint gains comparable to intracultural negotiators from either culture. Brett (2007) suggested that the Japanese in these studies may not have trusted information gathered via Q&A, again reinforcing the link between trust and Q&A.

In sum, research strongly suggests that cultural factors, like trust, and direct versus indirect communication, dictate the most appropriate behaviors in intracultural negotiations and so shape the way that negotiators interact. In general, low trust in negotiations will lead negotiators to use S&O and high trust to use Q&A. Negotiators use Q&A exchange information that benefits them in terms of joint gains. The benefits of using S&O seem to depend on whether negotiators are from high- or low-context cultures. Negotiators from high-context cultures seem capable of inferring priorities from offer patterns and using that information to negotiate joint gains. Negotiators from low-context cultures do not seem to do so.

The Time Lens: Negotiation Strategy Dynamics

Although the IBM–Lenovo deal became public in late 2004, it began in private as early as 2002. The lengthy negotiations between IBM and Lenovo saw many offers and counteroffers between the two companies (Hamm et al., 2005). The temporal dynamics of negotiation strategies are the focus of this section.

The negotiation framework in Figure 11.1 is static. However, some of the cultural research that we have been reviewing suggests that the strategy–insight–outcome relationship unfolds over time. Thus, the current section reviews research on negotiation strategy dynamics, considering how and why strategies change through time. Research on this topic studies negotiations with integrative potential and examines how the elements of integrative and distributive strategy ebb, flow, and develop (Putnam, 1990). The early game theory and economic approaches to negotiation assumed that either integrative or distributive strategy would dominate negotiations. However, subsequent research taking a

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communications or psychological perspective demonstrates that the opposing imperatives to create and claim value cause strategies to shift throughout the negotiation (Gulliver, 1979; Lax & Sebenius, 1986).

Empirical research on negotiation dynamics has taken two main approaches: qualitative case studies of real-world negotiations and quantitative analyses of behavior in negotiation simulations. Case studies of not only labor–management negotiations (Douglas, 1957, 1962; Putnam, Wilson, & Turner, 1990; Putnam, Wilson, Waltman, & Turner, 1986; Stephenson, Kniveton, & Moreley, 1977) but also hostage negotiations (Donohue, Ramesh, & Borgrevink, 1991; Donohue & Roberto, 1993) and marital disputes (Gottman, Markman, & Notarius, 1977) have informed our understanding of the phases or stages that characterize negotiations. The more recent quantitative research using coded transcripts of simulated buyer–seller negotiations (Olekalns, Smith, & Walsh, 1996), dispute resolution negotiations (Lytle, Brett, & Shapiro, 1999), and multiparty negotiations (Olekalns, Brett, & Weingart, 2004; Weingart et al., 2007) has informed our understanding of both phases and stages, and of smaller units like reciprocal, complementary, and transformational interactions, explained below. A third approach, computational modeling (which we will not review) has only recently been applied to negotiations and remains nascent.[8] Computational modeling dynamically models data from the second approach and/or introduces experimental conditions to predict the relationships between behaviors and outcomes (see Hulin, Miner, & Seitz, 2002, for an overview of use of computational modeling in organizational research).

Three major research questions guide the study of negotiation strategy dynamics: What strategy is likely to dominate each stage of the negotiation? What causes negotiators to change strategy? What causes particular strategy patterns to dominate negotiations? The next sections review research offering initial answers to these questions.

What Strategy Is Likely to Dominate Each Stage of the Negotiation?

Researchers and theorists have addressed this question with phase models and stage models (Brett, Weingart, & Olekalns, 2004; Putnam, 1990). Phase models focus on coherent chunks of similar strategic behaviors or tactics. A new phase begins when the strategy changes (Holmes, 1992). Phase researchers then describe negotiation dynamics in terms of the order in which different phases dominate. In contrast, stage models focus on time. Based on negotiation length, they divide negotiations into halves, thirds, quarters, or even eighths (Gulliver, 1979) and then determine what strategy dominates each stage (Morley & Stephenson, 1977).

Both stage and phase models are valid, but each provides somewhat different insight into negotiation dynamics. Because stages change with artificially imposed time periods, stage models reveal the interplay among multiple strategies at any given point in time. Because phases change when negotiators switch strategies, phase models clearly reveal the sequence of strategies but not the concurrent interplay of multiple strategies. Stage and phase models both suggest that negotiations typically begin with the parties using distributive strategy to position themselves and that doing so may be important for ultimately reaching an integrative outcome (Lytle et al., 1999; Morley & Stephenson, 1977; Olekalns et al., 1996; Olekalns et al., 2004). This statement, however, appears to be inconsistent with the culture and negotiation strategy literature just reviewed. In an effort to reconcile these inconsistencies, the following sections lay out the evidence for starting distributive and then

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propose a theoretical reconciliation with the culture and negotiation strategy research.

Strong evidence for the conclusion to "start distributive" comes from Olekalns et al. (2004) and Weingart et al. (2007). These two studies, which draw from the same data set, also provide the basis for our ultimate theoretical reconciliation. These studies used data from a multiparty, multi-issue simulation with integrative potential. There were 36 four-party groups composed of zero to four members who primed to act cooperatively or individualistically. Speaking turns (a statement by one negotiator surrounded by the other negotiator's statements) were coded into 32 categories of behavior. Correspondence analysis reduced the 32 categories to 6: integrative information about interests and priorities, value creation (e.g., multi-issue offers), distributive information about positions, value claiming (e.g., single-issue offers and substantiation), process (e.g., "this is going nowhere"), and closure (e.g., "do we have an agreement?"). Phase analysis (Holmes, 1992) revealed that 31 of 36 groups initiated negotiations with a distributive strategy phase, typically distributive information about positions (Olekalns et al., 2004). Of those groups, 29 ended with an integrative phase, typically value creation, and reached agreement. Five groups started with an integrative phase, typically integrative information about own interests or mutual interests, and four of them did not reach agreement!

The researchers concluded that, at least in this multiparty situation, starting with integrative strategy allowed one or more of the counterparts to turn the negotiation distributive, breaking the trust associated with the opening integrative strategy (Olekalns et al., 2004). Once broken, trust was difficult to reestablish. In contrast, starting with positions (distributive) is expected in negotiations (Morley & Stephenson, 1977), and because expected behaviors do not violate norms, starting with positions has no negative trust implications. However, once positions are stated, the negotiators typically remain far from agreement. At this point, the parties must move to integrative strategy to search for agreement.

While Olekalns and colleagues' (2004) study used phase analysis of a four-party, deal-making negotiation, Lytle et al. (1995) used a (four) stage analysis of a two-party dispute resolution negotiation.[9] The two studies' similar findings demonstrate the broad applicability of the Olekalns et al. (2004) pattern. The first stage of the Lytle et al. (1995) negotiation was dominated by distributive strategy, the second by integrative strategy, the third by a mix of distributive and integrative strategy, and the fourth by integrative strategy. The researchers concluded that disputants began by stating and substantiating their positions. Having established their differences, they began to use integrative strategy to understand interests and develop settlement options. By the third quarter, parties seemed reasonably confident that a zone of agreement existed and again used distributive strategy to position themselves within that zone. To reach an agreement, they ended the negotiation with integrative strategy.

Across real-world or simulated negotiations, deal-making or disputing negotiations, and qualitative or quantitative studies, the phase and stage research reveals a similar pattern of strategic dynamics: Opening with distributive strategy and moving into integrative strategy appears both normative and effective for generating agreements. Yet this start distributive conclusion is inconsistent with Adair and Brett's (2005; see also Brett, 2007) conclusion that negotiators need to get integrative information sharing going (via a culturally normative strategy) during the first quarter of the negotiation. How can we reconcile these findings?

We suggest two factors that may contribute to reconciling what seems like irreconcilable

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differences between the dynamic studies and the cultural studies. The first has to do with categorizing negotiation behaviors into strategies. The second has to do with the difference between phase and stage analyses.

Regarding categorization, recall that the Olekalns et al. (2004) study reduced 32 behavioral codes into six strategic categories, which separated information sharing into integrative (about preferences and priorities) and distributive (about positions and substantiation). By separating integrative and distributive information sharing, Olekalns et al. could see exactly what type of information exchange opened most negotiations (i.e., distributive). Recall, however, that Olekalns et al. used phase analysis, so distributive information strategy only prevailed until overcome with another strategy, for example, integrative information. Thus, Olekalns et al.'s negotiators may very well have moved on to integrative information sharing very quickly, at least by the end of the negotiations' first quarter. However, phase modeling cannot reveal *when* negotiators moved, just that they *did* move. Insights about the timing of strategic movement in negotiations come from the stage models of Lytle et al. (1995) and Adair and Brett (2005). Thus, it is both possible and likely that successful negotiators start sharing distributive information about positions and then move toward integration, sharing interests, and priorities. It is also clear that, if negotiators are going to attain high joint gains, they need to make this transition rather rapidly as the negotiation progresses through time.

Thus, the apparently divergent findings may represent a methodological artifact more than a substantive disagreement. This observation suggests a number of guidelines and opportunities for future research. First, careful coding of negotiation behaviors, which distinguishes information sharing about positions from information sharing about interests and priorities, seems essential. Second, using both phase and stage analyses within the same data set would shed the most light on negotiation dynamics (but would also require more time and resources).

What Causes Negotiators to Change Strategy?

The challenge raised by the phases and stages research is to identify the causes of strategic change. To address this question, researchers have studied smaller units of behavior called "strategic sequences." A strategic sequence is an "interact" (Weick, 1979) between two negotiators, comprising one's behavior and the other's response. Some sequences confirm a strategic direction by matching, mimicking, or generally reinforcing behavior (Putnam & Jones, 1982). For example, reciprocal sequences (one party mimics the other) and complementary sequences (one party enacts the same general strategy) tend to confirm a strategic direction (Olekalns & Smith, 2003). In contrast, some sequences tend to change that direction. Structural (i.e., transformational) sequences, for example, redirect strategy by introducing a "mismatched" behavior. Sequences are shorter than phases. Whereas sequences consist of one interact (i.e., I speak and you speak), phases contain at least two (i.e., I speak, you speak, and I speak), and often many more. Several studies indicate that the best predictor of a negotiator's next strategic statement is this two-interact phase (Olekalns, & Smith 2003; Weingart, Prietula, Hyder, & Genovese, 1999).

The empirical research on sequences indicates that reciprocal and complementary sequences reinforce strategic orientation. These sequences tend to foster long phases that often indicate an emergent social structure of cooperation or competition between negotiators (Brett et al., 2004). In contrast, structural sequences change strategic

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orientation and can redirect distributive strategy to integrative strategy or vice versa (Donohue, 1981).

For example, Brett et al. (1998) analyzed the data set of Lytle et al. (1995), examining two-interact phases that began with a rights or power statement (distributive strategy). They found several interesting patterns that successfully turned distributive to integrative strategy. Two were simple, structural sequences and the third, a complex structural sequence. One simple, structural approach was to avoid reciprocating distributive strategy by responding with a question or by sharing interest-based information. Another simple, structural approach was to respond to a distributive strategy with a process intervention, like labeling the process as ineffective (e.g., "This discussion is getting us nowhere, let's move on") or suggesting a break. The complex, structural approach not only involved reciprocating (e.g., countering a threat with a threat) but also pairing the counterthreat with a question about interests (e.g., a suggestion that the negotiators refocus on interests).

Other studies describing transitions (McGinn, Lingo, & Ciano, 2004) and interruptions (Kolb, 2004) are consistent with the structural sequences identified by Brett and colleagues (1998). Kolb (2004) listed five moves that may restore equity or engage the other party more deeply in the negotiation: interrupt the action (take a break), name a challenge, question the move, correct impressions, and divert to the problem. McGinn and colleagues (2004) identified seven transitions that they saw as abrupt (emotional outbursts, personalized value statements, and cutting off a conflict spiral) or gradual (trust testing, addressing assumptions, clarifying process, and discussing feedback). However, the authors portrayed the general effectiveness of these interruptions and transitions for changing strategic direction as uncertain. They cautioned that context is important—a transition may successfully turn a negotiation in one context but not another.

Variability in the effectiveness of interruptions and transitions may stem from negotiators' perceptions. Perceptions of interruptions and transitions may depend on the relationship between the negotiators (good, bad; trusting, distrusting), the compatibility of their goals (individualistic, cooperative, and mixed), and the nature of the interruption or transition (crisis/negative or breakthrough/positive; Druckman, Olekalns, & Smith, 2009). Variation in effectiveness may also stem from the source: whether the interruption or transition was motivated by external events beyond the parties' control (e.g., new information, new parties such as a mediator) or by internal events (e.g., the structural sequences described above).

Case study research considers particular contexts, suggesting that transitions precipitated by external events can lead to progress on security issues, while transitions precipitated by internal events can propel trade and political negotiations (Druckman, 2001). Experimental research on external events is limited and not fully consistent with the case studies. In one study, a crisis message in a low-trust climate motivated negotiators to reconsider their strategies but not to progress toward an agreement. In contrast, when trust was high, the crisis message did not lead negotiators to reconsider their strategies, but it did encourage them to progress toward agreement (Druckman et al., 2009). The researchers concluded that the context (trusting or not) into which external events intercede affects their ability to move the negotiators toward or away from agreement. When negotiators trust, their strategies seem robust to external events. When negotiators do not trust, external events only exacerbate their mutual suspicion. Thus, trust appears to determine strategy on both a static basis (as described above) and a dynamic basis by determining whether negotiators change strategy or carry on in the face of external events.

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What Causes Particular Strategy Patterns to Dominate Negotiations?

In addition to trust, negotiators' social motives appear to affect their predispositions to use integrative versus distributive negotiation strategy (De Dreu, Weingart, & Kwon, 2000; Deutsch, 1973) and to adjust their strategy to the social motive and strategy of the counterpart (Weingart et al., 2007). Social motives reflect the relative importance people place on their own versus joint outcomes in social interaction. People primarily concerned about their own outcomes are *individualists*, whereas those concerned both with their own and the other party's outcomes are *cooperators* (Messick & McClintock, 1968). Given that cooperatively motivated negotiators attempt to maximize joint gain, while individualistically motivated negotiators attempt to maximize their own gain, it is not surprising that two cooperative negotiators tend to rely on integrative strategies, while two individualistic negotiators tend to rely on distributive strategies (see De Dreu et al., 2000, for a meta-analysis supporting this conclusion).

Dyads with heterogeneous social motives use an entirely different set of negotiation strategies. Theory and evidence from the experimental game literature suggests that cooperatively motivated players are likely to shift from cooperation to competition (defection) when confronted with an opponent making individualistic choices. In comparison, individualistic players are less likely to shift from competition to cooperation when confronted with a cooperative opponent (Kelley & Stahelski, 1970a, 1970b; McClintock & Liebrand, 1988; Schlenker & Goldman, 1978). However, research on heterogeneous social motive dyads in integrative negotiations does not identify a consistent pattern of negotiation strategy (Olekalns & Smith, 1999, 2003; Schei & Rognes, 2003, 2005; Ten Velden, Beersma, & De Dreu, 2007). In some studies, it is the cooperator who changes strategy, while in others, it is the individualist or both (see discussion in Weingart et al., 2007).

Research on multiparty negotiations with heterogeneous social motives indicates that context matters. Cooperators report using distributive strategy less in groups dominated by cooperators than they do when groups are dominated by individualists (Schei, 2004). Weingart et al. (2007) found that cooperators reduced their use of integrative strategy and increased their use of distributive strategy in groups dominated by individualists, but individualists did not make similar, strategic adjustments in groups dominated by cooperators. Further analyses of strategy sequences showed that cooperators were more responsive than individualists to protect themselves, much like the cooperators in the experimental game studies. However, cooperators also used integrative moves strategically to redirect their groups toward cooperation (Weingart et al., 2007). The authors argued that these results contradicted the stereotype of cooperators as "suckers." Instead, cooperators intentionally and strategically used distributive and integrative behaviors to counterbalance their group's dominant strategy and maximize its outcomes. Therefore, it appears that negotiators' predispositions toward goals and trust can shape their strategies. However, strategies are not just static, predetermined attributes of negotiators and features of negotiation situations, but dynamic and evolving.

In sum, the deployment of negotiation strategy is a dynamic process that involves blending of distributive and integrative sequences and phases across different stages of the negotiation. Negotiators' predispositions concerning goals and trust affect but do not fully determine negotiators' use of strategy. Strategy shifts dynamically as negotiators reinforce, complement, or transition away from the strategic direction signaled by their counterpart's most recent behavior, or necessitated by unexpected external events.

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Reconciling the Gaps in the Negotiation Strategy Literature: Opportunities for Research

Considered separately, each lens of the negotiation strategy literature provides a coherent account. However, as we pointed out while moving from one lens to another, these four research streams do not tell a completely consistent story when considered together. We identify three inconsistencies among the lenses and discuss them below. Given the broad, birds-eye view required to identify these inconsistencies, we regard them as opportunities for future research, as opposed to critiques of prior research. Table 11.3 summarizes the gaps and inconsistencies among the lenses.

The first inconsistency arises when contrasting the outcome and process lenses against the cultural lens. The outcome and process literatures identified Q&A behaviors as integrative strategy and S&O behaviors as distributive strategy because negotiators using the former could typically realize higher joint gains than negotiators using the latter. However, the cultural lens clearly shows that S&O is not necessarily distributive when used by negotiators from high-context cultures. Thus, a direct and unambiguous mapping of Q&A and S&O negotiation behaviors onto

Table 11.3 Inconsistencies Among the Lenses of Negotiation Research

Lenses	*Inconsistencies*
Outcome versus process and culture	The outcome literature assumes that integrative and distributive strategies lead to integrative and distributive outcomes, respectively. However, the process and culture literatures suggest that the intentions underlying strategies need not correspond to the outcomes that negotiators attain. Thus, the outcome lens rather confounds the intention underlying the negotiation behavior with the outcome of that behavior.
Outcome and process versus culture	The outcome and process lenses identified Q&A behaviors as integrative strategy and S&O behaviors as distributive strategy. Yet the cultural lens shows that S&O does not necessarily lead to distributive outcomes when used by negotiators from high-context cultures.
Time versus process and outcome	Negotiation strategy is more complex according to the time lens than the way it is represented by the process and outcome lenses. The time lens illustrates the dynamic interplay between negotiators' use of strategy over time. In contrast, the process and outcome lenses tend to focus on the strategy that dominates the negotiations overall. In sum, the time lens shows that negotiators switch strategies on and off throughout a negotiation rather than maintain a constant use of a single strategy.

NOTE: Q&A = questions and answers; S&O = substantiation and offers.

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integrative and distributive strategies is not possible.

This conclusion highlights another inconsistency (pitting the outcome lens against the other lenses): Strategic behavior is, by definition, goal-directed behavior. However, labeling negotiation strategy as integrative and distributive confounds the intention with the outcome. For example, integrative outcomes do not necessarily reflect intentionally integrative behavior. Conversely, explicit or implicit intentions to be integrative may not produce integrative outcomes (e.g., if the other negotiator fails to reciprocate). The same is true of distributive behaviors and outcomes. For example, negotiators may use behaviors that research would label "integrative" (e.g., questions) to achieve an information advantage leading to distributive outcomes. Finally, the negotiation dynamics literature revealed that a cooperatively oriented negotiator may still resort to S&O when the counterpart does. Hence equating intentions and outcomes, as the terms *integrative strategy* and *distributive strategy* do, oversimplifies what we know about negotiation strategy.

A third inconsistency stems from the very nature of the negotiation dynamics literature, which suggests that negotiation strategy is significantly more complex than the integrative versus distributive stance of one side. The alternative views, which we have reviewed, suggest that negotiation behavior is determined by static factors that influence the individual negotiators—like the situation, negotiators' strategic orientations, cultures, or individual differences. However, the dynamics literature suggests that the behaviors of the other party or parties at the table are at least as important. Thus, the dynamics literature points toward a dyadic- or group-level conceptualization of strategy.

The negotiation dynamics literature also, obviously, points toward the importance of time and change. Negotiators can and do switch off strategies to further their interests as negotiations develop. The phase and stage research shows this decisively: Negotiators move from what has previously been called distributive strategy to integrative strategy and back again. Thus, they build toward integrative agreement in rather elegant waves, incorporating more and more information about differing interests into multi-issue offers. Alternatively, they spiral toward a distributive contest or impasse in waves foaming over with positions, offers, and substantiation.

These inconsistencies among the negotiation strategy lenses lead us to four theoretical conclusions. First, negotiation strategy is both predetermined (by cultural and individual differences) and emergent from the strategic choices that negotiators make. Second, negotiation outcomes are the end result of an intricate and dynamic interplay between negotiators' goal-directed behaviors. Third, the frequency and sequence of these behaviors depend to some extent on culture, negotiation context, negotiators' social orientations, and counterparties' moves. Finally, future research on negotiation strategy should define terms and operationalize concepts in behavioral terms—what the negotiators are doing—as opposed to what they intend. Negotiators' use of strategy is certainly goal directed, but as we saw in the culture section, equating the intention with the outcome can be misleading. It is for this reason that we encourage future researchers to label behaviors as behaviors (e.g., Q&A or S&O), as opposed to "distributive" or "integrative."

Conclusion and Opportunities for Studying Negotiation Strategy

In this chapter, we reviewed negotiation strategy research through four lenses:

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(1) outcome, (2) process, (3) culture, and (4) time. We have presented the lenses historically, discussing them in the approximate order that they emerged from the literature. We opened by explaining the importance of joint gains and defining negotiation strategy. We then reviewed the theoretical origins of negotiation strategy research and described the two overarching strategies—distributive and integrative—identified by those looking at strategy through an outcome lens. Next, we summarized the behavioral studies using a process lens and described the resulting model that links negotiation strategy to insight and joint gains. We then identified the implications of culturally based communication style and trust for negotiation strategy. We showed that Q&A and S&O serve different strategic functions in negotiations with the potential for joint gains, and, at least for S&O, that this function seems to depend on culture. We then reviewed research that has examined negotiation strategy dynamically, showing how and why negotiation strategy develops through time. Finally, we identified and suggested ways to reconcile some inconsistencies that appear across the four lenses.

Although we have presented the lenses historically, as they emerged from the literature, it is also possible to present them causally. As a means of synthesizing and summarizing the content of this chapter, Figure 11.2 does just that. As shown, negotiators' cultural experience predates any particular negotiation that they enter into; thus, culture causally precedes the use of negotiation strategy (i.e., the process lens). Within a particular negotiation, culture can be conceptualized as one factor influencing the strategies that play out through time. To capture the dynamic and sequential nature of negotiation strategy, described under the time lens, we have portrayed these strategies as a rope. Each strand of the rope represents a different strategy. Over the course of a negotiation, each strand comes to dominate at various points in time (i.e., appears "on top" of the others). The strategies that unfold during a negotiation naturally affect the negotiation's outcomes. Thus, outcomes form the final link in the causal chain in Figure 11.2. In sum, through a circuitous historical path, the negotiation literature has afforded a rather comprehensive view of the causal relationships between culture, negotiation strategy, time, and outcomes.

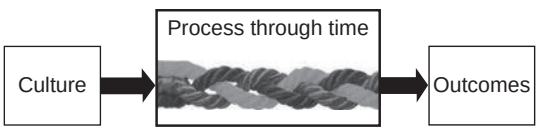

Figure 11.2 A Causal Model of the Four Negotiation Lenses

Although our review has been theoretically focused, negotiation theory has natural implications for practicing negotiators. Based on the research reviewed in this chapter, we draw several implications for the practice of negotiations. Table 11.4 organizes these implications according to the four negotiation research lenses.

Despite the growing body of research on negotiation strategy and outcomes, many important questions remain to be studied. For example, we identified substantial inconsistencies when looking at negotiation strategy using the outcome, process, culture, and time lenses. While we suggested a theoretical integration to address these inconsistencies, our suggestions are but a small subset of the many avenues that researchers might follow to reconcile them. Overall, we believe that the greatest opportunity for future research lies in studies that integrate across the four lenses, helping to create and define the lenses of the future.

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Table 11.4 Implications of Research for Becoming a Better Global Negotiator

Outcome	• Approach negotiations knowing that opportunities for integrative as well as distributive outcomes will generally arise. • Remember that giving counterparts more of what they want does not necessarily mean that you will get less of what you want. • Negotiations often present opportunities to create value by trading off low-priority issues for high-priority issues or by understanding both parties' interests and creatively bridging differences.

Process	• Practice using both Q&A and S&O and know when to use them.
	• At least in a Western cultural context
	  • Use the Q&A strategy to create value by generating and integrating information about underlying interests and priorities.
	  • Use the S&O strategy to claim value and defend against competitive negotiators.

Culture	• Recognize that negotiators in some cultures are more comfortable using Q&A, and negotiators in other cultures are more comfortable using S&O. This difference appears to be related to the level of trust in a culture. Educate yourself about negotiators' likely trust levels in your own and your counterpart's cultures.
	• Understand how to
	  • Infer information about interests and priorities from patterns of offers and substantiation, as high-context culture negotiators do.
	  • Infer information about interests and priorities from patterns of questions and answers, as low-context culture negotiators do.
	• If negotiating in high-context/low-interpersonal trust cultures
	  • Use the Q&A strategy more sparingly than in a low-context/high-trust culture.
	  • Use the S&O strategy both to create value and to claim value and defend against competitive negotiators.
	• Realize that in some cultures, good economic outcomes are expected to follow from relationship building, not precede it.

Time	• Accept that negotiations naturally cycle through stages as negotiators work toward agreement or impasse. Know where you are in the cycle, and deploy strategy accordingly. • Know that, although negotiation dynamics and cycles vary across cultures, most negotiators start by stating and justifying positions. • Know that, despite this tendency to focus on positions, generating an outcome that creates value requires that negotiators begin to share information in a culturally normative way early in the negotiation.

NOTE: Q&A = questions and answers; S&O = substantiation and offers.

Notes

1. Of ourse, not all value can or should be quantified. For a review of subjective value in negotiations see Curhan, Elfenbein, and Xu (2006).
2. Note that some negotiators reach joint gains inadvertently out of random trial and error. We do not consider such outcome a result of a strategy.
3. For an insightful retrospective on the theory, see McKersie and Walton (1992).

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4. For a discussion on satisficing, see the work of Simon (1957, 1978).
5. See *Cartoon* negotiation simulation at DRRC's website: http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/drrc/teaching/index.htm
6. "American" refers to U.S. nationals.
7. For a discussion of the anchoring effect, see Ku, Galinsky, and Murnighan (2006) and Galinsky, Ku, and Mussweiler (2009).
8. See the papers in the symposium presented at the MICON conference in 2009: http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~softagents/papers/IJCAI-09-MICON-Proceedings-final.pdf
9. Note that there are some differences between deal making and dispute resolution negotiations (e.g., linked versus independent BATNAS, a priori and true versus a posteriori and possibly faked negative emotions, negotiating to minimize costs versus maximize gains; Brett, 2007).

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12

Perspectives on Workgroup Conflict and Communication

Johny T. Garner and Marshall Scott Poole

Workgroups have become one of the most ubiquitous elements of 21st-century organizations—from project teams to boardrooms. They are the units in which the work of the organization—planning, design, development, operations, production, distribution, sales, service delivery, human resources, and so on—is done. Conflict in workgroups is of interest both in its positive and negative aspects. The negative aspect of conflict in workgroups is the disruption it causes, which has the potential to break down workgroups, reduce performance, and make members dissatisfied and unhappy. This must be weighed against the positive aspects of conflict, the new ideas and procedures it often introduces or sparks, the stronger workgroup and increased trust and capabilities that result from successfully navigating a difficult conflict, and the increased participation and voice that well-managed conflicts afford members.

When we reviewed the literature that examines workgroup conflict for the first edition of this *Handbook* (Poole & Garner, 2006), we sorted research into instrumental, developmental, and political perspectives. We were struck by the divisions between these broad perspectives despite the potential benefits of integration. In examining research conducted since that edition, much has changed even while much has remained the same. A great deal of research remains isolated from other positions. However, some scholars have advanced ideas that hold potential for bridging perspectives, most commonly the instrumental and developmental perspectives. Additionally, interdisciplinary journals, such as *Management Communication Quarterly*, and most notably *Small Group Research*, have led the way in tearing down disciplinary sectarianism. The research over the past 7 years has also added a new area of interest—network research on workgroup conflict—and drawn more attention to virtual teams (VT), which seemed to be a dawning area in the first edition. The chapter for this edition begins by defining workgroup conflict and briefly introducing each of the three perspectives in workgroup conflict research. The chapter then examines research in each perspective. Although much of the research in the last edition is also included here, we draw particular

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emphasis to more recent scholarship and the areas in which that scholarship has focused. Finally, we discuss efforts to integrate these perspectives, integrations that we see as particularly fruitful for future research.

Defining Workgroups

A workgroup is a set of three or more people who carry out common tasks in an organization. This definition highlights several important features of workgroups that we briefly discuss here by way of introduction.

Workgroups vary considerably in terms of size. Although 3 is the minimum size considered to be a group in this review, typical sizes of workgroups vary widely: Amason (1996) reported an average size of about 6 in his sample; Lovelace, Shapiro, and Weingart (2001) and Kirkman, Rosen, Tesluk, and Gibson (2004) averaged 10; Panteli's (2004) virtual teams (VTs) averaged 25; and one VT studied by Ngwenyama (1998) had 79 members.

Members of workgroups use a number of different communication channels. Most research has focused on groups that interact primarily face-to-face. A number of recent studies, however, have focused on VTs that interact via phone, e-mail, instant messaging, text and video conferencing, and various other types of specialized groupware. Members of VTs are typically dispersed across different locations, with subgroups of members colocated. The dynamics of conflict in VTs are somewhat different from those in colocated teams that meet mostly face-to-face.

Workgroups differ in significant ways from the experimental groups commonly studied in conflict research. Members of workgroups are more likely to have vested interests in the group than are members of lab groups. Workgroups originate as an outgrowth of organizational needs, and their raison d'être is grounded in consequential work and significant purpose, while laboratory groups are artificial constructions of the researcher. Many workgroups have considerable history and traditions, while most laboratory groups have no or limited history. Finally, members of most workgroups have an expectation of future interaction and experience real consequences from their behavior in the group, while members of most laboratory groups know that their time in their group is limited (even if they are not sure when the group will terminate) and that most consequences of their behavior will not stay with them once they leave the lab. Many of these distinctions are captured by the bona fide group perspective (Putnam & Stohl, 1990). For these reasons, research on workgroup conflict enables us to make judgments regarding the extent to which experimental findings hold in the "real world" and suggests important new questions to be explored in more controlled environments.

Based on the definition above, this review focuses on studies of actual workgroups situated in private and public organizations. Research using student groups is considered only in limited ways in so far as this literature may or may not apply to workgroups.

Perspectives of Conflict in Workgroups

In the first edition of this *Handbook*, we identified three scholarly traditions in the literature on workgroup conflict. Each tradition had a unique point of view with respect to the nature of conflict, sources and causes of conflict, and outcomes associated with conflict. Because of these unique points of view, we referred to these distinctions as perspectives. For the current edition, we review these perspectives paying particularly close attention to research that might fall outside of our prior delineations. The most promising of these new directions included research that integrated the instrumental and developmental perspectives, and

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we discuss that near the end of the chapter. We also see at least one novel method of study within the instrumental perspective that has the potential to be a new perspective as that research grows; in its present form, we believe that it remains part of the instrumental tradition in terms of how researchers using that method see conflict similar to how other scholars in this tradition see it. Table 12.1 presents what each perspective considers the source of conflict, a definition from each perspective for productive conflict, and the research focus of each perspective. Additionally, two ways in which it is particularly useful to conceptualize these perspectives are in terms of whether they focus on public or private aspects of conflict and on whether they regard conflict as being primarily based on rational or nonrational grounds (Kolb & Putnam, 1992). The reader is invited to refer to our chapter in the first edition of this *Handbook* for more complete definitions.

For the most part, the instrumental, developmental, and political perspectives have developed independently of one another. Studies in the three perspectives tend to focus on different types of questions, use different designs, and appear in different journals. As stated earlier, recent research has begun addressing some of the ways in which perspectives may be brought to inform each other, but generally speaking, all three perspectives have followed parallel paths with remarkably little dialogue or influence on each other. The following review summarizes and analyzes research in each perspective separately, and the final section considers possible relationships, debates, and points of cross-fertilization, including the limited research that has pursued such interplay.

Research Within the Instrumental Perspective

Studies from this perspective primarily focus on the relationship between conflict and workgroup performance. At the most basic level, these studies emphasize outcomes, including performance, member satisfaction, and group viability. Most studies conceptualize the conflict–outcome relationship as

Table 12.1 Three Perspectives on Workgroup Conflict

	Instrumental	*Developmental*	*Political*
Sources of conflict	Premeditated, strategic activity to achieve one's goals	Challenges that arise during key phases or junctures in a group's development	Dominant groups/ members who oppress subordinate groups/ members
Productive conflict	Helps the group accomplish its goal	Resolves problems, move to higher stage of development	Surfaces and challenges power imbalances, enables multiple voices
Research focus	Group performance	Group's progress through developmental stages	Power bases and deep processes underlying power bases, ideologies
Public versus private conflict	Public conflict	Private conflict	Private conflict
Rational versus nonrational conflict	Rational conflict	Nonrational conflict	Rational conflict, though sometimes blinded by dominant paradigm

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more complex than simple independent and dependent variables. These studies include moderators such as diversity or mediators such as conflict management style. The common theme in this literature is that the effect of conflict on outcome variables depends on how the workgroup manages conflict. The following sections first review studies that examine antecedents of conflict and general outcomes of workgroup conflict. In the sections subsequent to these, two common variables that a number of studies have used as either moderators or mediators are discussed: (1) diversity and (2) technology. Finally, we review a developing stream of research using network conceptualizations and methods to study workgroup conflict.

Antecedents of Conflict

A number of studies provide evidence on antecedents of conflict in workgroups. Generally, these antecedents could be considered within two broad areas—(1) how group members interact with each other and (2) elements of individual members' traits or group composition. For example, in terms of interactions, Eddleston, Otondo, and Kellermanns (2008) found that organizations with participative decision making and several generations of ownership experienced more task and relationship conflict, while participative decision making with only one or two generations of ownership experienced less task and relationship conflict. Also, looking at how interactions serve as antecedents to conflict, Swaab, Phillips, Diermeier, and Medvec (2008) studied dyadic side conversations within groups. They found that the absence of side conversations led to better performance with tasks that benefit from group unity but that the presence of dyadic side conversations led to better performance in problem-solving tasks that benefited from diverse opinions. With regard to individual members' traits and group composition, Kotlyar and Karakowsky (2006) examined how leadership styles might influence workgroup conflict. A transformational leader was positively related to productive task conflict but was also potentially related to relationship conflict. Workgroup conflict has also been related to group size (Amason & Sapienza, 1997; Wheelan, 2009) and self-efficacy (Desivilya & Eizen, 2005). Bridging these two types of antecedents, Boros, Meslec, Curseu, and Emons (2010) examined how interdependence and status might interact to predict conflict management styles. Boros et al. found that members who feel equal status-wise and interdependent were likely to use collaboration and cooperation, while members who perceived status differentials and felt independent from each other were more likely to use avoidance with conflicts.

Conflict and Workgroup Outcomes

Much of the research on effects of workgroup conflict on performance reviewed by the first edition of this chapter, as well as since then, takes its cues from Jehn's (1995) influential report. These studies demonstrate the direct effects of various types of conflict on outcomes as well as the influence of moderator variables on conflict and outcomes, moderators such as task type, internal structure, members' attitudes, and group norms. Jehn found that task and relationship conflict had different associations with group outcomes. Her results suggested that properly managed task conflict could improve group performance while avoiding negative outcomes. Relationship conflict, on the other hand, had primarily negative impacts on workgroups, and the implication was that it should be avoided as much as possible. That Jehn's types of conflict are still relevant is demonstrated by the amount of research since 1995 that has used her distinctions.

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While early work focused specifically on task and relationship conflict, process conflict has received more attention in recent studies in addition to task and relational conflict. Process conflict involves disagreement regarding how decisions should be made (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). In a longitudinal study, Greer, Jehn, and Mannix (2008) found that early process conflict leads to higher levels of all conflict later for the group but that the effect was limited if the process conflict was resolved early. Process conflict at Time 1 was related to increased levels of all three types of conflict (task, relationship, and process) at Times 2 and 3. Moderation analysis indicated that some, but not all, of that effect was moderated by successful resolution, such that resolution decreased some levels of conflict later in the group's work. These results are important in that they include time in the analysis rather than relying on cross-sectional methods, but this study included zero-history students groups (albeit MBA students rather than undergraduates), so we consider the conclusions tentatively. In contrast, Goncalo, Polman, and Maslach (2010) found that process conflict early in a group's history typically led to increased performance, and it was later process conflict that impeded group productivity.

Studies subsequent to Jehn (1995) provide more complex evidence about the association of conflict with workgroup outcomes. In contrast to Jehn, several studies indicate generally negative outcomes associated with all three types of conflict, such as reduced performance and satisfaction (Stewart & Barrick, 2000; Vodosek, 2007). Van Woerkom and van Engen (2009) studied 84 workgroups in a number of organizations and found that task conflict, while not related to team learning, was negatively related to perceptions of performance. Relational conflict was, however, negatively related to team learning. Task conflict has also been negatively related to innovativeness (Lovelace et al., 2001), although that relationship was moderated by conflict styles and openness so that for teams that dealt with disagreements collaboratively and in which members felt free to express doubts, task disagreement was associated positively with innovativeness. On the other hand, several studies have confirmed Jehn's (1995) work, finding positive associations between task conflict and performance (Amason, 1996; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999). Amason (1996) also found that affective (relationship) conflict was negatively related to decision quality. In an attempt to sort out the results on conflict and group performance, De Dreu and Weingart (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 30 studies through 2001. They found that overall both task and relationship conflict had an average correlation of –.22 with group performance and more substantial negative correlations with member satisfaction.

While De Dreu and Weingart's (2003) meta-analysis is helpful, it is likely that contextual variables are complicating the relationship between conflict and performance. Along that line, most scholars studying within the instrumental perspective are examining moderators and mediators that influence the impacts of conflict on performance. Chen (2006) focused on the link between conflict and creativity and presented several interesting findings. First, service-oriented teams developing business software experienced more relational conflict than teams working on new product development and new technologies, while technology-oriented teams experienced more task conflict than service teams. Somewhat consistent with Jehn's (1995) findings on group outcomes, Chen (2006) found that in service-oriented groups, relational conflict was negatively related to creativity. In technology-oriented groups, task conflict was positively related to creativity. Interestingly, Chen found that the group's development mattered—the point at which the group was in terms of

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developmental stages was a significant moderator of the conflict–creativity link. Ayoko and Pekerti (2008) surveyed 510 individuals about conflicts in their workgroups. They measured trust of coworkers and supervisor as the outcome variable and examined how conflict intensity and duration, openness, and type of conflict affected trust. They found that the intensity and the duration of the conflict mediated the relationship between type of conflict and trust in group and in leader. However, the openness of the group moderated the link between intensity/duration and trust. Other moderators included the degree to which the group's task was routine and the internal structure of the group (Jehn, 1995), task uncertainty (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), level of group member interdependence (Janssen, Van de Vliert, & Veenstra, 1999), and attitude toward group (Dooley & Fryxell, 1999). These studies imply that task conflict has a positive effect on outcomes when tasks are nonroutine with low uncertainty, when interdependence is high, and when members have positive dispositions to their groups. Relational conflict is more damaging to performance when tasks involve high levels of uncertainty and when group members are highly interdependent.

Norms regarding communication and conflict management also influence the impacts of conflict on group effectiveness. Jehn (1995, 1997) found that the positive effect of task conflict and the negative effects of relationship conflict were stronger in groups with norms favoring openness than in those that did not have such norms. She also reported that groups with norms favoring avoidance of conflict did not exhibit the negative effects of relationship conflict on satisfaction and liking. Other studies found similar results in that openness or collaborativeness generally led to enhanced group performance (Lovelace et al., 2001; Stewart & Barrick, 2000). Amason and Sapienza (1997) found a positive association between openness and degree of cognitive conflict in top management teams but a negative association between mutuality—the degree to which members feel joint responsibility and share goals—and affective conflict. Also related to norms, groups adopting a cooperative approach may have higher levels of "conflict efficacy"—a belief that the team could manage conflict effectively—than competitive groups, and groups with a cooperative approach received higher ratings of effectiveness from supervisors than those with a competitive approach (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 2000). Kuhn and Poole (2000) studied 10 quality improvement teams from a government agency and a large corporation. They found that teams that developed norms favoring integrative conflict management made more effective decisions than those that developed norms favoring competition or avoidance of conflict. Other studies have demonstrated the value of group norms encouraging controversy that results in constructive conflict (Alper, Tjosvold, & Law, 1998; Janis, 1982; Tjosvold, 1993; Tjosvold, Wedley, & Field, 1986).

Perhaps the most comprehensive study along these lines, Jehn, Greer, Levine, and Szulanski (2008) compared conflict types with productivity and member retention along with a number of other potential moderators and mediators. Jehn et al. measured emergent states associated with conflict, such as trust and cohesiveness, emotions, resolution efficacy, and outcomes (performance and viability). All three types of conflict resulted in decreased emergent states, and emergent states mediated the relationship between conflict and both outcome variables. Norms encouraging task conflict were positively related to emergent states. Emotions associated with conflict moderated the relationship between relational conflict and emergent states, while conflict norms and resolution efficacy moderated the relationship between process conflict and emergent states.

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To summarize the studies on conflict and workgroup outcomes, there is clear evidence that conflict affects outcomes. While studies fairly consistently find a negative relationship between relationship or emotional conflict and outcomes, the record for task conflict is mixed, with some studies finding positive effects and some negative effects. The impacts of process conflict have received much less attention. However, results from Greer et al. (2008) and Jehn et al. (2008) indicate that process conflict may be negatively related to outcomes. There is a good deal of evidence that shows how workgroups deal with conflict affects outcomes, and the studies reviewed here suggest that the best approach is to confront the conflict openly and promote open and cooperative communication concerning issues and options—exactly the advice given by most conflict management texts (e.g., Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2011; Wilmot & Wilmot, 2001). This is comforting for those who have used the normatively based concepts in these texts, but as we will see below, it may also be cause for concern.

Diversity and Workgroup Conflict

A large body of research is concerned with diversity in workgroups, and a major theme is diversity and conflict. Diversity is a common source of conflict in workgroups, and most reviews of diversity in teams make reference to conflict or potential conflict (e.g., Larkey, 1996). In workgroup research, diversity has been conceptualized both in terms of observable characteristics such as gender, age, and race and also in terms of underlying characteristics such as beliefs, perspectives, values, functional specialty, profession, and experience (Oetzel, 2002). This review traces some of the literature that explores these characteristics, describes how identity might be related to group diversity, and, finally, considers how diversity can be practically managed.

Several studies have considered the effects of different types of diversity on workgroup conflict. As previously mentioned, Eddleston et al. (2008) found that age diversity in the form of multiple generations of owners positively related to both task and relational conflict. Oosterhof, Van der Vegt, Van de Vliert, Sanders, and Kiers (2009) examined how individual differences might lead to conflict and might be interpreted by members. Oosterhof et al. found that diversity in expertise was negatively related to both task and relational conflict, while diversity in extraversion was positively related to both types of conflict. Diversity in approach to work was positively related to task conflict only. Pelled et al. (1999; Pelled, 1996) found that functional diversity was related positively to task conflict and that task conflict was positively associated with group performance as rated by the team's manager. Racial and job tenure diversity were associated positively with emotional conflict, while age diversity was related negatively to emotional conflict. There was no association between emotional conflict and performance.

Vodosek (2007) studied 76 chemistry research teams, typically consisting of a faculty supervisor, post docs, graduate and undergraduate students, visiting faculty members, and technicians, working as a team rather than in strictly hierarchical relationships. Vodosek operationalized diversity based on an omnibus calculation of horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism and also measured task, relational, and process conflict (Jehn, 1995, 1997). He found that cultural diversity was positively related to all three types of conflict and that all three types of conflict were negatively related to both performance and satisfaction. However, Vodosek (2007) also found that conflict mediated the relationship between diversity and group outcomes. That is, the significant, negative effects of diversity on satisfaction and perceived performance became less significant or nonsignificant when

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any of the three types of conflict was included in a regression equation. Similarly, Choi and Sy (2010) found that task and relational conflict mediated the relationship between demographic diversity and group-level organizational citizenship behavior (GOCB). Choi and Sy measured conflict in 62 work groups from a variety of industries and developed a group measure of GOCB that included items such as "members of my group help others with their work when they have been absent even when they are not required to do so" and "members of my group willingly attend functions not required by management but which help our group's overall image." Although both types of conflict were negatively related to performance, task conflict was positively related to GOCB, while relational conflict was negatively related to it.

Two studies have examined diversity in terms of divisions within workgroups. Both studies identified how differences created subgroups and how those subgroups contributed to conflict in the larger team. Li and Hambrick (2005) studied 71 joint venture management groups looking at factions formed by membership in preexisting groups. They found that group factions magnified demographic differences and led to more task and relational conflict and an increased risk of group disintegration. Jehn and Bezrukova (2010) also examined subdivisions within workgroups based on fault lines, which are divisions between members based on one or more characteristics (e.g., gender, race, organizational status, etc.). Jehn and Bezrukova found that, when "activated," these fault lines led to increased conflict, decreased member satisfaction, and decreased performance. These connections were moderated by the degree to which members identified with the team.

Several studies provide insights concerning how to manage conflicts effectively in diverse groups. Ayoko, Hartel, and Callan (2002) observed that more than 50% of the conflicts in participants' workgroups were rooted in cultural differences. They found that the groups that handled conflict productively used discourse management strategies such as explanation and feedback, talking about differences, and focusing "on the problem and not the people." Negative outcomes were related to "being loud, swearing, making threats, verbal aggression, domineering behaviors, criticism, lack of communication, and overtly paying attention to accent" (p. 177). Simons, Pelled, and Smith (1999) found that diversity in perceptions of environmental uncertainty and education level interacted with level of debate in the teams to affect performance of the teams positively. Debate led to comprehensive consideration of the issues, which in turn improved team performance. On the other hand, Von Glinow, Shapiro, and Brett (2004) argued that talk is not always appropriate for the management of conflict in diverse teams. Diversity of contextualization of comments and absence of word equivalents undermine effective communication, with the result that the conflict may be framed in ways that prevent constructive resolution. Moreover, cultures differ widely in their valuation of talk as a means of handling problems. Trying to talk about conflicts or differences to members of cultures that do not value talk as a means of addressing conflict may be counterproductive. Von Glinow et al. suggested that substitutes for talk such as shared activities and the use of pictures or images may be more appropriate ways to address cultural differences.

Overall, the studies on diversity and conflict suggest that diversity in terms of characteristics directly related to the work of the group, such as informational diversity and functional diversity, promotes task conflict and may increase group performance. On the other hand, diversity in terms of characteristics more distally related to the group's work—racial, age, gender, value, and job

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tenure diversity—is associated with relational and emotional conflict and may have negative effects on performance if not managed effectively. The ultimate effects of diversity on performance, however, also depend on how the group deals with conflict. Diversity that results in coalitions seems to lead to more conflict although that may lead to positive outcomes. The framing of conflicts in terms of work rather than personal differences is associated with positive outcomes. Debate and confrontation of task-related aspects of conflicts are associated positively with performance and other outcomes. This, in turn, suggests that the nature of the group's work will influence impacts of diversity on workgroup conflict. Pelled et al.'s (1999) finding on the interaction of task routineness with conflict provides an interesting suggestion that deserves further investigation.

Conflict in Virtual Teams

Virtual teams are becoming increasingly common in knowledge-based work such as information system development, product development, and engineering design. They are geographically dispersed workgroups that are often composed of several colocated subgroups with different interests, work practices, and cultural backgrounds. Consequently, conflict is likely to occur in VTs. Several empirical studies have shown that VTs experience higher degrees of conflict than traditional teams (Armstrong & Cole, 1995; Cramton, 2001; Hinds & Mortensen, 2005). This section reviews conflict emergence in VTs, how such conflict may in turn affect group processes, and, finally, how research on conflict and VTs relates to outcome and diversity research.

Conflict emerges in VTs as a function of inability to develop mutual understanding and shared knowledge, which gives rise to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and, subsequently, misattributions (Cramton, 2001). That is no different from face-to-face teams, but the communication medium may exacerbate those barriers. For instance, not answering e-mails seems to be a common source of conflict in VTs (Cramton, 2001; Fernandez, 2004). Team members in other locations foster attitudes of "us" versus "them." Computer-mediated communication may accentuate tendencies to react to others based on the social groups they belong to rather than considering them as individuals (Abrams, Hogg, Hinkle, & Otten, 2005). This may result in stereotyping and other reactions that polarize VTs. Yet not all research demonstrates conclusively negative findings in VTs. Some studies of international VTs suggest that the lack of nonverbal cues, fewer language errors in written messages, and the absence of accents in e-mail and other leaner communication media may foster perceptions of increased similarity among VT members and render cultural differences that might provoke social identity processes less salient (Bhappu, Griffith, & Northcraft, 1997; Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999).

Once conflict has emerged, other scholarship addresses how that conflict affects group processes in VTs. Lira, Ripoll, Peiro, and Orengo (2008) examined student VTs and found that while relational conflict many hinder both face-to-face and virtual groups, the hindrance is more pronounced in virtual groups, and these groups also suffered decreased potency from task conflict. There is also evidence that computer-mediated communication employed by many VTs may not be as conducive to consensus building and conflict resolution as face-to-face communication (Hinds & Bailey, 2003). As DeSanctis and Monge (1999) concluded, "About the only consistent finding in the empirical literature with regard to task and media is that [the tasks of] thinking convergently, resolving conflict, or reaching consensus [are] better done face-to-face than electronically" (p. 697). In an insightful study that compared VTs and traditional colocated

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teams, Hinds and Mortensen (2005) found that while conflict was higher in VTs overall than in traditional teams, in VTs in which there were higher levels of spontaneous, informal communication and in which it was easy to coordinate work, the level of conflict was no greater than in traditional teams. This suggests that as VTs develop relationships and work out procedures over time, they will improve their conflict management capabilities. Some of the communication technologies utilized by VTs incorporate features for structuring group processes, and these may help VTs surface and manage conflict.

There are both similarities and differences between findings on conflict in VTs and those in the other lines of research discussed in the instrumental perspective. Research on VTs strongly recapitulates two themes from research on colocated workgroups: (1) diversity is an important source of workgroup conflict and (2) how the group handles the conflict influences whether it has positive or negative impacts on group outcomes. Research also indicates that conflict in VTs is driven by some of the same dynamics as in colocated groups, particularly social identity and attribution processes but that these effects are heightened in VTs compared with colocated groups. VTs face unique challenges in managing conflict due to their channels of communication. Lean media such as e-mail, computer conferencing, and chat that are currently used by most VTs may exacerbate conflict and render conflict management more difficult than it would be in colocated workgroups.

Workgroup Conflict and Network Analysis

One area of research within the instrumental perspective that has also received increasing attention is that of a workgroup positioned within a larger network. This research still proceeds from the idea that conflict can be productive or destructive and focuses on public conflict from a rational perspective. Therefore, we included it within the instrumental perspective rather than as a separate perspective. For the purposes of this chapter, we focus on studies that only included research on conflict rather than the larger literature of subgroups in general. We also limited this review to only those studies that specifically focused on workgroups.

Balkundi, Barsness, and Michael (2009) studied 19 workgroups in a manufacturing organization and examined how the group leader's position in a network shaped conflict in the group and the group's viability (group members' willingness to remain part of the group). The network antecedents of conflict in this study include a leader's prestige (measured by the number of people who approach him or her for advice or "indegree centrality") and the leader's role as a bridge between two people who are unconnected otherwise (also called *betweenness centrality*). Balkundi et al. found that leaders with high prestige were typically part of a group with less conflict and higher group viability than groups with lower prestige, while leaders who served as bridges between subordinates who were otherwise unconnected typically led groups higher in conflict and lower in viability. It is possible that a leader's prestige may keep competing interests in check within a group, thus leading to less conflict. The leader who serves as the only connection between two subordinates may be stretched too thin or may get caught up in the group's factions and politics so that group members fight for the leader's recognition or support.

Although not strictly from network analyses, three other studies examine connectedness and its instrumental effect on workgroup conflict. Steinel et al. (2010) examined how intragroup norms regarding conflict may be projected onto intergroup relations using student groups. They measured whether group

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members would conform to group conflict norms while representing the group in intergroup negotiations. They found that peripheral group members would only conform to group norms regarding conflict when they felt a high need to belong, while more central members almost always conformed to group norms. Rispens, Greer, and Jehn (2007) also looked at conflict and how various types of conflict are affected by connectedness. In a study of 27 telecommunications workgroups, they found that although conflict was negatively related to trust, connectedness mitigated negative relationships between both task and relationship conflict and trust. Finally, Rau (2005) analyzed data from top management teams at 111 banks and found that conflict moderated the relationship between transactive memory and group performance such that in a low-conflict condition transactive memory was positively connected to performance, while the relationship became nonsignificant in a high-conflict condition.

Reflections on Instrumental Research on Workgroup Conflict and Communication

As we noted in the first edition of this chapter, research in the instrumental perspective has advanced and substantiated a large amount of normative and case-based research that posited that a certain style of managing conflict—marked by open communication, confrontation of the issues, recognition that conflict can be useful, participatory decision making, and confidence that the conflict can be resolved in an integrative fashion—promotes positive group outcomes. Despite that trend, research since that edition has yet to definitively answer the question of whether certain types of conflict are more likely to lead to positive outcomes. Notwithstanding the uncertainty, there remains a deep-seated, normative strand in conflict research that posits that emotional, nonrational conflict is destructive, while substantive, rational conflict is constructive. Instrumental research on conflict is useful because it puts to the test prescriptions long held by the conflict and dispute resolution communities.

The general confirmation of these prescriptions, however, raises a troubling issue. The normative position on conflict management has been taught to several generations of employees, starting with Blake and Mouton's (1964) classic formulation of conflict styles. The research designs of most instrumental studies of workgroups have relied primarily on self-reported attitudes and behaviors. Members of teams are asked to report their conflict behaviors and assess outcomes; managers of teams are asked to report outcomes. This raises the possibility that implicit theories about how "effective" groups handle conflict have influenced participant responses. Participants who perceive their groups as doing well (often based on feedback from the managers who are rating team performance) may exhibit selective recall such that they remember behaviors consistent with the normative perspectives they have been taught more than behaviors inconsistent with them. Their reports of team conflict handling styles may thus be biased such that they report confrontive and open styles when they believe their team is effective and less confrontive and closed styles when they believe the team is ineffective. In short, it may be that theories of effective conflict management are reshaping data so that they are consistent with the normative theories, thus creating a self-fulfilling research design. The same may be said for studies identifying impacts of task versus relational conflicts, because the differences between them, too, have been covered in conflict management workshops and books since the days of Blake and Mouton.

Studies that observe group behavior and relate it to objective or subjective outcomes

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offer one way to determine whether this is, in fact, occurring. The few studies that have taken this approach (e.g., Kuhn & Poole, 2000) offer encouraging replications of the questionnaire-based studies. There is a need for more research in this area that is based on direct observation and analysis of group interaction.

A second caveat for instrumental research is that almost all studies have been cross-sectional in nature and, as a result, cannot establish causality with respect to associations among variables measuring conflict, outcomes, and mediating and moderating factors. This was particularly true in the last edition, but there have been several longitudinal studies since that time. For example, as previously stated, Greer et al. (2008) found that conflict early in a group's history leads to more conflict, although that study was conducted using student groups. Similarly, Poole and Dobosh (2010) studied a jury meeting first to come to a verdict and second to determine the sentence. They found that within-group, micro-level conflict processes in the first meeting shaped how the group managed conflict in the second meeting. Lira et al. (2008) found that communication medium moderated the relationship between type of conflict and outcome in a longitudinal study. Yet despite these and a handful of other studies, the preponderance of research on workgroup conflict has been cross-sectional. Until more studies include longitudinal designs, results of much of the recent instrumental research may be best considered tentative.

The recent growth in network analysis and the studies on workgroup conflict from that perspective highlight a shortcoming of other work in this area in terms of considering the organizational context within which the workgroup is situated. While some of the research reports the industries from which groups were drawn, there is generally little information about the culture of the organization, whether members have joined groups freely or were assigned, and how workgroups fit within the organization's structure. Significant relationships found in network analyses indicate the importance of examining not just the group itself but also its context within an organization.

Finally, we might note a major gap in current instrumental research. While instrumental studies clearly indicate productive routes for dealing with task-oriented conflict, they are less definitive on what is to be done with emotion-based or relational conflicts. In view of the inevitability of such conflicts, more knowledge is needed about how best to cope with them. It is also important to realize that the distinction between the three types of conflict may be at least partially arbitrary. Janssen et al. (1999) call the separation somewhat artificial since task conflict tends to breed relational conflict and process conflict can cause both types. Some answers to these issues are suggested by research in the developmental and political perspectives.

Research Within the Developmental Perspective

In contrast to the instrumental point of view, the developmental perspective sees conflict not in relation to group performance but in relation to group progress. Two positions on group development see that progress as either movement from one stage of a life cycle to the next or movement between poles of an opposition, a paradox. The following review of the developmental perspective focuses on these two areas.

Group Life Cycle and Conflict

A long tradition of research has observed the functions of conflict in long-term group development. In one of the most famous formulations, Tuckman (1965) postulated that

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groups pass through stages of forming, storming, norming, and performing. LaCoursiere (1980) and later Wheelan (2005) summarized studies of group development in a basic five-stage model:

Stage 1: Dependency and inclusion
Stage 2: Counterdependency and fight
Stage 3: Trust and structure
Stage 4: Work
Stage 5: Termination

The various stages present the group and its members with problems they must resolve: (a) how to deal with dependence on others, (b) what degree of independence of member action is allowed, (c) the purpose and direction of the group, (d) control and power issues, (e) organizing the group for effective work, (f) maintaining an effective and creative work process, (g) meeting members' individual needs, and (h) coming to terms with the end of an important experience. Bushe and Coetzer (2007) suggested that the primary conflict of workgroups at those stages might be differences in perceptions of the group as it is versus the group as it ought to be. Karriker (2005) argued that leadership emergence was a key concern. As the group faces these and other problems, if it works through its problem effectively, it will develop and members will grow, both as group members and personally. Then the group can move on to confronting its next problem in the developing sequence. If the group avoids dealing with these issues or does not address them effectively, the group may remain "stuck" in a stage and not be able to develop further. Even if the group continues to develop, the problems will come back to haunt it. A group that runs into difficulties is likely to regress to an earlier stage at some later time.

Conflict is a critical part of the developmental process. Not only does it constitute a key stage of group development but it is also likely to occur at other stages as well, as members try to work through the problem(s) they encounter. Chen (2006) measured task and relational conflict and group creativity as compared with the life cycle of two types of groups in Taiwan. Chen found that conflict occurred at all points of the groups' life cycle; there were peaks in conflict levels for service-oriented groups, while the levels remained generally stable for technology-oriented teams. Franz and Jin (1999) found that conflict was cyclical in that new conflicts would develop, be resolved, and the group would continue until the next conflict occurred. Regarding the nature of those conflicts, Franz and Jin suggested that at approximately the midpoint of group meetings, members would shift from more competitive behaviors to more collaborative efforts, a variation on Gersick's (1991) punctuated equilibrium model. However, there is also evidence that not all groups engage in conflict. Following 72 student groups over the course of a semester, Goncalo et al. (2010) found that not all groups go through a distinct conflict stage. In their study, groups that felt confident early either skipped the conflict stage or experienced reduced conflict. However, groups that experienced process conflict early in their life cycle had increased performance. On the other hand, groups that experienced late process conflict typically experienced reduced performance.

From a developmental perspective, effective conflict management depends on dealing with current issues. An effective outcome is one that members are satisfied with and that puts the issue to rest. Akrivou, Boyatzis, and McLeod (2006) argued that the developmental perspective might also be used in a normative way to make prescriptions for groups initiating change. Akrivou et al. critiqued previous research on group development as overly descriptive and called for more research on prescriptive change in group life cycles.

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Unlike the instrumental perspective, the developmental perspective regards emotion as a necessary and potentially beneficial part of conflict. Indeed, Akrivou et al. (2006) argued that too much research on conflict considers emotions negatively. Conflict stems from existential needs and therefore inherently arouses emotions. Dealing with conflict effectively requires members to acknowledge and work through their emotional reactions to the group and to each other. Only if the group members successfully come to terms with their needs and express their emotions will a group be effective in the instrumental sense.

Tensions in Conflict and Workgroup Development

Smith and Berg (1987) advanced a different view of the role of conflict in workgroup development. They argued that rather than following a set developmental sequence, groups should develop through addressing inherent paradoxes that confront them. These paradoxes consist of "coexisting opposites"—contradictory and conflicting emotions, thoughts, and actions—that exist in groups. Smith and Berg defined three sets of paradoxes: (1) paradoxes of belonging, which represent coexisting opposites around group and individual identity, involvement, individuality, and boundaries; (2) paradoxes of engaging, which feature coexisting opposites concerned with disclosure, trust, and intimacy; and (3) paradoxes of speaking, concerned with the tensions among authority, dependency, creativity, and courage to disagree in groups. These paradoxes represent problems that continuously face groups, and groups tend to cycle within these paradoxes and between them. The paradoxes are sources of conflict for groups, and groups manage conflicts through managing the paradoxes. In terms of how groups can deal effectively with paradoxes, Smith and Berg argued that attempting to eliminate the paradoxes is likely to result in the group getting stuck. Instead the group should live within the paradoxes, work to understand them and the conflicts they produce, and find links between conflicting forces and issues. Finding these links enables the group to move forward both in terms of its own effectiveness and in terms of building a stronger group.

Group dialectics is a stream of research branching off from Smith and Berg's dynamic of tensions in group development. Kramer (2004) conducted an ethnographic study of a community theater group, arguing that group dialectics would differ from dyadic relationships because of the goal-directed nature of groups and because of group size. Kramer found four global dialectics present in his data: (1) commitment levels to the group, (2) ordered versus emergent group activities, (3) inclusion versus exclusion and group boundaries, and (4) norms for acceptable versus unacceptable behavior. In this model, a group would deal with conflict by using "a range of choices from explicitly communicating about them, such as venting or discussion, to communicating implicitly or choosing not to communicate about them through avoidance or minimization" (p. 328).

Approaching dialectics from an alternative perspective, Garner and Poole (2009) examined leadership emergence in workgroups as a function of conflict between a potential leader and a "foil," a difficult person who threatens the group's ability to focus and complete its task. Garner and Poole studied three groups that were part of a government organization. In two of those groups, the potential leader was able to overcome the difficult member, and the group effectively completed its task. In the third, the difficult person never faded in dominance and continued to distract the group until it dissolved. Garner and Poole concluded that, paradoxically, the leader in each group needed a difficult person; cast

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against the backdrop of this distracting element, the leader overcoming the difficult person exuded competence aligned with the group's best interests. Without the conflict between the leader and the foil, these groups may not have recognized their need for a leader and may have never have developed to a productive stage (as happened in the third group).

The developmental perspective views conflict as a useful and inherent part of group life. Properly managed, conflicts can help groups resolve critical issues and become more effective. The conflicts that the developmental perspective is concerned with exist at a deeper and more fundamental level than those discussed in the instrumental perspective. While some developmental models, such as Wheelan's (2005), propose that these conflicts can be resolved, others, such as Smith and Berg's (1987), imply that conflicts will always be with groups continuously presenting new tensions that must be dealt with (see also Bion, 1959).

Reflections on Developmental Research and Workgroup Conflict

Like in the instrumental perspective, research in the developmental perspective can be questioned on the grounds that normative theory may be shaping study results. The various models of long-term development such as Wheelan's (2005) are normative in the sense that they present an ideal sequence of phases that—traversed properly—will result in a growth experience for both group and members. Most evidence for these models comes from interpretive case studies and from longitudinal studies that measure behavior that would be expected in the phases. By presuming that patterns are present, these studies may be smoothing over other aspects of these groups that run counter to the proposed developmental sequences. The strong presumption that there are orderly patterns of longitudinal development raises questions about the openness of this research to rejecting the null hypothesis. More studies that consciously set out to test the null are needed.

The tight connection between process and outcomes in these models also raises questions. If a group progresses through the phases in the order posited, the assumption is that it is solving the primary problems posed in the phases as it develops. If, on the other hand, a group "loops back" to earlier phases, the assumption is that it is regressing to previous problems that were not solved adequately. There is, then, a tendency toward circular reasoning between sequence and outcome in the application of these models. It is important to assess or measure adequacy of problem solving independent of progress through phases to rigorously assess developmental models. The developmental perspective provides a useful complement to the instrumental approach. Its long-term view of workgroups that focuses on their health has the potential to provide a useful frame for shorter-term instrumental conflict management processes.

Research Within the Political Perspective

Research in the political perspective regards workgroups as "contested terrain" in which individuals and subgroups vie for control of the group. This perspective focuses on power in workgroups and traces how group processes both enact and are influenced by power and the struggle for power. In instrumental studies of workgroups, power is typically viewed as a characteristic or behavior of individual group members, particularly the leader. Instrumental studies focus on strategies and tactics that leaders and members use to influence other members, for example, compliance-gaining tactics or argumentative

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strategies. Political studies of workgroup conflict, in contrast, assume that power is rooted in social groups with different interests and different social power bases, such as labor and management, male and female, experienced members and newcomers (note that these groups represent categories of social identity, as discussed above).

While it acknowledges that power is often exerted openly in workgroups, the political perspective also focuses on more subtle and hidden dimensions of power. One of these is issue control, a process through which certain issues are defined as "off-limits" (Folger et al., 2011). In most workgroups, for example, the legitimate right of the leader to give orders is never questioned. That this issue is never raised reinforces the leader's power base. In turn, the leader's power gives him or her the ability to engage in issue control, setting up a self-reinforcing cycle that sustains the leader's dominance. Another aspect of hidden power is discipline, the establishment of shared goals and premises among members that channel their behavior in the direction of the interests of the dominant members (or of managers outside the workgroup; Barker & Cheney, 1994; Sewell, 1998; Tompkins & Cheney, 1985). Members' identification with the organization leads them to follow its premises, and in so doing, members exert self-control over themselves, thus channeling their behavior in ways consistent with the organization's interests.

According to the political perspective, conflicts of interest between different groups are the primary source of workgroup conflict. In many cases, these conflicts are played out through negotiation and alliance building among individuals and subgroups in a pluralistic political process. However, many political conflicts do not surface explicitly due to the operation of hidden power. Indeed, a hallmark of the political perspective is that it highlights the avoidance or lack of conflict as a common response to conflicts of interest. Hidden power functions to suppress or avoid conflict by defining conflicts of interest as off-limits or by inculcating premises in group members that prevent conflicts or resolve them in ways consistent with dominant interests. Ironically, the political perspective argues that when conflict surfaces openly, it represents a failure of the dominant individual or subgroup, because only when the power structures that normally suppress conflict have broken down or been undermined does conflict come out into the open. The remainder of this section examines control in work groups, pluralistic examinations of political processes, and the political perspective in health care teams.

Control and Workgroup Conflict

One active line of research in recent years has focused on control and conflict in workgroups (Sell, Lovaglia, Mannix, Samuelson, & Wilson, 2004; Sewell, 1998). Sell et al. (2004) argued that this topic is one that cuts across a number of disciplines and research traditions. Traditionally, workgroups have been controlled by management, which sets up the workgroup, establishes its goals, and monitors and evaluates its performance. The agent of management is the appointed team leader, who imports and enforces the motivations of management into the group. Sewell (1998) aptly named this traditional type of arrangement *vertical control*—that is, control from the top down. A different type of control emerges in newer types of workgroups, such as self-managed teams or quality improvement teams. These teams are typically set up with the nominal goal of empowering members, and they are presented as enabling members of the team to determine their own work arrangements and have freedom to innovate. However, as Barker (1993) noted, far from equalizing power among members, these teams tend to develop systems in which members internalize organizational norms and enforce

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them on other members. This type of control, which Barker (following Tompkins & Cheney, 1985) termed *concertive control* and Sewell (1998) named *horizontal control*, is based on teams first for negotiating arrangements and norms for attaining organizational goals and then translating them into rules and procedures that enforce member behavior. Because the members of the group willingly adopt the norms and procedures, resistance to them is met with the response "you agreed to this," which effectively short-circuits the resentment and resistance that often comes in response to rules and procedures imposed by management "from above." That the power structure is set up to reflect managerial interests is hidden by the apparent self-determination of the team members.

Barker, Melville, and Packanowsky (1993) described the role of concertive control in a conflict among members of a self-managed team in a team-based organization. One member persistently arrived late to work due to problems with child care, and members perceived this as a breach of team norms and an imposition on them. As they talked among themselves and worked out the nature of the offending member's transgression, members transformed the general guideline "we all need to be at work at the same time" into a more precise form "if you are more than 5 minutes late you will be docked a week's pay." This latter rule is clearer and easier to enforce than the more general guideline. It also reflects a more managerial orientation toward workers than the guideline. When the group confronted the late member, they used the rule to deliver an ultimatum, forestalling her attempts to ask for a reasonable accommodation. The other members confronted the latecomer with a solid front and insisted that she conform to the rule. In this action, the members inadvertently subjected themselves to further control, since they now had to conform to the tighter rule. Barker (1993) noted that in this way teams discipline themselves by replacing informal norms with rationalized behavior that serves the greater goals of the organization and its management. The promulgation of rules contributes to the suppression of conflict and enables the dominant group to prevail because members accept them as reasonable and objective. It also serves the interests of management.

Kirby and Krone's (2002) study of the enforcement of family leave policies in workgroups shows how those not taking leave developed rationalizations that pressured especially fathers, but also mothers, not to take the leaves or to take much shorter leaves than they desired. An undercurrent of conflict pervades these workplaces—conflict that is mostly hidden and serves as a pressuring mechanism. The resulting reluctance to take advantage of legally mandated leave policies serves managerial interests, but the "enforcers" who help realize managerial interests are for the most part worker proxies who believe they are acting in their own interests.

Scholars studying control and workgroup conflict within the political perspective generally challenge norms regarding authority in workgroups. They seek to uncover how workgroups police themselves and how, in doing so, members legitimize and serve managerial interests.

Pluralistic Approaches to Workgroup Conflict

A more pluralistic model of politics in workgroup conflict can be found in the work of human relations and industrial organization researchers of the 1940s and 1950s. Similar to control and conflict researchers previously described, these authors examine control structures in groups. However, the scholars that we identify as pluralistic are examining conflict with a more descriptive eye than where conflict and authority are

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less threatening than the control researchers. Pluralistic scholars documented numerous conflicts between different formal and informal groups in work organizations in rich qualitative studies (Dalton, 1959; Sayles, 1957; Whyte, 1948). One study that epitomizes this tradition is Melville Dalton's (1959) *Men Who Manage*. Dalton described a complex set of overlapping "struggles" within and among workgroups based on differences between production and maintenance functions, staff and line, and labor and management. His analysis of these struggles found that they were often conducted via informal cliques that represent alliances based on common interests. Some of these cliques represented a single social category, such as foremen in operations, while others cut across some social categories to unify members around a common interest. The cliques and subgroups commonly struggled with one another while using existing organizational rules, procedures, and resources, mobilizing and bending them to their ends.

In an ongoing process of struggle that was much more fluid than the power processes described by research on concertive control or feminist analyses, various individuals and subgroups ebbed and flowed in terms of power over one another in the firms studied by Dalton (1959). The struggles were often conducted via indirect and hidden conflicts that were not evident to superiors or outsiders. Dalton found these conflicts beneficial to the overall organization because they helped it change to resolve operational and human problems. In his words,

> Conflict fluctuates around some balance of the constructive and disruptive. Inevitably there must be constructive conflict as responsible officers and close associates work with varying success to adapt parts of the structure to changing conditions and personnel, while others for various reasons resist corrective changes. We are currently so busy hiding conflict that we quake when we must simultaneously deal with it and pretend that it does not exist. (p. 263)

Dalton (1959) viewed conflict in terms of power struggles but had a much more benign attitude toward it than the control researchers.

Political Conflict in Health Care Teams

Somewhere between the managerial control and pluralistic perspectives on politics falls a large body of work on health care teams in which conflict is a persistent theme. Differences in power and status among different professions—physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists—and within each profession—among different physician specialties and different types of nurses—both foment and are involved in the management of conflict in health care groups. The complexity of medical care forces health care teams to adapt constantly, often leaving room for negotiation of roles and power (Schatzman & Bucher, 1964).

Several factors in the interactions of health care teams, including the complex and pressing work, the strong authority position of the physician, and hesitancy to confront professionals outside one's own discipline, encourage avoidance or suppression of conflict (Drinka, 1996; Folger et al., 2011). Sands, Stafford, and McClelland (1990) found that conflict within interdisciplinary teams was expressed both overtly and covertly within a format that required the team to reach consensus in a short period of time. On the other hand, Simon (1999) analyzed how neurosurgeons and biophysicists jockey for professional prominence in sharp, public arguments over the interpretation of images. Keith (1991) described how physiologists and orthopedic surgeons contend for leadership in geriatric rehabilitation units.

Negotiations over division of labor in a group can be triggered by resistance of those

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whose voice was silenced by the ideology, problems with patients, or coalitions of lower status members (Schatzman & Bucher, 1964). Many of these negotiations occur "tacitly" as members work together. Abramson and Mizrahi (1996) reported that social workers (typically a lower power profession) focused more on interaction with physicians, while physicians focused more on competence of social workers, indicating that the higher status of physicians allowed them to judge the competence of social workers while social workers emphasized collaboration. The numerous articles (e.g., Fountain, 1993) advising nurses, social workers, and mental health professionals about how to interact with physicians effectively testify to the importance and potential impact of style differences in health care teams. They also indicate that resistance to the presumption of physician control and advocacy for increased input is an explicit part of the discourse of these professions.

The interdisciplinary team literature in health care emphasizes the need for mutual respect and power sharing among members of health care groups (e.g., Clark, 1997; Drinka, 1996). However, countervailing forces, including the assertiveness of professions and established status and power structures, tend to lead to the reassertion of physician dominance as teams progress (Freidson, 1970). Feiger and Schmitt (1979) found that even in teams initially committed to interdisciplinary collegiality, status differences reasserted themselves over time.

Another type of exceptional behavior, whistle-blowing, is a sensitive subject in the health care literature. Erde (1982) noted that professional norms require reporting incidents that represent negligence or harm patients; however, group norms grounded in collegial decisions about care and in collegial relationships provide disincentives to do so. Erde argued that the ideology of teamwork is often used to suppress dissent and curtail or punish whistle-blowers as "uncommitted" members. The dynamics of team communication surrounding ethically driven behavior such as whistle-blowing offer an important horizon for future research.

Reflections on Political Research and Workgroup Conflict

Research in the political perspective attempts to illuminate one of the most profound dimensions of workgroup conflict—power—and its connection to group communication and interaction. This perspective puts the most weight on communication of the three perspectives due to its emphasis on the importance of communicative interaction in influence strategies and tactics and of discourse in the constitution and maintenance of power structures.

It is something of a paradox that research in the political perspective often features conflict in terms of the absence of conflict—that is, in the suppression or avoidance of conflict. However, the dynamics of power dictate that it often can be sustained best if it remains hidden. Once the bases of power are revealed and are open for discussion, they are also open to challenge. Research in this tradition thus has to delve into hidden power, trying to discern the power behind a series of influence moves or the deep-seated power structures sustained by a taken-for-granted discourse that must be deconstructed. Though it may accord the most importance to communication of the three perspectives, the political perspective also tends to regard the communication surrounding power with skepticism, as though it obscures as much as it reveals. Perhaps the hidden, below-the-surface aspect of the political perspective explains why we found substantially less research in this tradition than in the other two since the previous edition.

One potential for this area to grow is through connecting pluralistic with structural

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conceptions of power. Pluralists tend to focus more on the surface and look for power in direct interaction (or the lack thereof). Structural views tend to focus more on deeply held, unarticulated, and unexamined premises and attempt to describe how they are communicatively constituted and sustained and how they undergird power in groups and organizations. The research approaches and basic assumptions of the two positions seem to run in different directions. Notwithstanding, the hints in structural studies such as those by Kirby and Krone (2002) concerning how structural power plays out in the discourse among interest groups and in studies like Dalton's (1959) concerning how positions of privilege are sustained through communicative interaction make us wish there was more articulation between the two positions.

Toward Integration and Cross-Fertilization

While research in the instrumental, developmental, and political perspectives has developed predominantly in separate "silos," it is clear that the three perspectives have the potential to inform one another. Indeed, some research since the last edition of this *Handbook* has taken steps in that direction and shown interplay between the instrumental and the other two traditions. With such integration, we can better understand workgroup conflict because each perspective can illuminate blind spots in the other perspectives.

Goncalo et al. (2010) saw connections between process conflict from the instrumental perspective and group development processes. Their results indicated the conditions under which groups might deviate from traditional development stage models. Thus, concepts originating in the instrumental perspective revealed a nuance in the developmental perspective. Similarly, Greer et al. (2008) studied process conflict as it related to stages of development and found that the effects of certain types of conflict might carry across developmental stages. In this case, ideas from the developmental perspective informed outcomes typically associated with the instrumental perspective. In both cases, one perspective shed light on the other. This type of synergy demonstrates the value of lifting one's head from a particular tradition and seeing insights in other traditions. As discussed previously, Chen (2006) found that the life cycle stage in which conflict occurs moderated the effects of conflict on creativity in some groups. Again, a developmental perspective joined with instrumental variables produces better understanding than either could alone.

Korsgaard, Jeong, Mohony, and Pitariu (2008) argued that the work on intragroup conflict since Jehn (1995) has advanced understanding of various types of conflict but has conflated levels of communication. That is to say, previous research has generally aggregated analyses in ways that do not account for cross-level variation. Korsgaard et al. (2008) proposed a multilevel model of conflict that associates individual-, dyadic-, and intragroup-level conflicts with group development. They reviewed substantial amounts of research in the instrumental perspective (which they called *structural*) and the developmental perspective (which they called *process*) to describe how the individual level, the dyadic level, and the group level might interact before and during workgroup conflict. They critiqued previous research for relying on individual-level measures of group conflict such as Jehn's (1995) and advocated for more research using time to understand conflict. What their model lacks in parsimony it makes up for in ambition and robust explanatory power. Workgroups are situated within a number of socioecological levels (e.g., interpersonal, organizational, community, etc.), and theorizing and research regarding workgroups need

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to take place within a multilevel framework (Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, & Rinderle, 2006).

Two recent studies have used an instrumental lens to study political relationships within groups. Boros et al. (2010) studied 125 multicultural groups, looking at how power and interdependence affect conflict management styles. They found that when members perceive equal power relationships and feel connected, they are more likely to use collaborative conflict management strategies. On the other hand, when members perceive unequal power held by group members and feel independent, group members are more likely to use avoidance strategies. Greer and van Kleef (2010) found that the effect of power on group conflict was more complicated. Studying 42 workgroups, they found that power struggles moderated the relationship between power and conflict strategies. For groups with overall low power, power differentials (where some members were in control and other members were not) led to better outcomes. For groups with overall high power, equal power distribution led to better conflict management strategies.

Despite these inroads into integrating these perspectives, much more work remains. The following discussion relates a few potential ways by which we believe each perspective could contribute to a better understanding of the other perspectives. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list but to spur thought and discussion.

The three points of view offer complementary insights into conflicts. The instrumental view focuses our attention on the immediate give and take of conflict interaction, the surface on which groups do their work. The political view reminds us that this interaction also reflects and plays a role in constituting the power structure that is brought to bear in conflict tactics and strategies. While the instrumental view sensitizes us to constructive and destructive patterns of conflict interaction, the political standpoint cautions us to consider factors that go beyond the immediate situation when we encounter destructive interaction patterns. The political perspective takes a long-term view that may serve goals such as group capacity building and member need fulfillment especially well, while the instrumental perspective is stronger on performance and immediate group effectiveness.

The developmental view stresses that all conflict, including the one based on deep-seated interests, unfolds within an ongoing concern—the workgroup—that is developing according to its own dynamics and facing challenges that may transcend the instrumental or political dimensions. A power struggle or conflict over work means very different things and is influenced by different factors in a group just forming than in a well-established workgroup. The developmental perspective also directs our attention to ways in which constructive responses must go beyond addressing work or structure to helping the group and its members grow. Together, the three perspectives remind us that multiple levels must be considered in understanding workgroup conflict. We must consider conflict as stemming from and effecting the group's work, as it reflects and shapes the power structures that make the group's work possible and as it affects the actualization of members and the health of the group.

Provided with some understanding of the conflict and the factors that drive it, we face another question: How should conflicts be managed? Again, the three perspectives provide diverse advice. Instrumental researchers have advanced many of the most effective models for managing workgroup conflict. These approaches advocate dealing with conflict "in the present"—that is, on immediate issues that surface during conflict interaction and in response to interventions in the conflict.

Political research has tended to focus more on describing the plight of groups with power

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issues and how they are controlled than to prescribe how to deal with power. Political scholars often project a sense that existing structures are so deeply embedded that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to change them or to use the conflict they engender for constructive purposes. This would require shifts in power relations that are often deeply rooted and reinforced by many structures in the group, the larger organization, and society. Resolving political conflicts sometimes seems more a matter of reforming society than handling things within the group.

The developmental perspective views the management of conflict as akin to psychological therapy (e.g., Gibbard, Hartman, & Mann, 1974) and emphasizes the importance of the quasi-therapeutic role. In some cases, this role is filled by an outside consultant or mediator, and in others, by a prominent member of the group. As occurs in psychological therapy, this person may be a facilitator who helps the group understand itself and suggests approaches for dealing with the conflict. The developmental perspective, like the political perspective, views conflict management as broader than simply dealing with the conflict at hand. Effective conflict management involves fundamental change in the group and in its members. Unlike the political perspective, the developmental perspective views power as just one aspect of the group and, in some cases, not the most important one to address.

Combining the three perspectives has the potential to greatly enhance conflict management. The quasi-therapeutic approach of the developmental perspective offers a useful resource for resolution of political conflicts. As Jürgen Habermas (1975) noted, one useful model for critical analysis of power structures is psychoanalysis. Developmental approaches to conflict management look past the immediate conflict to the deeper dynamics of the sort that drive control and domination in groups. The conflict management models advanced by instrumental scholars also have great potential in the management of political and developmental conflicts. It is difficult to deal with outbreaks of contention and competition, and instrumental models of conflict management provide guidance and techniques for achieving civil discussion and comportment in groups. It is also difficult to deal with deeper issues if the group engages in avoidance (Bion, 1959, called this *flight*) or if some members are able to keep important issues off the floor. Instrumental approaches such as constructive controversy can help groups surface issues safely and manage discussion so that minority voices are heard, thus increasing the probability of a successful diagnosis and change.

That conflict management means more than just handling the immediate conflict, but requires us to go beyond it to change the group and its members, is a useful addition to instrumental models of conflict management. The finding in instrumental research that groups with less open communication climates handle conflict less effectively implies that longer-term development of the group is important even for surface-level conflict management.

As we stated at the beginning of this chapter, workgroups are a ubiquitous part of contemporary organizations. As such, understanding conflict in these groups is important for reflecting on how to improve communication in these contexts. The instrumental, developmental, and political perspectives offer unique ideas regarding the sources of conflict, how conflict can be productive, and where research is needed within this phenomenon. Because of that uniqueness, interplay and cross-fertilization between perspectives have the potential to reveal nuances in what we know about workgroup conflict. We hope that this chapter will continue to create conversations toward those connections.

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13

Conflict Motivations and Tactics of Targets, Bystanders, and Bullies

A Thrice-Told Tale of Workplace Bullying

Pamela Lutgen-Sandvik and Courtney Vail Fletcher

Adult bullying at work is a unique type of escalated, entrenched conflict that occurs between and among organizational members. Nearly half of all U.S. workers are affected by bullying during their working lives, either being targeted or witnessing abuse as a bystander. The power disparity between bullies and targets, the aggressive character of bullying communication, and the persistent wearing down that occurs mark adult bullying as a unique type of escalated, destructive workplace conflict. Adult bullying at work is not, however, simply a dyadic one-on-one conflict—many others are involved and affected. Bullying conflicts are also extremely difficult to resolve, and the targets' tactics (especially problem solving) rarely resolve the conflict and often make it worse.

We tell a *thrice-told tale* of bullying conflicts from three standpoints: targets, bystanders, and bullies. To illustrate the tale, we include a case study to show how targets, bystanders, and bullies (dis)engage with bullying conflicts in real-life scenarios. By exploring bullying conflicts as experienced by these three groups, organizational members and researchers might have a better understanding of some of the forces that constitute the phenomenon and potentially locate leverage points for more effective interventions. We begin by describing the features that make workplace bullying a unique type of conflict. From this, we outline a typology of interpersonal motivations in conflict situations adopted from the multiple goals theory (Ohbuchi & Tedeschi, 1997) and a framework for conflict management tactics adapted from Rahim's (2002) theory of managing organizational conflict. We then explain why the three factors of focus in the chapter—profiles, motivations, tactics—are useful for understanding bullying conflicts and subsequently flesh out these three factors

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for each employee group in the thrice-told tale. We wrap up the discussion by exploring the contextual issues surrounding bullying conflicts, presenting ideas for transformation, and suggesting potential avenues for further research.

Workplace Bullying as a Unique Form of Conflict

Workplace bullying takes place between and among people who work together and is marked by

> a pattern of repeated hostile behaviors over an extended period of time; actual or perceived intent to harm on the part of the actor [bully]; one party being unable to defend him- or herself; [and] a power imbalance between parties. (Keashly & Nowell, 2011, p. 424)

Power disparity is central to bullying conflicts, and research calls the disadvantaged parties *targets*. The target's disadvantaged position can be due to position (e.g., supervisory bullying[1]), influence, or charisma; or can develop because of the persistent "hammering away" characteristic of bullying (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2006, p. 163).

Bullying is a *pattern* of communication, and when targeted workers try to explain their experiences, they often struggle with encapsulating their story, usually needing "to describe the entire set of behaviors and their interrelationships" (Keashly & Jagatic, 2011, p. 50). The enduring character of bullying contributes to targets' feelings of powerlessness. Persistent aggressive attacks contribute to increased stress and decreased coping capacity, which increase feelings of powerlessness, making targets even more easily bullied and less able to defend themselves.

Bullying is *escalatory*; initially aggression is passive, circuitous, and immensely difficult to describe, increasing in frequency and antagonism as time passes. In extremely escalated incidences, aggressors may even start to objectify their targets, which enable the use of more aggressive, inhuman attacks. In some instances, "the total destruction of the opponent is seen as the ultimate goal to be attained by the parties" (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003, p. 19).

Conflict, on the other hand, involves (a) parties that are interdependent (i.e., they have the capability to impede or interfere with the other), (b) a perception by at least one party that an opposition or incompatibility (or the potential thereof) exists among the goals or values, and (c) some type of interaction among the involved parties (Knapp, Putnam, & Davis, 1988). Bullying includes these general indicators of conflict but has additional features making them conflicts that are "most like intractable, escalating violent conflicts between unequals" (Keashly & Nowell, 2011, p. 427). In such conflicts, the bullies' goals might be to harm or drive targets from the workplace; targets' goals may be to end abusive treatment and repair identity. And the aggressive character of bullying conflicts creates hostile work environments affecting many employees, whether directly targeted or not.

The Communal Character of Bullying Conflicts

One of the tendencies, especially in U.S. organizations and popular thought, is to individualize the problem of workplace bullying. Supervisors, manager, and bystanders often blame the victims for their own abuse and label targets' reports of abuse as overexaggerated, subjective, and questionable (Keashly, 2001). By attending to the experiences of more of the employees who are involved and affected by adult bullying, we are better able to recognize the complexity of this type

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of conflict and avoid, at least partially, such myopic viewpoints. Thinking of bullying as a matter involving only a bully and a target contributes to viewing it as a solely subjective experience and stunts efforts to resolve this toxic form of conflict. From such a stance, managers and peers are less likely to believe target reports and thus take corrective action (Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010). Because workplaces are collective sites of human interaction, what occurs between any dyad or among group members bleeds and buzzes throughout the workgroup and affects all in proximity (Waldron, 2000). Thus, some understanding of target, bully, and bystander perspectives—especially their motivations—sheds light on some of the reasons these conflicts are so difficult to resolve.

Certainly, any view of the *reality* of bullying conflicts is partial, and current research on the subject may overemphasize the target perspective. Although literature on adult bullying extensively examines targets' perspectives in these conflicts, it less often explores bystanders' experiences (for an exception, see Vartia, 2001), and bully explanations are nearly nonexistent (for an exception, see Rayner & Cooper, 2003). We call attention to the fact that bullying conflicts involve *all* affected workers, whether or not those workers are actively engaged in conflict communication and behavior. Bullying conflicts slowly colonize and take over nearly all actions and interactions in workgroups where it is present. To gain a better picture of this involvement, the core material in the chapter explores three interrelated factors associated with targets, bystanders, and bullies: (1) general profiles, (2) motivations to act or withhold action, and (3) conflict tactics. We outline these factors because involved parties may be reticent or unable to report them for a number of reasons. They might not fully understand their motivations; they may feel bound by emotion display rules; they might feel compelled to perform certain image management work, or some combination of these. The three factors flesh out bullying conflicts in particularly useful ways.

Motivational Goals, Tactical Communication, and Group Profiles

Motivational goals and conflict tactics are inextricably linked. Motivational goals fuel action, giving behavior its energy and direction. Motivation is the first link in a chain of interconnected interactions that lead to various outcomes, both intended and unintended. To understand bullying conflicts requires understanding the motives of the actors who are involved or affected. The drive for justice, for example, is often an overriding motivation in bullying conflicts, particularly for targets, (Cowan, 2009) but also for bystanders (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006) and even bullies (Crawshaw, 2007). Tactics in conflict management are the ways in which people approach and engage with conflict, and tactics make sense in light of what motivates them. Tactics are driven both by personality tendencies, social situations, and the relational context of the conflict. In all conflict, and especially in bullying conflicts, "the *opponent's message behavior* accounts for the majority of variance in communication strategies" (Knapp et al., 1988, p. 416). Underscoring target, bystander, and bully motivations and tactics helps us better understand what is going on in these conflicts, where to intervene, and why certain interventions are less than effective. In addition to understanding motivations and tactics, different experienced subjectivities (i.e., profiles) can contribute to specific motivations and tactics.

Profiles are the common markers of persons who self-identify as belonging to one of the three groups and report certain personal or social characteristics in interviews or

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Table 13.1 Motivational Goals in Conflict Management

Motivational Goal	*Description*
Resource goals	• Economic—drive to obtain or protect something of economic value • Personal—drive to maintaining privacy or personal freedom and choice
Social goals	• Relationship—drive to maintain or protect good relationships with others • Power/hostility—drive to punish or establish influence or dominance over another • Identity—drive to face-saving, identity supporting, and preserving self-image • Functionality—drive to resolve conflict in a constructive way • Justice—drive for fairness and the need to restore social justice

surveys. Profile markers can help organizational decision makers better discern who is doing what and why, without having to depend solely on he-said she-said accounts. On one hand, profiles are overgeneralizations and exceptions always exist. As such, those dealing with bullying conflicts will want to avoid using profiles as fuel for either witch-hunting or victim-blaming. On the other hand, to ignore personality traits, social tendencies, and the patterned human communication and behavior documented in scientific research can be naive and counterproductive when trying to manage such conflicts. Profiles are useful *sensitizing devices* when trying to sort out bullying, if used prudently as a general guide rather than a hard-and-fast set of rules.

Motivational Goals in Bullying Conflicts

Multiple goals theory outlines seven core motivations or goals in conflicts—two associated with resources and five with relationships (Ohbuchi & Tedeschi, 1997). Resource goals include *economic* and *personal* goals. Economic resource goals include the desire to obtain or protect something of economic value, and personal resource goals are those concerned with maintaining privacy, personal freedom, and choice. Social goals include *relationship, power/hostility, identity, functionality*, and *justice*. Relationship goals are motivated by a desire to maintain or develop high-quality connections with others. Power/hostility goals include the drive to punish or establish influence and dominance over others. Identity goals are associated with face-saving, self-supporting, or preserving a preferred image. Functionality goals are drives "to resolve the conflicts in a constructive or socially appropriate manner" (Ohbuchi & Tedeschi, 1997, p. 2185). Justice goals are the inclination toward equanimity and a desire to restore social fairness. Motivations typically guide tactics. (Table 13.1 summarizes these goals.)

Tactical Communication in Bullying Conflicts

A popular approach to the study of tactical communication in conflicts is Rahim's (2002) theory of managing organizational conflict, which identifies tactics as integrating/problem solving, obliging/accommodating, dominating/forcing, avoiding/withdrawing, and compromising. Integrating/problem solving "involves openness, exchanging information, looking for alternatives, and examination of differences to reach an effective solution

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acceptable to both parties" (Rahim, 2002, p. 218). Obliging/accommodating "is associated with attempting to play down the differences and emphasizing commonalities to satisfy the concern of the other party" (Rahim, 2002, pp. 218–219). A dominating/forcing style is associated with a win–lose orientation in which "a dominating or competing person goes all out to win his or her objective and, as a result, often ignores the needs and expectations of the other party" (Rahim, 2002, p. 220). Avoiding/withdrawing is ignoring or steering clear of conflicts and the involved parties. In compromising, parties identify and settle on a solution that is partially satisfactory to those involved but not completely pleasing to either. We adopt this formulation as it is common in conflict and adult bullying research (Keashly & Nowell, 2011) and consistent with multiple goal theory. However, we also include third-party tactics from multiple goals theory since involving others is common in bullying conflicts because of power disparities. (See Table 13.2 for summary.)

Group Profiles

Although bullying conflicts are social and contextual and a number of systemic features, issues, and contingencies press parties to move them toward particular ways of dealing with conflicts, research suggests that certain types of employees are more likely to be targeted, to aggress against others, and to remain bystanders. Targets that are provocative may draw the attention of aggressive others, whether that provocation is simply speaking their mind or tending toward aggression themselves. Bystanders most often remain silent hoping they can avoid involvement but may also side with targets or bullies. Bullies are high verbal aggressives and tend to respond aggressively or harshly in most situations, escalating aggressive behavior when perceived pressures increase. For the most part, most bullies fall into the accidental category; they bully others as a means of goading more productivity from them. Other bullies, however, appear to have personality pathologies driven by fear, insecurity, or extreme ambition. In the case study that follows, a number of these profiles are apparent.

A Thrice-Told Tale: Targets, Bystanders, and Bullies

We offer a case study to illustrate the points made in the following sections about profiles, motivations, and tactics. From the case study, we detail these three factors for parties.

Table 13.2 Conflict Management Tactics

Conflict Management Tactic	*Description*
Integrating/problem solving	Openness, exchanging information, and looking for alternatives
Obliging/accommodating	Playing down differences, emphasizing similarities for others' sake
Dominating/forcing	Winning is objective, often ignoring needs of other party, forcing one party's position or opinion
Avoiding/withdrawing	Ignoring, steering clear of conflicts or other parties
Compromising	Parties identify, settle on partially satisfactory solution
Third party	Bring someone else into conflict, usually with power to resolve conflict or influence others who have power to arbitrate conflict

SOURCE: Adapted from Ohbuchi and Tedeschi (1997) and Rahim (2002).

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Case Study

The case study[2] is taken from Pam's (first author) work with organizations troubled by bullying. The setting was Youth Matters, a youth delinquency program in which staff worked with middle and high school adolescents who had problems with drugs, school failure, and misdemeanor crimes in the community. The bully was the program director, Buddy, a male clinical psychologist who oversaw the program, hired clinical staff, managed staff, and worked as a community representative for the program as a liaison with schools, police, legal system personnel, and so forth. Of the eight staff members (40% male, 60% female), six were clinical counselors with counseling education, social work, or psychology degrees (Hank, Bob, Toby, Kimberly, Deb, and Sue). One staff member (Crystal) was the community educator and another (Carrie) served as the office manager who scheduled appointments, maintained client files, billed insurance, and carried out related support tasks.

Prior to Buddy's management of the youth program (he had served as treatment director for the entire agency), Youth Matters had a dismal reputation in the community. Educators and law-related professionals (i.e., probation, courts, and police) had little faith in the program or its staff. May, the past program manager, had a confrontational relationship with these professionals, typically displaying undisguised contempt for them and their organizations' goals in relation to the youth they were tasked with helping. Buddy, on the other hand, was charismatic and convincing in community outreach efforts with these professionals, easily winning them over. In fact, school and probation professionals described him as a "breath of fresh air" after May's dampening effect. As a result of Buddy's charisma and efforts, the client numbers (and related billing revenue) increased fourfold in the first year (from $30,000 to nearly $120,000). Additionally, the adolescents' families loved Buddy's engaging style and had extraordinary faith in his ability to help their children. As effective as Buddy was in the community, with adolescents, and with their families, he was equally ineffective at managing employees.

For instance, Buddy practiced a haphazard manner of hiring staff. If he liked someone he just met, he immediately offered the person a job, claiming he could train the person to be a youth delinquency counselor. For example, Buddy hired Hank, a man who was an academic guidance counselor at a local high school. He also hired Kimberly, a young woman working in a men's clothing store (with a college degree but no experience), because he "loved her energy." Buddy did not fulfill his promises to train them adequately, and eventually, they disappointed him. Once staff members drifted into the "disappointing" category, Buddy systematically blew up at them, constantly criticized their efforts, repeatedly spoke with Claire, the executive director, about writing up a (retrospective) case for firing, and ignored or ridiculed them in case review meetings.

Three staff members (Toby, Bob, and Deb) initially resisted Buddy's abusive style and complained to the executive director. Kimberly and Hank were too fearful to support others' grievances, stating that they would report their experiences only if their statements would be held in confidence. Even when outside consultants came in, Kimberly and Hank remained reticent to speak, saying they feared Buddy's aggression (with good reason; complaining staff always became targets, likely because Buddy deemed them his "enemies"). Two staff members (Carrie and Sue) allied with Buddy and supported his negative judgments and subsequent "punishment" of others. Even during formal interventions, Carrie and Sue stood by Buddy. Buddy eventually targeted both of them, however, and they were transferred to other organizational programs.

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On one hand, the administration loved Buddy. Claire, the executive director, and the board of directors were thrilled with his success in the community and the revenue generated by increased client numbers (e.g., board was able to pay off a substantial loan). On the other hand, program staff morale suffered horribly. While youth client numbers increased, so did turnover. In the first two and a half years of Buddy's management, the turnover was more than 200%. Many exiting employees filed complaints about Buddy's aggressive, abusive management style. Claire and outside professionals assessed the situation, planned interventions, and carried out these interventions—interventions aimed at capitalizing on Buddy's charisma and effectiveness with community members, adolescents, and families and reducing staff mistreatment, turnover, and legal liability from staff grievances.

Buddy was a narcissistic bully (explained in later sections); Buddy saw himself as a superstar and viewed staff as lesser than him. If staff members failed to support Buddy or complained about his performance, they were punished. Following interventions, he would make small shifts in his abusive behavior but continued his wild hiring style—always with an unfortunate result. Sadly, no interventions had any long-lasting effects on his behavior. When turnover rates were confronted, Buddy would argue that the program dealt with a very difficult population that caused staff to burn out. In nearly all instances, he was able to sway the executive director and the board to see his viewpoint. When Claire retired after 4 years of Buddy's tenure, the board inexplicably appointed Buddy the interim executive director (despite warnings from external consultants). Buddy served for 3 months before exiting the organization. The board did not reveal whether he was fired or left on his own volition.

We refer to this case throughout the chapter as it applies to the thrice-told tale. We move now to a discussion of targeted workers—their general profiles, motivations in conflict situations, and tactics used to manage conflicts. From this, we will also discuss bystanders and bullies using these three factors.

Targets

Profiles. Although anyone can be targeted by bullies at work, research on victimization (i.e., being targeted by others' aggression) suggests that certain traits and tendencies appear to situate employees in ways that make them more likely to be targeted. Victimization research points to three general target profiles: provocative, submissive, and rigidly conscientious (Aquino & Lamertz, 2004). The first author's work points to two types of provocative targets: aggressive and assertive. The first type of *provocative* target is "aggressive, hostile, or irritating and therefore likely to provoke attack from others" (Aquino & Lamertz, 2004, pp. 1025–1026). Aggressive provocative targets are conflict-prone employees, usually less agreeable, and more likely to become involved in conflicts because they often disagree with others and create friction in their interactions (e.g., Aquino & Bradfield, 2000). At Youth Matters, May (past program director) was highly confrontational, which is why she had problems with the community member organizations. Her removal occurred early in Buddy's tenure as the treatment director (her supervisor) and was linked to May constantly arguing with Buddy.

The second type of provocative target is *communicatively assertive* employees who readily speak their minds, a tendency that can infuriate some bullies. Depending on the pressures bullies are facing, the argumentative style of a communicatively assertive employee can trigger harsh responses from high verbal aggressives (Fast & Chen, 2009). People who are professionally successful or highly skilled are often assertive and can be targeted because

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their experience or expertise may pose a threat to a less secure bully (Fast & Chen, 2009; Namie, 2007a). In Youth Matters, Crystal, a well-liked and knowledgeable community educator, had considerable conflict with Buddy because of what she perceived as his misrepresentation of the program during community outreach sessions. Because of Crystal's stellar reputation both in and out of the organization, Buddy's bullying tactics were less effective at marginalizing Crystal, less direct in form, and more politically focused (e.g., obliquely questioning her knowledge or skill when she was not present). She did, however, eventually exit the organization stating that she could no longer work for Buddy because of his manipulative, dishonest character.

The assertive provocative target may also have exceptional argumentation skills. High verbal aggressives are often low in argumentation skills and so have considerable difficulty countering skilled peers or "insubordinate" subordinates. When they face conflict situations, they quickly run out of constructive material and fall back on verbal aggression (Infante, Trebing, Shepherd, & Seeds, 1984). Such was not the case with Buddy, however, who had an incredible acuity at assessing or "reading" people coupled with extraordinary argumentation skills. As a result, he was able to stifle nearly anyone who questioned him—including the executive director and the board members.

The next target type is the *submissive* employee, a person who is conflict aversive. The submissive target is "passive, insecure, frequently rejected by peers, and unwilling to defend against attack" (Aquino & Lamertz, 2004, p. 1025). Submissive targets are less extroverted, less stable, less independent, have a reduced tendency toward self-defense, and an increased dependency on or desire for others' approval. Appearing weak, anxious, unassertive, low in self-esteem, and conflict-aversive can be provocative for high aggressives (Coyne, Seigne, & Randall, 2000). These inclinations can make the submissive employee an easy target, as a passive "weakling" can be seen as low risk—someone who can be bullied with impunity and serve as an example or warning to others (Neuman & Baron, 2011). In fact, some high verbal aggressives report using aggression to express their disdain of the targets (Infante, Riddle, Horvarth, & Tumlin, 1992). At Youth Matters, Kimberly was eventually a submissive target. Initially she was a silent bystander, but over time Buddy targeted her, eventually driving her from the program.

The final target type is the *rigidly conscientious* worker. These employees are very scrupulous, assiduous, "organized, self-disciplined, hardworking, conventional, moralistic, and rule-bound" (Lind, Glasø, Pallesen, & Einarsen, 2009, p. 234). Rigidly conscientious employees can be bullied at work because others perceive them as infuriatingly condescending due to their apparently inflexible, perfectionist approach to work and adherence to work-related rules. Rigidly conscientious workers are unlikely to go along with informal group rules if they believe the informal rules to be morally wrong. When these employees face situations they view as breaking the rules, they can become "rude, suspicious, uncooperative, ruthless, [and] irritable" (Lind et al., 2009, p. 234). They are likely to defend stubbornly their point of view, especially when moral issues such as work quality, client ethics, or productivity expectations are at stake. What they see as moral or ethical issues are far more important to rigidly conscientious employees than are relationships or others involved in the conflict. Additionally, they may report coworkers who break rules, behaviors that culminate to make them widely unpopular, increasing their social isolation and reducing potential allies or supporters (Aquino & Lamertz, 2004). When workers are in these socially excluded positions, they are simply easier targets; bystanders may even feel satisfaction at seeing them targeted.

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At Youth Matters, Toby fit the rigidly conscientious target profile because he did not believe that anyone in the program was adequately or effectively providing treatment to the clients (except for Toby himself). Toby had registered multiple complaints against a number of his coworkers and against May, the past program director. Because of this behavior, he had no friends in Youth Matters and little or no support from the executive director. When Buddy moved into Youth Matters as the youth program director, he fired Toby in the first 3 months, most likely because Toby, like May, continued to argue against Buddy's ideas for treatment provision.

In addition to these general profiles, three other factors increase the likelihood of being targeted: organizational position, communication skill deficits, and social difference. First, although employees at all levels can be bullied (Zapf, Einarsen, Hoel, & Vartia, 2003), typically the higher one's position, the lower the incidence of bullying (Aquino, 2000). Second, persons who lack effective social and communication skills (e.g., some submissives, many high verbal aggressives) can have great difficulty protecting themselves and can thus be targeted quite easily (Coyne et al., 2000). Third, being noticeably different also increases the risk of becoming an outsider and thus a target. In the United States and Great Britain, for example, employees of African descent "are victimized more frequently than any racial group" (Aquino, 2000, p. 182).

Motivations. Typically all targets are motivated to protect their interests and identity and to achieve a fair or just outcome. Although all target types share similar motivational goals in bullying conflicts, they also differ depending on what is important to them personally. Most targets involved in an entrenched bullying conflict are motivated by *personal resource goals* and *identity* and *social justice goals*. Interpersonal aggression, by definition, is behavior that targets are motivated to avoid (Neuman & Baron, 2011). Targets are motivated to protect themselves, stop abusive treatment, manage face and identity threats, and be vindicated (Cowan, 2009). Personal resource goals are driven by a need to maintain personal freedom, in this case freedom from attacks on their character. Targets go to great length to protect themselves and to end the abusive treatment. Most targets are also motivated by *economic resource goals*; they want to maintain their jobs. This motivation is well founded as the majority of targets find that bullying only ceases when they quit, transfer to another job, or are fired (Namie, 2007b).

Social justice goals, based on a drive for fairness or restorative justice, are also at play in bullying conflicts. Targets communicatively position themselves as moral warriors, fighting depraved enemies, and argue that they respond accordingly to restore justice and fairness (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Many responses to bullying conflicts are indirectly motivated by what targets call a *moral imperative* to act against what they perceive as corrupt actions and interactions. Beyond restoring justice, however, targets are also highly motivated by identity goals. Targets want to be vindicated (Cowan, 2009); they want to redeem themselves because being victimized is stigmatizing. Especially in the United States, dominant cultural norms, being a victim brands someone as weak, childish, and usually to blame—if people are victimized, others often assume that they did something to bring it on themselves (Lutgen-Sandvik & McDermott, 2008). In addition to these motivational goals, specific types of target have unique motivations in bullying conflicts.

Provocative targets (aggressive) are motivated by social power goals. Rather than a drive to punish (often seen with bullies), these targets' power goals are to establish influence and dominance over others in conflicts.

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At Youth Matters, Bob and Deb argued with Buddy because he harassed staff about their inadequacies in working with adolescents. From Bob and Deb's perspective, Buddy spent too many hours in the community and not enough time on site training staff. Buddy publically humiliating, criticizing, and embarrassing staff for how poorly they provided treatment seemed a kind of betrayal to Bob and Deb since Buddy had promised to train the inexperienced clinical staff he hired. Bob and Deb also clashed with coworkers and community members about adolescent treatment issues. Buddy, Bob, and Deb were reputed to have near-screaming matches at the site, sometimes even in the presence of adolescent clients. (Bob and Deb were the second and third staff members Buddy fired after Toby.)

Although also quick to speak up, the *communicatively assertive* provocative targets are motivated by economic personal goals—they are driven to protect their right to free speech, personal freedom, and choice. Crystal, the community educator, was a target of this type. When she disagreed with Buddy, she assertively put forth her perspective—something that infuriated Buddy, who thought Crystal should defer to his status and position. Crystal never used verbal aggression but calmly and straightforwardly stated her position and reasons for it, an approach very different from the more aggressive targets like Bob and Deb.

Submissive targets want to avoid conflicts and so are motivated by the social functionality goal—the desire to settle conflicts in a socially proper way. They are also motivated by social relationship goals as they wish to maintain peaceful, nonconfrontational contact with others. Kimberly, the young woman hired from the clothing store, most closely fit the submissive profile. She rarely spoke out, followed others' prerogative, and appeared to be motivated by a desire to please and get along with others. (Kimberly was initially a silent bystander, a point we take up in the bystander section.)

Rigidly conscientious targets are motivated by power goals; they seek to influence the other parties to see the issue as they do. Specifically, rigidly conscientious targets want others to recognize the importance or moral value of the issue. Toby's goal in the bullying conflict with Buddy was driven by Toby's concern that adolescents were not receiving correct treatment. Specifically, Toby thought Buddy's new treatment program omitted critical areas that the former treatment program included (e.g., electronic monitoring bracelets), areas Buddy believed were the responsibility of collaborating institutions. Toby also thought that Buddy put too much emphasis on family counseling nights where Buddy was "the star" and the families' needs were secondary. Toby was the first counselor fired.

Tactics. Bullying conflicts most often involve affective (e.g., threatening identity, values) rather than cognitive (e.g., focusing on ideas, tasks) types of conflict. Although problem solving and compromising work well for cognitive conflicts, such is not the case for affective conflicts. Problem-solving efforts in bullying conflicts often exacerbate the conflict (Keashly & Nowell, 2011). And despite targets' efforts to appease or oblige high aggressives (e.g., speaking with the bullies about the problem, working harder, cutting off communication with certain peers, and monitoring their own messages to the bullies), hostile actions and interactions continue unabated or even escalate (e.g., Zapf & Gross, 2001).

Specific to the thrice-told tale and in line with diverse target profiles and motivations, victimization literature suggests that "conflict styles [tactics] . . . [can] distinguish victims from non-victims [and] . . . employees who rely on certain styles more than others may unwittingly present themselves as potential

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targets of aggressive action" (Aquino, 2000, p. 174). The *provocative aggressive target's* tendency to use forcing communication likely elicits aggressive tactics from other parties. Because provocative aggressive targets want to gain influence over bullies in the conflict, they more often use dominating/forcing tactics, but some form of problem solving typically precedes forcing. Forcing tactics are more often passive aggression because bullies typically have more power, influence, or both than targeted workers. In fact,

> higher levels of bullying [are] predictive of . . . behaviors such as purposely wasting company materials and supplies, . . . doing one's work incorrectly, and . . . damaging a valuable piece of property belonging to the employer. (Ayoko, Callan, & Härtel, 2003, p. 283)

The provocative assertive targets are motivated to speak their minds in disagreements and argue about issues of disagreement without employing verbal aggression. Depending on the parties involved, even their assertive disagreement can trigger aggression, hostility, and behavior framed to "put them in their place." At Youth Matters, the staff who disagreed with Buddy's approaches first went to Buddy with their concerns, using problem-solving tactics. When Buddy met their concerns with put-downs, harassment, and public humiliation at case review meetings, staff members circumvented the chain of command and complained to the executive director[3] and in one case the board of directors—third-party conflict management tactics.

Tactics of *submissive targets* usually are obliging/appeasing and avoiding/withdrawing, although all targets use these tactics to some degree. They hope that if they do nothing to upset anyone, the conflict might go away. Submissive targets are typically amenable to compromising tactics to manage conflict but rarely suggest such tactics themselves (Ayoko et al., 2003). Rather, they are willing to go along with others' ideas regarding compromises if they believe that those tactics will end the conflict. At Youth Matters, Kimberly was a silent bystander but became a submissive target near the end of her time with the program. She remained silent for the most part throughout intervention sessions. When consultants or the executive director approached her in confidence, she said that things were fine. Although passive targets such as Kimberly are particularly uncommunicative, such is not the case for the rigidly conscientious target.

Rigidly conscientious targets use forcing tactics because they feel so strongly about the issues at hand. They will also use problem solving, accommodating, and compromising but *only* when these tactics get them the results they want. If less aggressive tactics fail, rigidly conscientious targets shift to forceful communication, often coupled with third-party involvement (Aquino & Lamertz, 2004). Because they believe that they are right—absolutely—they work to involve higher authorities as allies in the conflict. At Youth Matters, Toby used forcing/dominating communication (e.g., *repeatedly* complaining about the quality of youth treatment, implying that clinical staff were failing the adolescents) without apparent concern for how his complaints affected his workplace relationships. He typically coupled forcing/dominating with third-party tactics, as Toby often brought complaints to Claire, the executive director, or evoked her name in support of his arguments (e.g., "I talked to Claire about this.").

Bystanders (Nonbullied Witnesses)

A special note is warranted as we move into this section about bystanders. Because of their once-removed status, they do not have to be active parties to the bullying conflict and may have a particularly powerful type of voice.

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They are neither stigmatized like the targets nor instigators of bullying like the aggressors.

Profiles. Because bullying conflicts are so volatile and aggressive, they typically spread fear through the entire workgroup and push members into one of three nonbullied bystander groups: (1) those who cluster around and support bullies (*bully allies*), (2) those who support or protect targets (*target allies*), and (3) those who attempt to distance themselves from the bullying conflict (*neutral* or *silent bystanders*). Bystanders are often considered *secondary* targets because although they are not targeted directly, their "perceptions, fears and expectations are changed as a result of being vicariously exposed to violence" (Barling, 1996, p. 35). This group often reports "significantly more general stress and mental stress reactions than employees from the workplaces without bullying" (Hogh, Mikkelsen, & Hansen, 2011, p. 108) and often leave organizations (avoiding) after witnessing bullying.

Depending on the framework, bully allies are alternately labeled "passive bullies, followers, or henchmen" (Olweus, 2003, p. 67), or patrons and pawns (Boddy, Ladyshewsky, & Galvin, 2010). Olweus's (2003) framework, taken from his work on schoolyard bullying, indicates that passive bullies and followers are those "who participate in bullying but do not usually take the initiative" (p. 67). These "passive bullies can be equally troubling to the victim . . . where others are gathered willingly or unwillingly to participate in continuous malevolent actions" (Vickers, 2006, p. 271). Henchmen and -women, on the other hand, actively take part in bullying conflicts, loyally following the bully's lead and working to undermine, remove, and sometimes even destroy targets' reputations. Bullies appear to have two other types of allies: patrons and pawns (Boddy et al., 2010). Patrons help bullies ascend to positions of power and are persons to whom bullies turn as third-party allies. Bullies often choose these people as a support network. Pawns, who often emerge later as targets, are persons initially loyal to the bullies who side with them in bullying conflicts but later feel or discover they are being used or manipulated.

At Youth Matters, Sue and Carrie supported Buddy and could be considered followers or pawns. Despite months of siding with Buddy in various bullying conflicts, Buddy eventually targeted them, and they were driven from the program. The agency administrators were also supportive of Buddy. Claire and Buddy earned their Master of Social Work degrees together and were friends prior to Claire hiring him. The board members had heard from their peers in the community about Buddy's charismatic, collaborative approach; they were as impressed as their peers. Because the board was tasked with the agency's economic oversight, they were also delighted at the impressive increase in client revenue, which allowed the board to purchase new property and pay off a loan. Thus, despite ongoing staff problems, the administrators remained Buddy's allies. Even when it was necessary to hire outside consultants to intervene with Buddy and his staff, administrators remained awed with Buddy's skills.

When solutions to the problems in the program seemed unachievable, Claire decided she would have to fire Buddy; the board, however, intervened on Buddy's behalf. The board was so impressed with Buddy that instead they hired Buddy to serve as interim executive director when Claire retired. The promotion may have been due to his ability to "read" his superiors and then "talk to them in their own language." This skill made believing complaints about Buddy difficult for the higher ups.

At Youth Matters, Buddy was the only person identified as a bully or high verbal aggressive (although no one used these terms). In other workgroups, bystanders who witness and then subsequently model aggressive

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communication and become bullies can be of grave concern. Whether bystanders mimic bullying behavior depends, in part, on group norms and cohesion. If workgroup cohesion is high, bystanders' direct observation of bullying can increase their own use of aggression (Ferguson & Barry, 2011). Additionally,

> norms of toughness . . . tend to reduce the likelihood that witnesses to workplace bullying will take action against it. On the contrary, such norms tend to increase the odds that witnesses will join in and even applaud the action of workplace bullies. (Baron & Neuman, 2011, p. 217)

In a majority of cases, bystanders becoming active bullies is less frequent than members becoming more rude and discourteous in everyday interactions, likely due to the reciprocal nature of communication. Although some members may become more uncivil over time, others empathize with and try to help targets.

Target allies, in contrast to bully allies, are bystanders who witness abusive conflicts and side with the targets. They comprise a second (albeit small) group of bystanders—those who either believe abuse is morally wrong or have long-standing friendships with targets (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Ferguson and Barry (2011) suggest that directly witnessing another's abuse

> affords the observer an opportunity to witness and, accordingly, vicariously experience the emotions of the target (or victim) . . . [giving] the observer . . . an opportunity to empathize with the victim, and perhaps to mentally place themselves in the victim's shoes. (p. 89)

Other bystanders may eventually join the target's side of the conflict, especially if they shift from being followers, patrons, or pawns to being targets. At Youth Matters, Crystal often defended colleagues when Buddy humiliated or shamed them, and though she eventually became a target, she remained a staunch defender of others.

Unlike target or bully allies, *neutral* or *silent bystanders* withhold voice and allegiance to parties of the conflict and take a Switzerland-type position in the conflict, striving to be uninvolved noncombatants. Silent bystanders want to stay out of the conflict because they see targets being "undermined, disenfranchised, and emasculated" (Boddy et al., 2010, p. 124). At Youth Matters, Kimberly silently looked on for most of her time in the program. She apparently wanted to avoid conflict and refrained from taking sides in bullying conflicts. Quite possibly, Kimberly emerged as a passive target toward the end of her time in the program because she failed to side with Buddy or anyone else.

The relative size of bystander groups is unique to each workgroup, as are bullying conflict dynamics, issues of contention, and personalities of those involved. Regardless of the setting, membership in bystander groups continuously shifts and morphs. Targets' supporters may burn out; noninvolved persons can become targets or begin taking sides, and persons in the bully's circle of supporters are ousted. Persons safe from targeting can become targets when bullies' alliances shift, which they commonly do. At Youth Matters, Kimberly was a silent bystander and became a passive target. Additionally, individuals may simultaneously fall into multiple categories. Crystal, for example, was a target ally and a provocative assertive target.

Motivations. Nearly all bystanders are motivated by *economic resource goals*; like targets, most want to keep their jobs. The threat of becoming embroiled in the bullying conflict often jeopardizes employment (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2007; Namie, 2007b). Further motivations depend on the bystander's profile. *Bully allies* who may passively and symbolically side with aggressors are often

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motivated by *social relationship goals* and want bullies to see them as allegiant. Such was the case for Sue and Carrie at Youth Matters. Some bully allies are motivated by *social justice goals*, and they believe that targets are in the wrong and bullies are in the right. Many are motivated by *social identity goals* and want to prevent their own potential target status. *Power/hostility social goals* motivate henchmen and -women who, like bullies, can be high verbal aggressives. This type of bully supporter may want to establish their own dominance, strength, and position in the workgroup.

Target allies are often motivated by *social justice goals*; their primary motivation is to restore fairness at work and stop abusive treatment of workers (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Some are motivated by a moral imperative to right a wrong and to take action against tyranny. Crystal was motivated by this goal at Youth Matters. In some cases, if bystanders are motivated toward justice, they collectively work with targets and like-minded allies in acts of collective resistance. Target allies are also motivated by *social relationship goals* and want to maintain their friendships and positive interpersonal affiliations with targeted persons.

Silent bystanders, on the other hand, are typically motivated by *personal resource goals*; they want to maintain their privacy and personal freedom, which can be threatened if they become involved in the conflict. Another motivating factor for silent bystanders is the *social identity goal* (face-saving and identity preserving); they want to avoid becoming a target. Additionally, silent bystanders may be motivated by *social relationship goals* and hope to avoid alienating bullies, targets, or anyone allied with either side by appearing neutral. Sadly, this strategy rarely works because bullying conflicts are so emotionally charged, mainly because the stakes are high, that both target and bully groups negatively judge those who stand by silently. In all bystander groups, the motivations typically drive the tactics or conflict management approaches.

Tactics. Bully allies side with aggressors and use tactics including spying on targets and target allies and reporting back to bullies (third party, forcing), silently looking on as bullies harass and abuse targets (avoiding), and bending to the bullies' demands (obliging). For allies who also aggress, tactics can include ignoring targets' feelings or needs (avoiding), asserting their influence (forcing), and stressing their position as a bully ally (forcing, appeasing). The latter move is closely tied with efforts to dominate or force outcomes that favor the bully allies or the bully (Vickers, 2006).

For *target allies* motivated by *social justice goals*, they may speak with upper management (third party), meet with union stewards (third party), or organize group discussions outside the workplace (avoiding) (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Most tactics have a dominating/forcing thread because target allies are interested in taking disciplinary action against bullies—blocking promotions, countering claims, and constructing employment termination—even if third parties are involved. Target allies motivated by *social relationship goals* provide social support. They offer instrumental support by helping targets with their work and trying to arrange breaks and moments of escape, informational support by telling targets of their redress avenues or about powerful allies who might help in the fight for justice and emotional support in the form of "empathy, caring, acceptance and assurance" (Tracy, 2009, p. 88). Supportive tactics are supplementary to conflict management tactics but often involve advising targets how to fight back in the bullying conflict. Thus, even social support can be a form of indirect forcing and advising targets how to win. Tactics of those who choose to remain silent, however, are focused on self-protection.

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Silent bystanders try to withdraw into a nonaligned position that appears safe (Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010) using avoidance/withdrawal tactics. Kimberly at Youth Matters used this tactic throughout her time in the program. In toxic working environments, however, neutral bystanders may struggle with whether to stay uninvolved or help the targets being persistently abused. It can be difficult "to remain uninvolved in such cases . . . due to a seemingly strong need for the target to seek support for their case" (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003, p. 151). On the other hand, neutral bystanders are often motivated by social relationship goals, so they will remain friendly with persons from both sides of the conflict—an obliging/accommodating tactic.

Bullies

We have argued earlier that bullying conflicts involve all affected workers, not simply bully–target dyads, and have outlined both target and bystander dynamics. In bullying conflicts, however, the bully or aggressor plays a crucial role. Unlike other types of conflict that assume mutuality of parties, "workplace bullying . . . is characterized as involving a clearly identified actor (bully) . . . [who is] primarily the provocateur" (Keashly & Jagatic, 2011, p. 52). Although bullies cannot harass, humiliate, and verbally abuse others unless the organization's climate is marked by a "sense of permission to harass" (Brodsky, 1976, p. 84), certain personality types appear more likely to use verbal aggression. Some people appear to be more verbally aggressive than others, whether it is an inborn trait (Beatty & McCroskey, 1997) or socially learned (Baron & Neuman, 2011). These actors may not always instigate the conflict but are the parties who persistently use hostile, aggressive attacks to press their side.

Profiles. Bullying conflicts occur in relationships of unequal power, so despite coworkers being most common source of aggression in the workplace (e.g., Keashly & Neuman, 2005), when asked to identify a bully, targets most often report that the perpetrator is someone with legitimate power—supervisor, direct manager, or upper manager (e.g., Ayoko et al., 2003; Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007). Even when lacking legitimate power, bullies tend to have access to more resources than targets, including relationships with persons who have influence. In addition to more power and influence than targets, research suggests three general bully profiles based on motivation, tactics, and responses to challenge (Crawshaw, 2007): the *accidental bully* (under pressure); *narcissistic bully* (vulnerable, insecure); and *psychopathic bully* (grandiose, power-driven) (Egan, 2005). Narcissistic and psychopathic traits are tendencies that range on a continuum and are influenced to some degree by contextual, situational factors. However, people who have worked with any of these bully types will recognize the characteristics to some degree as they are quite descriptive of observed behaviors.

Accidental bullies are the most common and are (usually) managers with a very tough, even rough, style and way of interacting and directing others. They demand that others complete work tasks, often within exceedingly tight deadlines, and have little or no perception that what he or she says hurts or disturbs others. The accidental bully typically overreacts to pressure and passes that reaction on by blowing up, making impossible demands, and otherwise communicating in a blunt, insensitive, and insistent manner. The situational factors that trigger accidental bullies are wide-ranging and can include unorganized or poorly orchestrated changes and demands, organizational conditions such as work pressure, high performance demands, role conflict, and role uncertainty (Hoel & Salin, 2003). In their drive toward tasks, they often lose sight of the humanity of others. They frequently

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act aggressively as a means to an end—to reach higher standards, thrash the competition, protect the company, and so forth. The welfare of people is secondary to task or output goals. Accidental bullies expect others to be resilient—to understand that nothing personal is meant by their tirades. In fact, "such people are often shocked when they are made aware of the consequences of their attitudes and actions" (Egan, 2005, para. 8; see also Crawshaw, 2007). This bully type is the most amenable to intervention, particularly if that intervention is tough and straightforward (Egan, 2005).

The *narcissistic bully* is charismatic but driven by fear, especially fear of appearing incompetent, and so may see harming others as a justified means of social survival (Crawshaw, 2007). This bully does not plan to harm others, "he [or she] does so offhandedly, as a manifestation of his[/her] genuine character" (Egan, 2005, para. 10). They are exceedingly self-absorbed, frequently pretentious, and can have "fantasies of breathtaking achievement" (Egan, 2005, para. 10). They believe themselves to be better than others and therefore should be treated exceptionally, yet they feel entitled to treat others as they wish.

Narcissistic bullies are typically shame prone and exceedingly sensitive to slights or any hint that they are less than competent (Crawshaw, 2007; Fast & Chen, 2009). Because they have limited impulse control and are fear driven, their grandiose self-image is easily punctured, and they can respond by acting out in rage and making outlandish claims about their detractors. That is, if they are crossed or questioned, they can respond with cruel fury (Boddy, 2010). Given these tendencies, narcissistic bullies can shift from being very charming to extremely difficult and even vicious. "Their abuse is not cold and calculating and meant to intimidate, it's just an expression of their superiority when they rage against you because they see you as the idiot. Of course they don't have much empathy" (Egan, 2005, para. 8). The narcissistic bully can alter his or her communication and behavior if organizations are willing to invest considerable time and effort coaching and counseling. Although the cost may be high, if the narcissistic bullies are valuable, the upper level managers may believe that their talents are worth keeping them.

At Youth Matters, Buddy most closely fit this bully profile. In his job interview, Buddy claimed he could turn the youth program around in less than 6 months. The executive director developed stringent outcome goals, which Buddy easily met. As such, his grandiose self-image was supported by his skill. He was an incredibly talented counselor, one able to reach adolescents and their parents, often in one session. With a difficult population (adolescences from troubled homes), his skills were miraculous. However, Buddy's skills wildly fluctuated—he was either outrageously successful (with clients or community members) or just outrageous (with his staff). He was capable of exceptional success but was also self-defeating because of his verbal aggression, aggression that predictably occurred when questioned or critiqued. Buddy seemed aware of his shortcomings, had insight into his psychological issues, and changed slightly after interventions, but he invariably reverted to aggression in time. The paradox for administrators was how he could be so effective in the community and with clients and so disastrous with staff.

The third bully type is the *psychopathic bully*, a rare personality type (1%–2% in general population, 15%–25% in prisons) that is thought to be found in higher proportions in senior-level organizational positions (up to 3.5%) (Boddy, 2010). These aggressors are also called industrial psychopaths, organizational psychopaths, organizational sociopaths, and corporate psychopaths (see Boddy et al., 2010, for discussion). These noncriminal or

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successful psychopaths, deemed *successful* because unlike criminal psychopaths they have evaded legal authorities, are "not prone to outbursts of impulsive, violent, criminal behaviour" (Boddy, 2010, p. 301). Psychopathic (like narcissistic) bullies are grandiose, and they come across as friendly and charming at first. They are highly motivated to gain power and exceedingly talented at ingratiating themselves with powerful others. They often rise almost meteorically in organizations "because of their manipulative charisma and their sheer, single minded dedication to attain senior levels of management" (Boddy et al., 2010, p. 124). These bullies can be authoritarian, aggressive, and domineering but in ways that imbue a sense of safety, particularly when organizations face external threats.

Psychopathic bullies usually work to attract a follower base of patrons who can assist in their ascendancy. They also identify pawns to use or manipulate potential opponents, whom they attempt to undermine or disenfranchise (e.g., auditor, HR staff, safety, and security personnel; Boddy et al., 2010). Developing a cadre of followers is important to the psychopathic bully, and they are likely to react aggressively to those whom they perceive as disloyal or oppositional to their goals (Egan, 2009). These bullies may perform feelings of remorse if the situation calls for it, but these are not *felt* emotions; such emotions are more likely displayed for manipulative effect. Their personalities are marked by coldheartedness, manipulativeness, ruthlessness, and lack of emotions, including fear, empathy, guilt, and remorse, when they harm others (Boddy et al., 2010). Psychologists believe that this personality type has no capacity for empathy or perspective taking.

A disturbing part of communicating with psychotic bullies is that they may distort what others say in self-serving ways. They typically blame others if their own actions bring about negative ramifications. If this bully type is challenged about his or her behavior, his or her reaction is as volatile as the narcissist but often involves threats of litigation, claims of being a victim of bullying, threats of divulging information about others, and escalated bullying (Egan, 2005). Counseling or mentoring has little effect as the psychopathic bully is unlikely to change his or her communication or behavior (Boddy, 2010).

General Bully Characteristics or Traits for All Types. Most bullies are unlikely to praise others (Wigley, Pohl, & Watt, 1989) and are prone to verbal aggressiveness. They are likely to have this trait to a higher degree than those who do not bully others, regardless of the situation or pressure. Because high verbal aggressives have lower scores on perspective taking and higher scores on social dominance orientation, they are unlikely to perceive aggressive messages as hurtful (Infante et al., 1992). Motivations do differ somewhat, however, based on unique profile markers.

Motivations. Accidental bullies are motivated predominantly by *economic resource goals*, the desire to gain or keep something of economic value (Fukushima & Ohbuchi, 1996). Their drive for achievement comes from this motivation. Typically, the accidental bully wants to reach high standards and meet organizational goals (regardless of human costs). They respond readily to demands from higher-placed organizational members, especially as those demands deal with output or the organization's financial survival. Certain antecedents can drive the accidental bully by evoking additional stress around work production, which evokes aggression, venting negative emotions, and pushing subordinates and peers even harder (e.g., Hoel & Salin, 2003). Quite likely, frustration exacerbates accidental bullies' aggression if they believe that employees are stifling production goals (Infante et al., 1984).

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Narcissistic bullies, on the other hand, are driven by *social identity goals* (e.g., face-saving, identity preservation, and maintaining their self-perception of someone exceptional). They justify aggressive treatment as a means of bolstering their persona and maintaining their image or identity management work. Secondarily, they may be motivated by economic goals of obtaining something of value but only if it serves the primary goal of bolstering grandiose self-identities. These bullies want to protect others' perceptions of them as competent and excellent (Crawshaw, 2007; Egan, 2009; Fast & Chen, 2009). Such was the case with Buddy at Youth Matters, who appeared to be driven primarily by identity preservation. When questioned about his mistreatment of staff, Buddy was keen to defend his use of aggression by drawing on deep-value arguments such as client confidentiality, the fatal course of untreated drug addiction, and the community's need for a youth program. That is, Buddy deflected critique by focusing conversations on deeply important issues to the other person with whom he interacted. Because of his skill for reading people, he was able to identify issues most important to the other person in order to win that person over. Because of Buddy's basic insecurity, he often viewed other people's questions as attacks.

Narcissistic bullies like Buddy and psychopathic bullies are often motivated to act aggressively because of a tendency to ascribe others' actions and words as having malevolent intent and see themselves as victims (Burroughs & James, 2005). As such, *justice goals* are activated for both types, as they believe they have been wronged and so seek retribution (Infante et al., 1992). Other indirect motivating factors are psychopathology (e.g., transference of negative emotions toward someone who represents unresolved conflict) and argumentative skill deficiency (e.g., lacking ability to communicate position effectively) that can trigger verbal aggression (Infante et al., 1984). Buddy at Youth Matters could argue well, but when Claire, the executive director, demanded he stop mistreatment of staff, he said to others that she was "a bitch just like [his] mother." Narcissistic bullies as high verbal aggressives can be motivated by their own anger and bad mood—emotions they rarely control very well (Infante et al., 1992).

Psychopathic bullies are motivated predominantly by *power/hostility social goals*, the drive to establish dominance, gain power, and punish anyone who stands in the way of achieving these. As part of a drive for power and influence, psychopathic bullies are often motivated by *social identity goals* and will cover up errors and bad decisions or scapegoat and shift blame onto others (Egan, 2009). As high verbal aggressives, they can be driven by the desire "to appear 'tough,' . . . to be mean . . . , and to express disdain for" the other person (Infante et al., 1992, p. 122). Self-defense, reprimanding someone, winning arguments, expressing anger, and manipulating another person's behavior also motivate verbal aggression (Infante, Bruning, & Martin, 1994). They may be motivated by *social justice goals* because they often have a retribution bias (belief that retaliation is better than reconciliation); they might also be motivated by a potency bias (tendency to frame conflict as a contest in which to demonstrate dominance or submissiveness) (Burroughs & James, 2005), another form of a *power/hostility social goal*.

Tactics. Primarily, bullying involves a hostile, forcing/dominating conflict management style—bullies want their way and often shift conflicts over tasks (cognitive conflicts) to conflicts attacking targets' identity or values (affective conflict) (Keashly & Nowell, 2011). Conflict management tactics are aggressive, and bullying conflicts, rather than being marked by a single form of negativity, involve numerous barbs, jabs, and machinations. Exchanges are far more extreme and

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intense than everyday incivilities. Tactics vary by bully type, as might be expected, although all bullies use verbal aggressiveness (passive or active) to varying degrees. Most bullies derogate their targets, often to justify their own abuse of others in the conflict. Caustic humor is a common tactic bullies use against targets because it is ambiguous and provides plausible deniability.

> High verbal aggressives [claim] that about 46% of their verbally aggressive messages . . . [involve] trying to be humorous. . . . [As such,] using humor may be a tactic for being mean to disdain another, or it may be an "evasive" device which masks the use of personal attacks and avoids provoking physical violence. (Infante et al., 1992, p. 125)

Depending on the bully type, tactics can include blaming targets for the bullies' errors (narcissistic, psychopathic), making unreasonable demands (accidental), criticizing targets' work ability (all types), yelling and screaming (accidental, narcissistic), inconsistently referring to made-up rules (narcissistic, psychopathic), threatening job loss (all types), discounting targets' accomplishments (all types), socially excluding targets (narcissistic, psychopathic), insults and put-downs (all types), taking credit for targets' work (narcissistic, psychopathic), and scapegoating (narcissistic, psychopathic Hoel & Salin, 2003). Psychopathic bullies disparage, belittle, emasculate, and destroy anyone who appears to be blocking their aspirations (Egan, 2009). Tactics can include physical and psychological intimidation intended to cause fear, distress, or harm to the target (Parkins, Fishbein, & Ritchey, 2006). This type of bully employs third-party tactics quite often, depending on the protection of patrons and the important or powerful others with whom the bully has developed power-based relationships. In fact, they are quite adept at *managing up*, so to speak (Namie, 2007a).

This overview of the involved employee groups outlines many of the issues involved in bullying conflicts and illustrates why bullying can be so difficult to stop. Table 13.3 (on p. 368) summarizes involved party profiles, motivations, and associated tactics. In line with the central themes of this volume, we add to our thrice-told tale an exploration of the contextual and transformational issues affecting bullying conflicts as perceived by the three-employee groups.

Contextual Factors Complicating Bullying Conflicts

Contextual, organizational factors can exacerbate and induce bullying conflicts, including workplace climates and professional cultures, productivity pressure, prevailing social norms external to organizations, and predominant national cultures. When workplaces are chaotic and unpredictable, with high job insecurity or role–conflict strain, bullying is more likely (Hodson, Roscigno, & Lopez, 2006). In chaotic workplaces or workplaces with high levels of task-related conflict, bullies may use aggression to maintain control or advantage.

Organizational cultures and economic demands can drive bullying conflicts. Some organizational or professional cultures have adversarial, aggressive norms for working relationships (Hoel & Cooper, 2001) and may even reward aggressive members with promotions, access to leadership, personal credibility, and voice. Economic pressures can also trigger bullying conflicts. Demands for increased productivity, especially when coupled with cost cutting, can place incredible pressures on both supervisors and employees that can trigger aggression.

External social and cultural belief systems influence employee abuse since boundaries between organizations and external environments are highly permeable (Mumby & Stohl,

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Table 13.3 Three Groups' Profiles, Motivations, and Tactics

Profile	*Primary Motivational Goals*	*Most Common Conflict Tactics*
Provocative aggressive target[a]	• Social power	• Dominating/forcing • Integrating/problem solving • Obliging/accommodating • Third party
Provocative assertive target[a]	• Justice • Economic personal	• Integrating/problem solving • Obliging/accommodating • Compromising • Third party • Dominating/forcing
Rigidly conscientious target[a]	• Social power	• Dominating/forcing • Third party
Passive target[a]	• Social functionality goal	• Avoiding/withdrawing • Obliging/accommodating
Bully ally bystander	• Economic resource • Relationship • Identity • Justice • Power/hostility	• Third party • Avoiding/withdrawing • Obliging/accommodating
Target ally bystander	• Economic resource • Justice • Relationship	• Third party • Domination/forcing
Silent bystander	• Economic resource • Identity • Relationship	• Avoidance/withdrawal
Accidental bully	• Economic resource	• Dominating/forcing[b]
Narcissistic bully	• Identity • Justice	• Dominating/forcing[b]
Psychopathic bully	• Power/hostility • Economic resource • Justice	• Dominating/forcing[b] • Third party (patrons)

a. All targets are motivated by personal resource goals, economic resource goals, and social identity goals. We note here goals that differ among target types.

b. Verbal aggression is a hallmark of bullies' communication.

1996). Social discourses or meaning systems contributing to bullying include a wide range of forces, including the ideological link between work and religion, philosophies of individualism and meritocracy, a reverence for hierarchical power, profit as an ultimate goal, and Theory X notions of workers as lazy and in need of goading (Lutgen-Sandvik & McDermott, 2008). Related cultural ideologies can stimulate bullying and include praising power, profit, and position; devaluing human and stakeholder interests; and stigmatizing victims or disadvantaged persons. An important effect of these ideologies is to whom they confer voice. Bullied workers (a class of *victims*) in subordinate positions (low-position status)

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may be doubted, especially if being bullied by a highly productive (profit) or politically astute (high-position status) aggressor (Lutgen-Sandvik & Tracy, 2012).

Considerable evidence points to predominant national culture as a key factor in bullying prevalence. Scandinavia, for example, has far lower bullying rates than the United States and Great Britain (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Zapf et al., 2003)—arguably due to Scandinavia's low-power distance and feminine-egalitarian norms. As bullying is a power-driven phenomenon, fewer power and status differences between people likely result in lower rates of conflict. In cultures with high concern for the quality of interpersonal relations, persons may communicate more respectfully.

There are many drivers of bullying in organizations beyond the involved parties we have focused on in this chapter. (For in-depth discussions of these, see Baron & Neuman, 2011; Salin & Hoel, 2011.) So, what can organizations and their members do to transform bullying conflicts and encourage sustainable and respectful conflict management?

Transformational Possibilities

We now bring some optimism to the chapter and talk about directions for transformation. Although we believe strongly that bullying is an organization-wide issue, individual employees are keen to be empowered to improve these situations, so we touch on both. Fleshing out the different types of targets, bystanders, and bullies, as well as their motivations in these conflicts, underscores the complexity of bullying conflicts. Clearly, no "one-size-fits-all" solution will work. Rather, the dynamic nature of the resource and social goals in combination with the differing tactics to managing conflicts will result in negative spirals of retaliation and war zone–like workplaces. Then where does this leave organizations? Our experience suggests that organizations dealing with bullying conflicts should carefully consider this chapter's discussion to be forewarned of the involved actors and their situations. Organizations will necessarily have to conduct a careful analysis of the history (e.g., involved parties, motivations, and tactics to date) surrounding the conflict to unravel the situational dynamics unique to the involved workgroup.

Bullying really is an organization-wide issue rather than something individuals alone can solve. Solving the problem is not only an organization-wide responsibility, but successful efforts also require the total commitment of top-level organizational leadership, involvement of middle management, and engagement of employees (Tehrani, 2001). Short-term approaches such as identifying lone perpetrators while ignoring initiating and maintaining factors ultimately fail to produce meaningful, lasting change.

Vandekerckhove and Commers (2003), who claim that bullying results from being inadequately prepared for the pressures of globalization, argue that organizations need "new rules" such as "clearly defined channels for support and advice in addition to clear reporting standards, times, and lines. Not surprisingly, this merges with a higher concern for *communication*" (p. 47). Indeed, there is a "need for new managerial skills such as strong interpersonal, communication, and listening skills and an ability to engage in reciprocal rather than manipulative behavior." We would add that *all* organizational members need these communication skills.

In fact, the most effective interventions for reducing aggressive communication among organizational members occur via changing the very nature of day-to-day conversations (for full discussion and details, see Keashly & Neuman, 2005). Policy development, while important for victim redress, has little effect

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on reducing bullying if the organizational climate and culture do not change at a fundamental level. Similarly, although the training of individuals about workplace bullying is important, labels the phenomenon, and should be part of an overall plan for staff education, training alone rarely has a determinable effect on interpersonal aggression levels (Vartia & Leka, 2011). Rather, the members need to learn new ways of interacting at the day-to-day level.

From Keashly and Neuman's (2005) work with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, we summarize the following steps for an effective organization-wide approach. This approach requires the involvement of four groups. First, top-level persons must be committed to organization-wide change regarding dignity for all workers. Second, middle managers must be involved at each step. Third, members from support staff such as HR, Employee Assistance Program, ombudspersons, and unions should be involved. Finally, representatives chosen by direct-line staff in each program or division must be involved. Organizations may benefit from bringing someone in from outside to help facilitate analysis and planning, as an outsider may be more objective and less likely to have a vested interest in outcomes. Teams comprising persons from these groups carry out the following steps: (1) each workgroup conducts a baseline evaluation of aggression using a validated measure (Neuman's WAR-Q, Workplace Aggression Revised Questionnaire is outstanding); (2) based on the types of aggression and the unique makeup of each group, teams develop tailored interventions and implement them; (3) after 3 to 6 months, teams conduct a follow-up evaluation using the same measure as in Step (1). If desired change has not occurred, teams assess the follow-up findings, design new approaches, implement, and measure again in a predetermined time frame. We cannot stress the importance of this approach enough if true change is desired. However, if there is no support for this plan, we suggest the following individual-level actions for targets, bystanders, and bullies.

Individual responses to managing bullying conflicts constructively begin when involved parties are able to recognize when a simple conflict has become a bullying conflict. In particular for targets *and* bystanders, it is being able to name abusive conflicts "workplace bullying"; this is an important first step to understanding what is occurring and what to do about it (Namie, 2007a). Information about bullying (e.g., research articles and books) coupled with being able to name bullying as a distinct phenomenon also bolsters employee claims to upper management and HR (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Targeted workers may also decide to file formal or informal complaints to unions, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the bully's boss, or attorneys (Macintosh, 2006)—reports that typically require detailed documentation (e.g., dates, times, and events; Tracy, Alberts, & Rivera, 2007). Targeted workers may also consider filing lawsuits against employers but should understand that such suits are rarely won and take enormous resources and personal energy.

Ensuring self-care and social support is especially important for effectively dealing with bullying conflicts. This may mean taking time off, trying not to take the experience personally, and spending time with trusted others (Namie & Namie, 2009). Gaining peer support is easier if other organizational members understand bullying and know it is occurring. Informally educating peers can be done by distributing articles and talking about bullying in a manner that protects vulnerable persons (Macintosh, 2006). If and when individual conflict management tactics fail, which is often the case, workers may choose to quit or transfer and, we argue, should frame their exits as a victory rather than defeat.

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Bystanders are very important in bullying conflicts. Although directly confronting bullies can be risky and make situations worse, there are other responses bystanders can take. Scully and Rowe (2009) suggest that bystanders can do two things that will reduce bullying, mobbing, verbal aggression, and so forth: "discouraging negative behaviors, and, . . . encouraging *positive* behaviors" (p. 89). This means helping "people in all cohorts to note—and to commend—the achievements of their fellow workers. Such commendations often matter to the person concerned and are thought to be useful in encouraging future, socially desirable behavior" (pp. 89–90). Bystander action also means "helping people in all job categories to react, and then act appropriately, when they see unsafe, unprofessional, offensive, discriminatory, or illegal behavior in the workplace" (p. 90).

In addition, bystanders can be very helpful for supporting targets' stories and breaking the bullying cycle; concerted voice simply increases believability (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Collective voice also reduces some of the risk of being labeled troublemakers, mentally ill, or problem employees. Nontargeted workgroup members may not be as stigmatized, since they lack the victim label. But even with collective resistance, there is the risk of being pejoratively branded when speaking out against abuse and oppression (Cowan, 2009). These ideas suggest an instructive approach for building others' competence in workgroups, so that they can help prevent, handle, and, in some cases, stop aggressive communication behavior (Keashly, 2010).

As for bullies, the organizational and communication literatures are sparse regarding what they could do to better manage conflicts and keep conflicts civil and constructive.[4] Infante, Myers, and Buerkel's (1994) and Rancer and Avtgis's (2006) work does provide constructive pointers, however, regarding persons with high-trait verbal aggressiveness—likely present in some degree with all bully profiles. Their scholarship suggests that one of the reasons people use verbal aggression is that they lack argumentation skills. Thus, if organizational members who bully others realize they tend to become aggressive in interactions that are conflictual, one remedy could be to learn how to constructively argue. In fact, Infante (1995) has developed a curriculum specifically for this purpose. Another useful skill is improving one's ability to read others' emotions. Laura Crawshaw (2007), who coaches abrasive managers, argues that these individuals tend toward aggression because they have little ability to empathize with others so they do not see fully the effect their aggression has on others. And although learning empathy is not a simple task, persons in the medical profession often complete courses on this skill (e.g., La Monica, 1983). Indeed, the steps that high verbal aggressive might take is an area needing more research.

Future Directions

This look at the three central employee groups suggests areas of research necessary so that we might improve organizational efforts in resolving bullying conflicts. One of the areas that has received little attention is studying the factors that have transformed other workplaces faced with bullying. Although there are a number of models outlining organization-wide change (e.g., Keashly & Neuman, 2005), researchers are yet to explore fully what organizations have done in circumstances in which bullying decreased as a result of less formal ways of responding and dealing with the problem. From all perspectives in the thrice-told tale, what situational, contextual, or cultural factors assist or thwart targets, bystanders, and perpetrators in resolving conflicts?

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Target actions rarely resolve bullying, and there is a substantial body of research focusing on their (ineffective) efforts (e.g., Zapf & Gross, 2001). What is needed is a look into the experiences of bystanders, especially when bystander action has proven effective in the resolution of bullying conflicts. As important is developing and supporting bystander training programs like Keashly's (2010) and Scully and Rowe's (2009), both of which are still in nascent stages. Bystanders more than any other group in the thrice-told tale have been woefully understudied.

As important as bystanders in bullying conflicts is learning more about the perpetrators' experiences, perspectives, and motivations. Interpersonal communication research about verbal aggression informs much of what we have presented in this chapter regarding perpetrators. As workplace bullying is currently in the news and is of increasing interest to organizational leadership, researchers might creatively devise means of accessing the bullies' point of view. In Pam's (first author) experience, after presenting to professional groups about bullying, some audience members have approached her saying, in effect, "I can see that I've been doing this to the people I'm supervising." These interactions could provide fruitful inroads for deeper discussions or interviews.

Conclusion

We define workplace bullying as a unique type of conflict because it includes power disparities, aggression, and persistence that involves all employees in affected workgroups. Specific to the discussion about workplace bullying conflicts, an exploration of these parties' goals and tactics helps trace the likely motivations and how those differ for targets, bystanders, and bullies. If we say that there are roughly three different types of target (provocative, submissive, and rigidly conscientious), three types of bystander (bully allies, target allies, and neutral bystanders), and three types of bully (accidental, narcissistic, and psychopathic) and all nine of these general types have different motivations and tactics driven by those motivations, then we have some idea of how impossible it can feel to address bullying conflicts once they develop. In fact, many motivations are at odds with each other (e.g., targets and bullies want someone on their sides, neutral bystanders want to stay out of it).

Notes

1. For a review of communication and supervisor–subordinate conflict in organizations, see Roloff (1987).
2. All names are fictitious.
3. Although we do not expand herein about the role of upper management and associated staff (e.g., HR), bullying conflicts often involve these organizational members. In Youth Matters, these were primarily the executive director and secondarily the board of directors. When Deb and Bob complained, the executive director attempted to negotiate compromise in the face of the conflict, asking Buddy to spend more time on site conducting training and asking clinical staff to seek external training opportunities to improve their skills. The executive director also worked with Buddy extensively, teaching him hiring tactics for finding more qualified staff (integrating/problem solving). Certainly, there was the unspoken but well-understood power of the executive director to fire, demote, or otherwise sanction involved parties (dominating/forcing) if they failed to go along with his suggested resolutions.
4. Rather, there are various texts to assist upper management dealing with bullies (e.g., Crawshaw, 2007; Namie & Namie, 2011; Twale & De Luca, 2008). Most of these are for acting on the bully (interventions) rather than actions for actual or potential bullies.

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14

Work–Life Conflict

Erika L. Kirby, Stacey M. B. Wieland, and M. Chad McBride

The intersections between individuals' working and personal lives—and the potential for conflicts between them—are of interest to scholars in multiple disciplines (including communication studies, sociology, psychology, and organizational behavior) as "increasing proportions of dual-earner couples and single-parents in the workforce, changes in gender-role norms, and shifts in values toward greater life balance have made work-(family) life issues salient" (Greenhaus, Allen, & Spector, 2006, p. 61). *Work–life conflict* (WLC) encompasses the impact of work characteristics on the quality/characteristics of (family/personal) "life" and the impact of (family/personal) "life" characteristics on the quality/characteristics of work.

In the 7 years since our first chapter, the WLC literature has proliferated and continues to rapidly expand—more than 250 related articles have been published when considering the interdisciplinary literature on WLC and the relevant scholarship in communication studies. While we consulted all these sources in writing this chapter, we include the sources most related to WLC and communication, because as Kirby, Golden, Medved, Jorgenson, and Buzzanell (2003) argue, interdisciplinary WL scholarship typically has more of a focus on predicting *outcomes*, while communication WL scholarship foregrounds *processes* through which WL interrelationships are negotiated using a discursive, meaning-centered perspective.

Our purpose in this chapter explicating WLC is therefore to (a) provide a summary of the communication-based and communication-related interdisciplinary research on WLC across several "levels" of analysis, (b) identify potential transformations of WL problems, and (c) offer future research directions regarding WLC. In summarizing WLC-related literature, we first explicate the (micro) construct of WLC and then utilize the following levels of analysis as related to WL as our organizational pattern: macrostructures, organizational policies, relational practices, and individual enactments (see Figure 14.1).

In so doing, it is important to emphasize (as noted by the arrows) that we see these "levels" of analysis as interrelated; we assume that microlevel interactions and macrolevel structures are mutually constitutive (Giddens, 1984). As a concrete example, as citizens

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Figure 14.1 "Levels" of Analysis in Work–Life (WL) Research

of the United States, the cultural norm of individualism within which all three of us have grown up will probably affect how we approach our own WLCs; we will likely try to solve "our" problems in isolation when work and personal/family life come into conflict rather than trying to build coalitions with others to collectively solve our problems. Thus, this ordering could have started with the individual level and worked to the macro-level—these levels of experience inform each other (Kirby & Krone, 2002).

Defining and Exploring Work–Life Conflict

The perspective of WLC, typically attributed to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), is "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family[life] domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (p. 77), including the extent to which experiences in the work(life) role result in diminished performance in the life(work) role (Greenhaus et al., 2006). Contemporary models take a bidirectional approach (see also Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011), where "life" interference with work (L → WC) occurs when life role responsibilities hinder performance at work (e.g., child's illness prevents attendance at work) and work interference with "life" (W → LC) occurs when work activities impede performance of life responsibilities (e.g., long hours in paid work prevent performing duties at home). Four different forms of conflict can arise from the conflicting role demands (see Table 14.1 and Greenhaus et al., 2006).

Several recent quantitative meta-analytic studies and qualitative thematic literature reviews examine work–family conflict and/or WLC (i.e., Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Ford, Heinen, & Langkamer, 2007; Golden, Kirby, & Jorgenson, 2006; Greenhaus et al., 2006; Medved, 2010; Michel et al., 2011). These sources outline many specific articles feeding into our knowledge of the construct of WLC. In explicating predictors of WLC, we strongly draw from Michel et al.'s (2011) meta-analysis of 142 studies as it was "developed from multiple work–family linkages, incorporates core work, family, and personality antecedents, and examines demographic

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Table 14.1 Types of Work–Life Conflict

Type	*Related to . . .*	*Example*
Time-based conflict	Competition for time from multiple role demands	Picking kids up late from child care because of work meeting running late
Energy-based conflict	Amount of physical vigor to devote to work and life	Coming home from work too tired to play with kids
Strain-based conflict	Role stressors in one domain inducing physical/psychological strain that hampers fulfilling role expectations in other domains	Coming home from work cranky and losing temper
Behavior-based conflict	When behavior patterns appropriate to each domain are incompatible, yet individuals do not make adjustments across domains	Coming home and acting like "the boss" to one's partner

variables as moderators. . . . [It] integrates and applies many [foundational] works . . . into a coherent framework" (p. 712). After outlining the predictors of L → WC and W → LC, we summarize some consequences of WLC and conclude with "work–life synergy" as an alternate conception.

Predictors of Work to Life and Life to Work Conflict

In conceptualizing predictors of W → LC and L → WC, Michel et al. (2011) had the following results: Across both realms, demographic variables, including marital status, parental status, personality, and gender, are significant and meaningful moderators of many WLC relationships. Table 14.2 (on p. 380) provides the details of this study.

As a quick summary of W → LC, as *work role stressors* increase, W → LC also increases; likewise, as *work role involvement* increases, W → LC also increases. Conversely, as *social support in the work role* increases, W → LC decreases. In the realm of *work characteristics*, task variety increases W → LC, but job autonomy and "family friendly organization" decrease W → LC. *Stressors on the (family) life side* were also found to affect W → LC, indicating that family members who are more socially supportive and provide a more understanding family culture reduce negative crossover effects (Michel et al., 2011).

To summarize L → WC, as *role stressors in the (family)life domain* increase, L → WC also increases. As social support in the *(family)life domain* increases, L → WC decreases. "Family climate" has also been studied as a predictor of L → WC: As it increases, L → WC decreases. *Stressors on the work side* were also found to increase L → WC. Furthermore, *work social support* was a predictor of L → WC; "these findings seem logical as organizations and coworkers who are supportive, and particularly 'family supportive,' probably engender less [L → WC] as they are more understanding and tolerant of an employee's family life within the work domain" (Michel et al., 2011, p. 706).

Consequences of Work–Life Conflict

In their meta-analysis, Kossek and Ozeki (1998) found that regardless of type of measure used, a consistent negative relationship exists between WLC and (reduced) life and

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Table 14.2 Predictors of W → LC and L → WC (see Michel et al., 2011, for details)

Variable	*How It Affects W → LC*[a]	*How It Affects L → WC*[a]
Work role stressors		
"Global" job stressors	*Increases*[a]	*Increases*
Work role overload	*Increases*[a]	*Increases*
Work role conflict	*Increases*[a]	*Increases*
Work time demands	*Increases*	
Work role ambiguity	*Increases*	*Increases*
Work role involvement		
Job involvement	*Increases*	
Work interest/centrality	*Increases*	
Social support in work role		
Organizational support	*Decreases*[a]	*Decreases*
Supervisor support	*Decreases*	*Decreases*
Coworker support	*Decreases*	*Decreases*
Work characteristics		
Task variety	*Increases*	
Job autonomy	*Decreases*	
"Family friendliness"	*Decreases*	
Role stressors in the family/life domain		
Global family stressors	*Increases*[a]	*Increases*[a]
Family role conflict	*Increases*[a]	*Increases*[a]
Family role overload	*Increases*	*Increases*[a]
Family role ambiguity	*Increases*	*Increases*
Family interest/centrality	*Decreases*	
Family time demands		*Increases*
Parental demands		*Increases*
Number of dependents		*Increases*
Social support in the family/life domain		
Family support	*Decreases*	*Decreases*
Spousal support	*Decreases*	*Decreases*
Family climate	*Decreases*[a]	*Decreases*

[a] Indicates moderate to larger effects ($\rho \geq .30$).

job satisfaction. Ford et al. (2007) found that 7% of the variance in (family)life satisfaction was related to variables in the work domain and that 7% of the variance in work satisfaction was related to variables in the (family)life domain. While this may initially be seen as a small effect, it is indeed important given all the variables related to work and life satisfaction. Consequences for individual mental health resulting from WLC include anxiety, life stress, psychological strain, increased health risks for employed parents, poorer performance of the parenting role, psychological burnout, and lower mental health to include clinical depression (for summary review, see Greenhaus et al., 2006). Regarding physical health, Greenhaus et al. (2006) further note that a large number of studies investigate general reports of

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physical health symptoms. Researchers also examine the relationship between WLC and behaviors that increase health problems, such as substance dependence in multiple forms (e.g., drugs, prescription medications, alcohol, smoking), as well as decreased physical activity and poor (fatty) food choices (see Allen & Armstrong, 2006; Greenhaus et al., 2006).

Although we have talked about the causes and consequences of WLC separately, research indicates that these processes are more complex; the causes and consequences are interconnected in a dualistic relationship. Furthermore, as Kelly et al. (2008) note, "While the field has devoted most of its attention to the strains that often arise from managing both work and family[life] roles, recently there has been more attention to the benefits of combining work and family responsibilities" (p. 311).

Work–Life Synergy/Facilitation

A promising direction for research—and indeed for transforming WL problems—is to consider how "accumulating" multiple roles (e.g., employment and personal) can be beneficial, with the potential for positive spillover of emotions, attitudes, and behaviors. This has been framed as WL "synergy" (Beutell, 2010), as well as WL facilitation (Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004) and WL enrichment (McNall, Nicklin, & Masuda, 2010). Wayne et al. (2004) propose that sources of WL synergy/facilitation might include instances when (a) involvement in one role leads to privileges, security from role failure, and/or personality enrichment, which then lead to improved functioning in the other domain; (b) the activities in one role energize employees for the other role; and (c) the social support individuals receive or the skills and attitudes they acquire in one role are useful in the other (also see Barnett & Hyde, 2001). They assert that like WLC, WL synergy/facilitation is a bidirectional construct comprising W → L synergy, where one's involvement in work provides skills, behaviors, or positive mood that positively influences the family/personal life, and L → W synergy, where when one's involvement in family/personal life results in positive mood, support, or a sense of accomplishment that helps him or her cope better, work harder, or feel more confident or reenergized for one's role at work (Wayne et al., 2004, p. 111). Their findings suggest that WLC is negatively related to WL outcomes, whereas WL synergy is positively related to the same outcomes.

WL scholars argue that the amount of importance one places on a role affects the potential for synergy or conflict; in this capacity, the recent call to interrogate the meaning of work (Cheney, Zorn, Planalp, & Lair, 2008) seems promising. For example, is WL synergy more likely when individuals feel they have meaningful work? However, current scholarship in this area is primarily agenda setting; more studies linking this with lived experiences are needed (for exceptions, see Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Wieland, 2011). Overall, awareness of WL synergy changes the theoretical discussion by suggesting a need to facilitate WL synergy, as well as to minimize WLC to obtain positive outcomes. This awareness transforms the ways individuals think about WL problems by allowing a frame of the positive aspects of combining employment and personal roles. Yet even in offering this construct, as communication scholars we see a need to continue moving beyond antecedents and consequences of WLC (or WL synergy). Rather than asking what makes WLC likely and what are the outcomes, we assert a need to *assume* that WLC exists and then try to understand the nuanced ways it is negotiated through communication. In moving toward such a communicative approach, we now focus on the multiple contextual "backdrops" within which individuals experience WLC.

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Macrosocietal Contexts for Work–Life Conflict

Office Gossip I: Did you hear? I guess Colleen asked about working from home once her maternity leave is over in two weeks . . . and if she can't do that, she wants to work part-time. Apparently she is loving motherhood and just can't fathom leaving Riley in childcare all day . . . but it's not CompanyX's problem she decided to have a kid! I'm not surprised though. Once she has a second she'll probably quit altogether and in the meantime she gets the benefit of working from home. . . . If I was a woman I'd take that deal any day.

At the macrosocietal level, we discuss two categories of systems that shape WL norms and practices as a backdrop for thinking about organizational, relational, and individual responses to WLC: (1) economic and political and (2) historical and cultural. After discussing how U.S. WL scholars have studied such systems, we also consider scholarship that focuses on WLC in other national contexts.

Economic and Political Contexts

Drago (2007) argues that it is important to contextualize WLC economically because WL experiences are shaped by issues such as (a) what forms of labor are compensated, (b) the wage gap between mothers and others, and (c) how nonpaid household labor is divided. And while U.S. political rhetoric voices support for family values, economic structures do not reflect an ethic of care (Folbre, 2001). Indeed, Bianchi and Milkie (2010) assert a need to attend to materiality in paying attention to *underwork*: "How [do] families function during bad economic times and how [do] unemployment and poor economic circumstances erode WL balance. . . . Many families are experiencing job loss, eroded pension wealth, housing foreclosure, and affordability issues that may have long-term implications" (p. 719).

Yet economic and political contexts have been largely ignored outside of comparative research (Den Dulk, 2001). In other nations, the economic and political context is more central because of ways in which other governments (e.g., all European Union nations) have intervened in shaping their citizens' quality of working life by legislating paid parental leave (Kelly, 2006). Thus, the minimalist free market approach to policy in the United States is distinctive compared with other industrialized countries (Kossek & Distelberg, 2009), but this does not mean that economic and political contexts are of less consequence. On the contrary, the U.S. government position related to issues such as parental leave and child care has made such public policy issues the purview of corporations (Googins, 1997), resulting in WL policies and discourses that reflect a corporate ideology that privileges organizational values (Hoffman & Cowan, 2008).

Gross (2001) argues that U.S. scholars should broaden their understanding of the ways policy issues directly affect issues and experiences of WLC and remember that "having a job and being able to afford a family in the first place is a fundamental work/family[life] issue" (p. 191). While parental leave legislation dominates when scholars situate WLC politically, the legislation of a variety of issues such as working hours, wages, and health care certainly affect WL possibilities. The WL literature often presumes ideals of "choice" and "balance" that in reality are tied to positions of economic or political privilege (Simpson & Kirby, 2006; Wieland, 2006). Connecting WLC research to multiple policy issues is crucial not only for understanding how the political context shapes WL choices but also for considering ways to inform WL legislation.

Historical and Cultural Contexts

Much attention is devoted to the broader historical and cultural context within which WLC is experienced, focusing on three primary

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areas: (1) the rise of communication technologies, (2) the construction and performance of gender, and (3) the shifting nature of work. First, scholars focus on the effects of new communication technologies on WLC. Kirby et al. (2003) argue that technologies can be both exploitative and empowering—exploitative in "intruding" across "boundaries" of home and work and yet empowering in allowing workers to exercise increased control over where and when they do their work. Mobile technologies, such as laptops (Ladner, 2008), mobile phones (Wajcman, Bittman, & Brown, 2008), and personal digital assistants (Golden & Geisler, 2007) are of interest due to their potential to alter WL boundaries. Thus, scholars often consider how mobile technologies facilitate alternative working arrangements such as telework and explore whether such work arrangements facilitate more or less WLC, with mixed conclusions. Some argue that telework helps mitigate WLC; for example, Fonner and Roloff (2010) explain how individuals who telework more than 50% of the time actually have higher job satisfaction than those on-site and attribute this to additional flexibility and having a break from the everyday politics of the workplace.

Others suggest that telework increases WLC. For example, Tremblay, Paquet, and Najern (2006) argue that teleworking increases workloads and employer expectations on worker time. Women face unique challenges in teleworking; many find that when working from home, they do even more unpaid domestic work than they previously did (Holloway, 2007). Scholars do agree that mobile technologies and alternative working arrangements need to be understood as socially constructed by individuals situated in particular families, organizations, and cultures (Golden & Geisler, 2007; Ladner, 2008). Cultural values and norms, such as the importance of both face time and collegiality at work (e.g., Drago, 2007; Hÿlmo & Buzzanell, 2003), as well as how available one should be outside of normal working hours (Ladner, 2008), have the greatest influence on how technologies are constructed and adopted as well as their impact on WLC.

Second, communication scholars have focused on gender as a major historical and cultural context/macrodiscourse shaping experiences of WLC (Kirby et al., 2003). Gendered expectations surrounding WL are tied to the historical distinction between public and private formed during early industrialization when job site and household fractured into separate spheres and a two-sphere ideology emerged with men in the public (work/occupational) sphere and women in the private (home/family/domestic) sphere. As a result, work life and personal (family) life are often understood as constituting separate, nonoverlapping worlds in a "myth of separate spheres" (Kanter, 1977). Today, this "separation" between work and home is being renegotiated because of the ways (socially constructed) "boundaries" (see Kirby et al., 2003) are being blurred through practices such as telework. However, the historical influence of the public–private distinction remains influential.

Indeed, WLC and the need to "juggle" career and life demands is often narrowly considered as a "woman's issue" (Drago, 2007), which in turn focuses on the "difference question" and establishing equal opportunities for men and women rather than challenging the ways we "do gender" in relation to WL (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004). Research focuses on the gendered implications of WLC and considers how individuals navigate the cultural expectations of "ideal workers" in conjunction with their other roles (Drago, 2007; Williams, 2000). Scholars agree that working mothers especially experience a tension between society's expectations for them as workers and caregivers—aversive sexism still exists (Meisenbach, 2010a; Tracy & Rivera, 2010). Research shows that female

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breadwinners (Medved, 2010) and managerial mothers (Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Liu, Bowers, & Conn, 2005) manage this tension by reframing ideals for motherhood in ways that justify and celebrate their own choices and experiences. Stay-at-home fathers similarly experience identity struggles associated with violating gender expectations (Petroski & Edley, 2006). While gender expectations related to WL roles are still segmented, there is some evidence that cultural norms are beginning to shift; research suggests that contemporary fathers are expected to be more active parents and are expanding the meaning of fatherhood (Duckworth & Buzzanell, 2009; Golden, 2007).

Finally, research focuses on how large-scale discourses such as meanings of work are shifting in light of changes such as globalization, the flattening of organizational hierarchies, increasing work hours, the boundary-less career, and the changing social contract between employers and employees (see also Cheney et al., 2008; Major & Germamo, 2006). Several macrodiscourses, including work (Cheney et al., 2008), career (Wieland, 2006; Wieland, Bauer, & Deetz, 2009), success (Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004), and professionalism (Drago, 2007; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007), further elucidate how dominant views of the WL relationship were constructed as well as the consequences of particular constructions. We are socialized into these discourses through various systems such as families (Medved, Brogan, McClanahan, Morris, & Shepherd, 2006; Paugh, 2005) and the media (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Sotirin, Buzzanell, & Turner, 2007). An explicit (communicative) focus on macrodiscourses can deepen our understandings of how historical and cultural contexts shape WLC.

International Contexts

Considering a variety of national contexts provides a greater awareness of how historical, cultural, economic, and political systems shape WLC. Furthermore, studying multiple national contexts can provide a deeper understanding of how navigating WLC at individual, relational, and organizational levels can (re)shape these broader systemic contexts. Those studying WLC in national contexts other than in the United States pay particular attention to Scandinavia, especially Sweden. Sweden has focused on providing legislation aimed at enabling gender equality, a good working life, and care for children through its parental leave and day care policies (Haas & Hwang, 2000). As of 2011, Swedish parents receive 77.6% of their salaries for 390 days of parental leave. To incent couples to more equally share parental leave, 60 days are reserved for both mother and father and cannot be transferred (Haas, Chronholm, Duvander, & Hwang, 2009). In communication studies, Wieland's (2010, 2011) ethnographic research explicates how Swedish cultural discourses intersect with organizational discourses in shaping WLC experiences; when tension emerged between discourses of employee well-being and employee/organizational productivity, participants drew on the Swedish value of *lagom* (moderation) to productively navigate these discourses.

Of course, other nations are studied as well, and by considering WLC in these contexts, scholars have acknowledged the importance of taking a macrosocietal perspective (several edited books address numerous countries; see also Blyton, Blunsdon, Reed, & Dastmalchian, 2006; Haas, Hwang, & Russell, 2000; Poelmans, 2005). This broader systemic perspective includes factors related to the economy (e.g., income), policy (e.g., welfare and health), history (e.g., immigration), and culture (e.g., values and attitudes). In a comparative study of 20 countries in the Anglo world, Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe, Spector et al. (2007) conclude

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that cultural differences in terms of individualism and collectivism directly affect how people experience WLC. As an example of this, Lucas, Liu, and Buzzanell (2006) compare "no-limits" career discourses in the individualistic United States and in the collectivistic China. While demonstrating how (a) the U.S. career discourses related to meritocracy, hierarchy, and materiality and (b) the Chinese career discourses related to equality, devotion, and recognition, they ultimately conclude that discourses in *both* countries perpetuate an excessive view that presumes one can never work long or hard enough (which can result in WLC).

In thinking about the transformation of WL problems at the macrosocietal level, WLC should explore (and challenge) cultural ideologies related to work, gender, time, and so on since cultural differences clearly affect the relationship between the causes and consequences of WLC. Wieland (2011) notes that the discourse of excess—"one can never do enough"—is especially influential in shaping the ways in which U.S. Americans work and live; it results in an excessive model of career that has destructive consequences for individuals, organizations, and societies (Wieland et al., 2009). While shifting cultural values is a daunting task, making small changes in the ways we speak about work and life can alter our WL constructions (Tracy & Rivera, 2010). Given this contextualization of WLC within macrosocietal structures, we turn now to how organizations intersect with WL possibilities.

Organizational Responses to Work–Life Conflict

Office Gossip II: Guess what? Supposedly there's talk of us finally getting flexible scheduling! I heard the policy is drafted so that as long as we work five core hours, we can come in earlier or later around those hours as long as we work 40 hours a week. I hope it's not just a rumor—I would love to do hot yoga in the mornings before I come in, but right now I don't have time to get that sweaty and then shower before work. I can't imagine how much more balanced I would feel if I could!

At the organizational level, the focus turns to issues that affect the workplace, including (a) an explanation of what WL benefits, policies, and programs are available and what their outcomes have been and (b) the role of organizational culture and climate related to WL as connected to WL benefit utilization.

Work–Life Benefits, Policies, and Programs

As illustrated, U.S. employers generally have far more latitude to determine work and family policy with few requirements to even offer policy support (Kossek & Distelberg, 2009). Still, many organizations have made "deliberate organizational changes—in policies, practices, or the target culture—to reduce WLC and/or support employees' lives outside of work" (Kelly et al., 2008, p. 310). While this change may in part be altruistic, WL issues are also expected to affect the "bottom line" in terms of talent management, human capital outcomes, financial performance, and operational and business outcomes (Richman, Johnson, & Noble, 2011). Since employers offer WL benefits on a voluntary basis, access and availability are uneven; more benefits are received by higher-income workers, employees of medium and large rather than small firms, white-collar (vs. blue-collar) workers, and full-time (vs. part-time) workers (Catalyst, 2011; Kossek & Distelberg, 2009; Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2011). We discuss the range of potential WL benefits per the Society for Human Resource Management's (2011) grouping in their benefits report: (a) leave benefits, (b) "family-friendly" benefits, and (c) flexible working

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benefits. Yet we recognize (and examine) the difference between policies existing and policies being usable (see Kirby & Krone, 2002). See Table 14.3 for a summary of these policies.

In general, patterns of leave taking are marked by gender, racial, and class differences (Rudd, 2004). The only standardization for leave policies in the United States is the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), a governmental mandate for job-protected family leave. Job-protected family leave is especially important in the United States, where a significant part of health and welfare benefits are provided through employment relationships (Rudd, 2004). Maternity leave is the most studied benefit; Buzzanell and colleagues (see also Buzzanell & Liu, 2005, 2007; Meisenbach, Remke, Buzzanell, & Liu, 2008) extensively studied women's attempts at maternity leave negotiations, examining how women talk about, enact, and respond to workplace pregnancy and maternity leave processes. One key takeaway from this research is that maternity leaves are an occasion for the (re)production of gender, especially in defining women as less than ideal workers. A second takeaway is that although standardization is implied, "companies enacted maternity leaves as burdens and nonroutine events" (Buzzanell & Liu, 2005, p. 11). These takeaways imply increased WLC.

When considering "family-friendly" benefits, some companies have set a new standard by offering a menu of flexible work arrangements and a variety of "personal" rather than specifically parental benefits, recognizing that these benefits in particular may cause resentment

Table 14.3 Work–Life Benefits

Work–Life Benefits Category	*Access*	*Sample Benefits*
Leave benefits	84% FT/41% PT	Paid family leave, paid parental leave, paid time off for volunteering or to serve on the board of a community group, sabbatical programs, and donation programs for paid time off and/or sick leave
"Family-friendly" benefits	59% FT/36% PT	Dependent care flexible spending accounts, bringing a child to work in an emergency, an on-site lactation/mother's room, elder care benefits, domestic partner benefits, child care centers, referrals and backup care, and adoption assistance
Flexible working benefits	76% FT/46% PT	Part-time work, flextime (allows employees to select their work hours within limits established by the employer), telecommuting, flexible breaks/meals, and compressed workweek

SOURCE: Society for Human Resource Management (2011).

NOTE: N = 600 companies surveyed; FT = full time; PT = part time.

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among those who have no need for them (e.g., Burkett, 2000; see also the Relational Impacts on Work–Life Conflict section). Finally, regarding flexible work, according to the SHRM 2010 Job Satisfaction survey (SHRM, 2010), 46% of employees cited flexibility to balance WL issues as "very important" to job satisfaction, and flexibility is associated with lower levels of WLC. Experimental trials of several flexible-working benefits have been conducted and have resulted in lowered WLC (e.g., Moen, Kelly, & Chermack, 2009). However, measuring flexibility as *formally* offered by the employer is often insufficient as an indicator of flexibility available to the employee. On the (less) flexible side, many employers limit flexibility to a small portion of the workforce or workday (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, Kim, & Giuntoli, 2008). Conversely, supervisors can also permit more flexibility than is formally allowed.

Outcomes of Work–Life Benefits, Policies, and Programs. In their review of more than 150 peer-reviewed studies, Kelly et al. (2008) note the difficulty in reporting the success of WL policies because some studies evaluate the impact of *having* WL policies available to employees (more common), while other studies evaluate the impact of employees' *use* of these policies (see their review for extended references). Yet employers consistently cite improvement in worker morale and job satisfaction after introducing WL benefits or programs (Richman et al., 2011). In particular, WL benefits are cited as increasing organizational commitment (Eaton, 2003), increasing "organizational attractiveness" for applicants (Richman et al., 2011), increasing job satisfaction (McNall, Masuda & Nicklin, 2010), and reducing turnover intention (McNall et al., 2010).

Kossek, Lewis, and Hammer (2010) further note mixed consequences of WL initiatives for individuals and organizations—while they may enable employees to manage work and caregiving, they can perpetuate stereotypes of ideal workers and increase work intensification because employees work harder out of gratefulness for the flexibility they have been granted (see also Drago, 2007). Finally, in their meta-analytic examination of aspects of "family-friendly" workplaces in reducing WLC, Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesveran (2005) utilized 38 studies (total N = 13,605) and found that they "may provide less assistance to workers in managing WLC than one may hope, as none explained more than seven percent of the variance in WLC" (p. 555). Yet of the dimensions studied, they found that a "family-friendly" work culture seemed most influential in reducing WLC.

Workplace Cultures/ Climates Reflecting Concern for Employees' Lives Outside of Work

A growing literature illustrates that it is not formal WL benefits and policies in isolation that make a difference in reducing WLC but rather the daily practices that surround their use and whether there is a culture/climate that supports WL policies (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2002; Eaton, 2003; O'Driscoll et al., 2003; Premeaux, Adkins, & Mossholder, 2007). Thus, while benefits might exist on paper, employees may not feel that they can use them to alleviate WLC based on how the policies are talked about by supervisors, the climate of the workgroup, and/or perceived career repercussions (see Eaton, 2003; Kirby, 2000; Kirby & Krone, 2002; Schutte & Eaton, 2004). For example, in their study of 2,810 employees, Bond, Galinsky, and Hill (2004) note that 39% of respondents agree that there is job jeopardy for working flexibly.

WL culture refers to "the shared assumptions, beliefs, and values regarding the extent to which an organization supports and values the integration of employees' work and (family)

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[personal] lives" (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999, p. 394). Allen (2001) also introduces family supportive organization perceptions, as "global perceptions that employees form regarding the extent to which the organization is family[life] supportive" (p. 414). Eaton (2003) offers the construct of perceived usability to explore the extent to which employees feel free to utilize their "available" formal and informal WL policies. These concepts are important because employees who perceive a supportive WL culture/climate (a) are more likely to use WL benefits (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2002; Kossek, Noe, & Colquitt, 2001; Thompson et al., 1999) and (b) have lower levels of WLC (Allen, 2001; Behson, 2002; Kossek et al., 2001; Thompson et al., 1999; Voydanoff, 2005).

In their foundational work, Thompson et al. (1999) lay out three considerations regarding WL culture. The first is organizational time demands, or the extent to which there are expectations for rigid schedules, for long hours of work, and for prioritizing work over family. Another dimension of culture is perceived career consequences, or the degree to which employees perceive positive or negative career consequences for using WL benefits. The third aspect of managerial support alludes to the extent to which individual managers are sensitive to and accommodating of employees' family needs, not only in terms of policy use but also in more informal accommodations (see the Relational Impacts on Work–Life Conflict section; Premeaux et al., 2007).

Thus, organizations can transform WL problems by becoming "life friendly" (see Pitt-Catsouphes, 2002). This begins with providing benefits, policies, and programs that promote employees' quality of life, recognizing that flexibility and giving employees some control over work scheduling seems to most reduce WLC (see Brough & O'Driscoll, 2010). But it also involves cultivating a culture/climate in which employees perceive that (a) their nonwork life is respected, (b) they are not required to prioritize work above family/personal life or manage unrealistic schedules to achieve desired career consequences, (c) there will be no negative career consequences associated with using WL benefits, and (d) their managers and coworkers will listen to and support them in striving to reduce WLC (Andreassi & Thomson, 2004; Kossek et al., 2010; Thompson et al., 1999). To enact such cultures, supervisors may need to be trained to be more supportive of WL issues (see the Relational Impacts on Work–Life Conflict section) and should then in turn be rewarded by the organization for supporting WL issues; Galinsky et al. (2008) found that only 20% of 1,100 employers said it was "very true" that management rewards those supervisors who support effective flexible work arrangements. Finally, workplace relationships should be developed that are respectful of employees' WL responsibilities.

Relational Impacts on Work–Life Conflict

> *Office Gossip III: Can you believe it? Mary is home with a sick kid AGAIN. Seriously, can't she find someone else to help her out? When she is gone the rest of us have to do her work and I am so tired of covering for the breeders around here. I think she abuses CompanyX's policy that separates sick leave for dependents from personal sick leave and uses every last day. . . . I wish I could play hooky like that. When she's back we should give her the third degree . . . see if her kid was really even sick.*

Clark (2002) asserts that talking with family about work and talking with coworkers/supervisors about (family)life affects both the work and life domains, leading to greater work satisfaction, higher work functioning,

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higher satisfaction with home and family activities, and resulting in more functional families. In this section, we first highlight the impact of work relationships on WLC by focusing on supervisors and coworkers and then discuss ways in which spousal and other familial relationships are connected to WLC.

Workplace Relationships

Supportive relationships in the workplace are critical social resources in dealing with WL issues (Krouse & Afifi, 2007; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesveran, 2005). We discuss how relationships with supervisors and coworkers can both facilitate and buffer WLC.

Supervisory Relationships. Research indicates that supervisors are a major determinant in subordinates' ability to balance work and life roles (e.g., Allen, 2001; Kirby, 2000). Workers with "life"-supportive supervisors (a) make greater use of flexible hours and family leave (Breaugh & Frye, 2008), (b) have increased job satisfaction and decreased WLC (Breaugh & Frye, 2008; O'Driscoll et al., 2003), and (c) have increased career and overall life satisfaction (Karatepe & Uludag, 2008). Supervisors who are aware of their workers' "life" situations and are flexible in accommodating these issues are one of the most powerful predictors of employee well-being and diminished WLC (Lauzun, Morganson, Major, & Green, 2010).

Breaugh and Frye (2008) assert that informal actions of supervisors have greater influence on employee WLC than formal practices, and research has demonstrated that WL policies are ineffective if employees perceive that supervisors do not support them (Lauzun et al., 2010). Kirby (2000) notes that supervisors can (intentionally or not) send mixed messages about work and life and WL policy use (e.g., emphasizing deadlines but then encouraging time with family) that create employee uncertainty. Perhaps based on such uncertainty, Hoffman and Cowan (2010) illustrate how employees have multiple "rules" governing requests for WL accommodations, including (a) what types of requests to make (e.g., family requests are easiest to make) and (b) how to ask for accommodations (e.g., emphasize organizational interests).

In light of their impact on WLC, several scholars suggest training programs for supervisors (e.g., Buzzanell & Liu, 2007). While Ryan and Kossek (2008) identify "supervisor support for policy use" and "the degree of negotiation with supervisors before one can use the policies" as attributes of an inclusive organizational culture, in a survey of 1,100 employers, Galinsky et al. (2008) note that (only) 50% train supervisors to respond to employees' WL needs. In their white paper outlining ways by which supervisors can be more supportive of WL issues, Rivera and Tracy (2009) offer six concrete suggestions: (1) make changes (themselves) at home, (2) lead by example (role modeling), (3) do not let parental leave turn into an "off-ramp" from paid work, (4) put policy onto paper, (5) create a strong culture of WL harmony, and (6) have the courage to embrace new ideas.

Coworker Relationships. When organizational norms surrounding WL issues are unclear, individuals often go to colleagues to negotiate boundaries (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Talking with coworkers about family and personal life leads to greater work satisfaction and higher work functioning as well as higher satisfaction with family activities (Clark, 2002). Social support at work is negatively correlated with anxiety and depression (Barnett & Hyde, 2001), and a positive correlation exists between team collaboration and the ability to balance work and life (Bhave, Kramer, & Glomb, 2010). Research shows that emotional support from coworkers affects overall emotional exhaustion. Venting with coworkers is seen as a catharsis, and employees seek affirmation, assurance, advice, and instrumental support

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from coworkers (Krouse & Afifi, 2007). The mentoring relationship (which could be supervisory but often is a colleague) is also central to buffering WLC (Nielson, Carlson, & Lankau, 2001). Furthermore, having a close friend at work can help an employee deal with work issues at work and not have to revisit the "work world" at home (McBride & Bergen, 2011).

Yet while coworkers can positively affect WLC and offer support, they can also discourage each other from taking advantage of WL policies. Coworkers may fear having to take on more work as a result of individuals taking advantage of policies such as family leave and consequently might feel resentment and communicate negatively about WL policies and how they create an unfair burden (Kirby & Krone, 2002). There are emerging issues of equity where individuals without families feel burdened by policies because of the increased workloads they are facing (e.g., Burkett, 2000; Hayden, 2010). Kirby and Krone (2002) explain how employees frequently communicated a perception that WL policies granted preferential treatment based on whether the employee (a) had children or not, (b) was male or female, and (c) had a part-time or full-time status. The single employees then "talked about 'banding together' to share their perceptions of inequity, which translated to feelings of resentment" (p. 63), and this fostered an environment where coworkers created an (unwritten) rule of determining "use versus abuse" of WL benefits that contributed to a system of peer pressure where many individuals felt pressured not to utilize their available benefits.

There are gendered implications to these processes. For men, taking advantage of WL policies to reduce WLC challenges traditional notions of masculinity and work commitment (Drago, 2007). And while women may desire to communicate with coworkers about WLC, they will often "edit out" family involvements in conversations so as not to invite questions of commitment and professionalism (Jorgenson, 2000). In sum, workplace relationships with supervisors and coworkers can buffer and contribute to WLC.

Family Relationships

Much like workplace relationships, the interpersonal relationships within families and social support networks affect and are affected by WLC. We discuss the interplay between work and the family as a unit in WLC. We also discuss WLC impacts on the spousal relationship and the division of household labor and how children are affected.

Family Units. While families are made up of a nexus of various relationships, the family unit itself can be studied as a relational entity linked to both W $\rightarrow$ LC and L $\rightarrow$ WC. Research illustrates that work hours and stress at work can affect the family unit's cohesiveness, functionality, and integration (e.g., Boyar, Maertz, Pearson, & Keough, 2003; Clark, 2002; Voydanoff, 2004). For example, mothers' shorter paid work hours and fathers' lower participation in professional organizations are positively related to activities with adolescents, which in turn are positively related with family integration (Voydanoff, 2004). Boyar et al. (2003) note that WLC affects the family unit because employees "adjust their home lives rather than their work lives since the immediate effect is less damaging to one's livelihood" (p. 185).

Additional research examines how "life" issues can both contribute to and buffer WLC (or its outcomes) in the workplace (e.g., Clark, 2002). While Kossek et al. (2001) find family climates that are open and conducive to sharing concerns are directly related to well-being, work performance, and WLC, they also note that if either family *or* work climate is not open to sharing WL concerns,

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general well-being and work performance of the caregiver is damaged. Some organizations acknowledge this need for "openness" and recognize families as a legitimate influence on employees' organizational involvement—they consider families as organizational members and see homes and families as an extension of the workplace (Golden, 2009).

Relational Partners. Research on how relational partners affect WLC often focuses on how workplace issues affect these relationships or how the relationship buffers WLC. Most notably, WLC negatively affects marital satisfaction (Crouter, Bumpus, Head, & McHale, 2001) and partners' commitment (Day & Chamberlain, 2006). Bergen, Kirby, and McBride (2007) examine commuter marriages and illustrate how social networks can further these negative impacts by questioning the couples' choices and (re)introducing a need for the couple to negotiate WL. Furthermore, when wives choose to commute because of work, they expend great energy, constructing a narrative to make their relationship fit within the master narrative of marriage (Bergen, 2011). Conversely, partner support can also buffer WLC (Westman & Etzion, 2005); the positive management of WLC of one partner can have positive implications for the other (Cinamon, Weisel, & Tzuk, 2007).

Partners can also help each other communicatively reconstruct the seemingly competing roles of worker and parent/spouse/partner. When studying worker's decisions when faced with conflicting demands of a workplace and family event, Greenhaus and Powell (2003) found that pressure to engage in one domain's activity by either the partner or supervisor had the greatest impact on the decision made. In light of societal changes, Golden (2002) explores how worker parents interpersonally "co-arrange" their working and personal lives (see also Golden, 2001). Related to partners' negotiation of work and life, emerging communication research focuses on the division of domestic labor (Alberts, Tracy, & Trethewey, 2011; Medved, 2007, 2009b). Alberts et al. (2011) propose an integrative theory of division of labor that takes into account (a) response thresholds to household labor, (b) differences in perceptions of obligation versus gift, and (c) how responsibility can become a solidified pattern of domestic labor. These negotiations of domestic labor between partners in the private sector have also led to the commodification of family labor with new services provided by public entities (Medved, 2007).

Dependent Relationships. WLC affects the parent–child relationship and how much knowledge of their children's experiences the working parents have. For example, Crouter et al. (2001) note that a combination of long hours and high work overload is consistently associated with less positive father–adolescent relationships among adolescent sons and daughters. As noted, mother's shorter work hours and father's lower participation in community-based organizations (rather than paid work) are positively related to increased activities with their adolescents (Voydanoff, 2004). WLC also influences how mothers and fathers think about themselves as parents as it is negatively correlated with parental self-efficacy (Cinamon et al., 2007). Other research explores the impacts of elder care on WLC: As just one example, an employee's decision to care for an elderly family member in her or his own home seems to be detrimental to overall performance and well-being (Kossek et al., 2001).

Conversely, WLC is associated with increased parental commitment (Day & Chamberlain, 2006). And researchers note that, like spouses, children can act as a buffer to WLC (e.g., Barnett, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992). Among fathers, blurring the boundaries of work and child rearing actually aided in the development of a masculine concept of caregiving that acknowledges emotion (Golden,

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2007). Finally, parental WLC can also affect how children are socialized into WL issues (Langellier & Peterson, 2006) and divisions of domestic labor (Alberts et al., 2011): Paugh (2005) analyzed actual dinnertime conversation among 16 working-class families to "illuminate how children are apprenticed into discourse and ideologies of work" (p. 55). This socialization of children, however, is not necessarily equitable, and men and women may receive significantly different messages about career paths and when/if it is appropriate to exit the paid labor force (Medved et al., 2006).

In thinking about the transformation of WL problems at the relational level, individuals should be mindful that communicative exchanges with spouses, friends, managers, and coworkers can both create and relieve WLC. Certain types of communication, such as a coworker expressing feelings of guilt that his child is home alone sick, may increase an individual's own feelings of WLC. Especially in the workplace, human resource professionals who desire to facilitate WL "balance" for employees should educate coworkers and supervisors on their power to contribute to or buffer the WLC of others (including by implying that single people do not have "lives" that they need to accomplish outside of work). Being mindful of our communicative choices in relationships about WL leads to our final realm of discussion: how on a daily basis individuals must make choices about how they "do" work and life (and as a result, WLC).

Enactments of Work, "Life," and Work–Life Conflict

> *Office Gossip IV: So in my last meeting they were considering providing all of us with smartphones through the CompanyX budget and paying our monthly bill and giving us like $50 in apps . . . but I gotta say, I'm not sure how I feel about it. Don't get me wrong—the technology is exciting. But if Sarah sends me an e-mail at 9:30 at night, am I expected to answer it because she is my boss and it is my work phone? What time does work officially stop? I like to separate work and home, and this seems like a slippery slope.*

In terms of practice and future research, we focus on the "doing" (accomplishment, management, navigation) of work and life in mundane daily practices (Medved, 2004) and how that facilitates or buffers WLC. In the everyday accomplishment of work and life, we see the continual, dynamic, and communicative nature of the WL relationship: "The process is not always smooth, linear, nor necessarily purposive; however it is surely one of ongoing action, interaction and sensemaking" (Medved, 2004, p. 142). We discuss here three processes through which individuals accomplish work and life (and that can potentially transform WL problems): (1) constructing boundaries, (2) constructing identities/selves, and (3) seeking out practices of power. Research on these processes comes primarily from a social constructionist perspective, which emphasizes the role of communication in constructing reality.

Boundary Construction

Boundary work refers to the ongoing process through which individuals create, manage, transform, and transcend "boundaries" between work and life as they navigate WLC (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Communication scholars have called attention to the fundamentally discursive nature of boundary construction (see Kirby et al., 2003) as well as its socially performative implications (Shumate & Fulk, 2004). Boundaries are socially constructed and changing—individuals create diverse boundaries between work and life that vary along a continuum from segmented to integrated, which "implies that these categories, their contents and their boundary must be negotiated" (Nippert-Eng, 1996, p. 6). Those who segment work and life build and maintain the spheres as

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separate and unique, while those who integrate construct work and home as intricately interrelated minimize distinctions (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). Attending to the communicative practices through which boundaries are built and transcended provides insight into how individuals accomplish work and life.

Ashforth et al. (2000) illustrate that segmentation and integration lead to different stresses: While WL integration leads to a blurring of boundaries that makes *boundary maintenance* an ongoing challenge, WL segmentation requires more intensive *boundary transitions*. Research indicates that generally, segmentation reduces WLC more than integration as it provides individuals with more control and decreased levels of stress—but of course, this depends on the individual and the organization (Kreiner, 2006; Voydanoff, 2005). In Gill's (2006) study, many female entrepreneurs physically separated work and life as well as created/enforced family rules (e.g., having an established family time) and personal rules (e.g., not taking work home) and claimed that such segmentation helped them reduce WLC.

Some scholars suggest that the reasoning for integration will shape its effectiveness in reducing WLC. For example, Eng, Moore, Grunberg, Greenberg, and Sikora (2010) found a vast difference in WLC for those who *planned* to work from home as opposed to those who were *allowed* to do so in order to complete extra work (as this indicated work overload rather than flexibility). As this work progresses, the literature is making space for the possibility that individuals potentially construct diverse WL boundaries. For example, in considering the role of personal digital assistants in boundary work, Golden and Geisler (2007) find participants use the technology both to create a clear distinction between work and life and to develop integrated selves—to achieve the "concurrent and conflicting goals of integration and segmentation" (p. 541).

Identity Construction

Doing WL also involves identity construction, and while we discuss this separately from boundary work, they are certainly interrelated practices. In the first edition of this *Handbook*, we urged a move from roles, conflicts, and outcomes to more subtle processes of identity construction to gain insight into the experience and negotiation of WLC (following Kirby et al., 2003): "What individuals are trying to accomplish is not merely the avoidance of conflict but the positive accomplishment of personhood" (p. 14). Identity construction is emerging as another way of understanding WLC, building on the theorizing of identity as conceptualized in organization studies. In this conception, self-identity is contested and more focused on paid work than in previous eras, requiring individuals to more actively craft a self (Giddens, 1991).

Alvesson and Willmott (2002) argue that self-identities emerge out of the interplay of *identity work* (the ongoing process through which one crafts a self) and *identity regulation* (the ways that social practices shape the process of identity construction). As Wieland (2010) notes, identity constructions draw "not only on one's position as worker but also as family member, citizen, and consumer . . . and as such involves a negotiation of the demands of work and other parts of life" (p. 505). While identity work is accomplished both through conscious reflection and ongoing practices (Wieland, 2010), it is easiest to identify during major work and life transitions marked with uncertainty (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008). WL scholars have focused on identity construction during work role transitions—changes in positions, organizations, or occupations prompt individuals to do identity work in order to make sense of their (new, changed) identity in light of the change (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Job loss also prompts identity work: Buzzanell and Turner (2003) establish how unemployed men did emotion

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work that enabled them to maintain their identity as breadwinner and their focus on the public rather than private realm. Medved and Kirby (2005) analyze how stay-at-home mothers drew on professionalized discourses (i.e., "I'm the Family CEO") to manage their identities once they no longer engaged in paid work.

Life transitions (e.g., transitioning to parenthood) also provide the opportunity to observe identity construction. Golden (2001) concludes that first-time (dual-career) parents were active in the identity renegotiation process and worked to reduce anxiety; individuals constructed identities by positioning themselves in relation to their spouses and demonstrated both a continuation of and resistance to traditional gender roles (Golden, 2002). Buzzanell and Liu's (2005) exploration of women's identity work during pregnancy, on leave, and after returning to work illustrates how participants worked to maintain their self-identities as "the same" as they were before pregnancy and to resist the negative identity regulations of others.

Scholars also explore how WL identity construction occurs when one's identity is perceived as countercultural (Meisenbach, 2010b), as is the case with female breadwinners. Medved (2009a) argues that breadwinning mothers draw on moral, personal, and political positions to construct their identity as morally right, a personal fit, and as improving women's role in society. Female breadwinners in Meisenbach's (2010a) study saw their identity as providing them with control, independence, career progress, and appreciation of their partner while also increasing their stress, guilt, and resentment. As a whole, this scholarship indicates that identity construction is a deeply social process shaped by societal discourses about what is acceptable or desirable (Meisenbach, 2010a). Ideal selves associated with both the public and the private spheres—such as the ideal worker, citizen, mother, father, woman, and man, among others—regulate identity work; individuals respond with strategic and creative positioning through which they satisfy and/or resist those ideals (Wieland, 2010). In this sense, the accomplishment of WL through identity construction is very much shaped by the macrosocietal context. As shown, societal expectations associated with gender are especially consequential.

Research that studies how WL is accomplished through identity construction provides a deeper understanding of the ongoing, messy, and situated process of navigating WLC. Yet at times, this work perpetuates a view of self-identity that presumes the possibility and desirability of developing a coherent self that incorporates all aspects of one's identity (thus, resolving role conflicts). Tracy and Trethewey (2005) suggest an alternative conception to celebrate the benefits and challenges associated with conflicting aspects of self: viewing the self as crystallized—having multiple facets that potentially conflict with one another (see also Gill, 2006). Whether a multifaceted self that incorporates work and life is seen as possible, expected, and/or desirable depends in part on societal discourses. In Sweden, for example, a strong cultural value of moderation helps individuals maintain a healthy tension between work and life (Wieland, 2011). Research considering the implications of viewing the self as crystallized would enable scholars to better understand how WL is accomplished through identity construction.

Seeking Out Practices of Power in Studying Work–Life Conflict

We argue elsewhere (Kirby et al., 2003) that taking a meaning, process-centered perspective makes communication scholars' contributions unique from other disciplines regarding WLC. Medved (2010) further notes an emerging theoretical perspective in the

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communication-based WL literature: interrogating "discourse and related practices of power [that] . . . question who has the ability to determine dominant social meanings" (para. 5). As communication scholars who are mindful of power dynamics in society (e.g., gender, economics, social class), organizations, and relationships, we conclude by embracing this perspective and encouraging more critical work on issues of work, life, and WLC.

Kirby (2006) notes how organizational policies that might be seen as alleviating WLC might concomitantly be seen as the organization creeping into (and controlling more of) personal life. Hoffman and Cowan (2008) expand this notion in uncovering a "corporate ideology of work life" on the websites of Fortune's *100 Best Companies to Work For*. In this ideology, organizations end up defining the proper relationship between paid work and the rest of life, where (a) work is the most important element of life, (b) life means family, (c) individuals are responsible for balance, and (d) organizations control WL programs. Mescher, Benschop, and Doorewaard (2009) also analyzed company WL rhetoric and found that "websites reproduce the traditional cultural norms of an ideal worker who is available full-time, who allows work to prevail over private life, and who is willing to 'go the extra mile'" (p. 35). Overall, when organizations "present work-life programs as benefits to the employee, [they] hide the fact that the ultimate goal of the program is to enhance organizational effectiveness by getting more work out of individual employees" (Hoffman & Cowan, 2008, p. 240).

Hoffman and Cowan (2008), therefore, encourage studying the tension between domination and resistance in organizations regarding WL policies. Shuler's (2006) study of evangelical ministers on a college campus who work and live at home as a total institution is one such example; while participants resisted the pull of the total institution in home-based work by maintaining "boundaries," sometimes they succumbed to the total institution and undermined the public/private dichotomy. Furthermore, Hoffman and Cowan's (2008) finding that "managing the relationship between paid work and the rest of life is the responsibility of the employee, with only the assistance of the organization" (p. 237) reflects the power of the organization to (re)produce a privatized and individualistic approach to WL, at least in the United States. Such a view privileges dominant structures, because when WLC is framed as an individual issue, there will likely not be an organized push for widespread change (see Kirby et al., 2003). Indeed, in their analysis of actual requests for leave, Hoffman and Cowan (2010) define the rule "Work life needs are private and individual" by a scarcity of coalition-based strategies (to be exact, 1 out of 96). Employees do not even think to organize on issues of WL "balance" because of its framing as an individual issue—a private versus a public concern. In light of this, Tracy (2008) argues for, and we echo, a "reframing of organizational policies as allowing for and promoting *care as a common, collective good*" (p. 171).

In sum, while we have emphasized organizational and individual issues in our examples of paths for practice and future research, certainly there are macro and relational issues as well. Thinking about care as a common good brings to the fore macro issues of gender, not just as a variable to be examined but as a socially constructed divide in the arena of WL with power implications. Indeed, the construction of WLC issues as primarily a "woman's issue" can make it easier to marginalize. In addition, macro issues of social class are also of import as we move forward in studying WLC in communication; while moves have been made to embrace more perspectives (see, e.g., Cowan & Bochantin's, 2011, study of blue-collar employees' WL metaphors and Simpson & Kirby's, 2006, commentary on the

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opt-out revolution), the research is still largely classist. Furthermore, at the relational level, examining actual dialogue between individuals as they negotiate WL and the power imbued in that dialogue would likely illustrate systematically distorted communication (Deetz, 1992). Overall, there are many directions that critical WL communication research could take, and we look forward to reading these alongside the more descriptive approaches as scholars continue to elucidate issues of WLC across all levels of analysis.

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15

Building Constructive Conflict Communities Through Conflict Resolution Education

Tricia S. Jones

Domestically and globally many students are in physically and/or emotionally unsafe learning environments that are taking a toll on their academic, physical, and mental health. The following data from the National Center for Education Statistics (Robers, Zhang, & Truman, 2010) confirms the seriousness of the problem in the United States:

- In 2009, 8% of students reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.
- In 2009, 10% of students aged 12 to 18 years reported that someone at school had used hate-related words against them, and 35% reported seeing hate-related graffiti at school.

American school children are not unique in their condition. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2009), in its report on violence and youth, reports that all over the world children are facing violent and unsafe contexts that must be improved.

Students are not taught how to deal with conflict and how to create communities in which social aggression is not acceptable. Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) summarize,

> In a national sample of 148,189 sixth to twelfth graders, only 29%–45% of surveyed students reported that they had social competencies such as empathy, decision making, and conflict resolution skills, and only 29% indicated that their school provided a caring, encouraging environment. (p. 405)

The lack of basic competencies often translates into inability to prevent or de-escalate potentially destructive situations as the Search Institute (1997) found; 41% of youth surveyed reported that when provoked they could not control anger and would fight.

One answer is to provide children with educational opportunities that build basic social competencies. As WHO (2009) concludes, "Interventions for developing life skills

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can help young people to avoid violence, by improving their social and emotional competencies, teaching them how to deal effectively and non-violently with conflict" (p. 3).

To accomplish the outcomes recommended by WHO, we need to build better educational organizations and prepare them to deliver programs to increase the conflict, social, and emotional competence of youth. This chapter argues this point in three sections. The first section introduces the field of "conflict resolution education" (CRE). CRE is defined and explained in relation to social and emotional learning (SEL), multicultural education, and peace education. The second section spotlights exemplary CRE programs proven to build constructive conflict communities in educational contexts. The spotlight programs include the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies), Second Step, and Strong Start SEL curricula; peer mediation and negotiation, bullying prevention, and restorative practices programs in schools. The final section contains guidelines for developing CRE systems with special attention to global initiatives and teacher education/teacher preparation. The Conflict Resolution Education in Teacher Education (CRETE) program is presented as a model of strong teacher education and professional development in CRE.

Conflict Resolution Education: Making Peace a Behavioral Reality

CRE "models and teaches, in culturally meaningful ways, a variety of processes, practices and skills that help address individual, interpersonal, and institutional conflicts, and create safe and welcoming communities" (Association for Conflict Resolution, 2002, p. 5). Initially, the rationale for CRE was the desire to create safe learning environments—a rationale that was responsive to increases in school violence and school shootings in the late 1990s. In 1994, Congress passed the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act that funded the Safe and Drug-Free Schools unit in the U.S. Department of Education. CRE programs, especially peer mediation, were seen as an important violence prevention effort (Greenberg et al., 2003). Success in establishing safe learning environments was measured by decreases in violent incidents, number and severity of intergroup conflicts, and behavioral indicators like suspensions, absenteeism, and dropout rates (Archambault, Janosz, Morizot, & Pagani, 2009).

However, as the field of CRE has matured, the superordinate goal has become to create constructive conflict communities that are socially just and tolerant. A constructive conflict community is one in which there is shared responsibility for social ills and social accomplishments. William Ury (2000) talks about this idea as "the third side":

> In our societies, conflict is conventionally thought of as two-sided: husband vs. wife, union vs. employer, Arabs vs. Israelis. The introduction of a third party comes almost as an exception, an aberration, someone meddling in someone else's business. We tend to forget what the simplest societies on earth have long known: namely that every conflict is actually three-sided. No dispute takes place in a vacuum. There are always others around—relatives, neighbors, allies, friends, or onlookers. Every conflict occurs within a community that constitutes the "third side" of any dispute. (p. 7)

Creating a constructive conflict community requires involving parents and community members in CRE activities. Parents can and should participate actively in CRE—receiving training, modeling effective skills for their children, volunteering with program administration, and so on. The school can also link with other conflict management and dispute resolution efforts in the broader community;

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for example, having student mediators work with community mediators to handle parent–teen conflicts in the community.

Three related fields—SEL, multicultural education, and peace education—are considered here as subfields of CRE. Specifically, SEL builds the foundational social and emotional competencies, like empathy, that are necessary for all communities. Multicultural education develops students' awareness of and tolerance for other cultures. And peace education emphasizes the importance of positive peace and systems that support peace.

Social Emotional Learning: Building the Foundation

At the heart, CRE helps children be more socially and emotionally competent so they can lead happier lives and contribute more positively to society (Jones & Compton, 2003). Both regular and special-needs students can benefit from programs that teach them the competencies delineated below (Feuerborn & Tyre, 2009). As Elksnin and Elksnin (2006) concluded, between 15% and 22% of children in U.S. schools have socioemotional problems that warrant intervention; and special-needs children with learning and/or other disabilities have greater social skills deficits than children without special needs (Elias, 2004).

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) articulated five core areas of social and emotional competency (Zins & Elias, 2007):

1. *Self-awareness*—accurately assessing one's feelings
2. *Self-management*—regulating one's emotions and controlling impulses
3. *Social awareness*—taking the perspective of and empathizing with others
4. *Relationship skills*—establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed
5. *Responsible decision making*—making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions

While all of these competencies are important, research suggests that developing empathy is one of the most critical (Irimia, 2011). Empathy, even more than aggression, differentiates youth offenders and nonoffenders (Cohen & Strayer, 1996). Jolliffe and Farrington's (2004) meta-analysis concluded that low empathic response predicts antisocial behaviors in adolescents. Empathy is negatively related to physical, verbal, and relational aggression (Kaukiainen et al., 1999); and more empathic students are more likely to defend targets of bullies (Gini, Albiero, Benelli, & Altoe, 2007; Kumar & Ryan, 2009).

Comprehensive reviews of SEL programs report that they are effective in developing students' competencies. Two recent meta-analyses of SEL programs deserve special mention. Payton et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis of 317 studies involved 324,303 children in K–8 populations. Durlak et al. (2011) reported results from a meta-analysis of 213 school-based, universal SEL programs involving 270,034 kindergarten through high school students. Both meta-analyses provide strong support for positive effects of SEL on students' SEL skills, attitudes, positive social behavior, conduct problems, and academic achievement. Compared with controls, SEL participants demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance that reflected an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement (Durlak et al., 2011).

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Multicultural Education: Developing Awareness and Tolerance

Multicultural education has three pillars—(1) helping students learn about other cultures, (2) increasing tolerance and appreciation for other cultures, and (3) creating "shared" cultures (McDonough, 2005). Multicultural education is used worldwide and, in many countries, is the underpinning of democratic or citizenship education (Fujikane, 2003). Nieto (2004) explained an ideal for multicultural education:

> It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers reflect . . . multicultural education promotes democratic principles of social justice. (p. 346)

Multicultural education seeks to prevent and reduce bias and prejudice, so some educators also use the term *antibias education*. These efforts are built on research that suggest basic conditions necessary to reduce hostility and intergroup conflict and bias: a supportive environment, maintenance of relatively equal status between groups, close contact among group members, and an environment of cooperation and task interdependence for achievement of a valued outcome. Pettigrew and Tropp (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of 203 studies on intergroup contact as an influence on prejudice. Ninety-four percent of these studies found that when contact occurred under these conditions, prejudice was significantly reduced.

One example of multicultural education and CRE designed to reduce prejudice was the Community Peace and Safety Networks project in South Africa in 1995 to 1997 (Jones, 2005). In 1995, a year after Nelson Mandela had been elected, a team of U.S. and South African educators and community members from diverse South African cultural groups developed mediation programs linking communities and schools in Johannesburg. The South African team included members from two Black African townships (Soweto and Thokoza), an Afrikaans community, and a British community. In each community, a school-based conflict education and mediation program was created in a high school and linked with a community mediation center.

Multicultural and antibias education addresses all aspects of difference and diversity that may separate people into in-groups and out-groups. For example, sexual harassment is a form of bullying based on gender discrimination. According to an American Association of University Women study of 2,064 K–12 students, four out of five students experience sexual harassment in school, approximately 33% first experience harassment prior to the 6th grade, and almost half of 7th to 12th graders experienced sexual harassment during the school year of the survey (cited in Lichty, Torres, Valenti, Valenti, & Buchanan, 2008). These problems are not unique to the United States. Attar-Schwartz (2009) surveyed a nationally representative sample of 16,604 students in Grades 7 through 11 in 327 Israeli schools about sexual harassment. About one fourth of the students were victims of at least one unwanted and unwelcome act of harassment by peers in the prior month.

Multicultural education also embraces linguistic diversity and multilingual teaching. Powerful examples can be seen in the use of bilingual (Arabic–Hebrew) education in Palestinan–Jewish schools. Zvil Bekerman and his colleagues (Bekerman, Habib, & Shhadi, 2011) show how bilingual education in very high conflict situations changes children's perceptions of ethnic and national identities and hopes for building a future together rather than a future "against" the other. They conclude that using the languages of the children's cultures in their learning is a

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"deep" infusion of respect for difference. This language sensitivity is increasingly relevant to U.S. schools as well, where the number of bilingual students has increased from 1 in 10 students in the late 1970s to 1 in 5 students today (Scanlan, 2011).

Peace Education and Human Rights Education: Valuing Peace and Protecting Rights

Peace education, like multicultural education, attempts to reduce prejudice and bias that leads to poor treatment of others who are different. Yet it also instructs students about the dynamics of peace, skills related to creating peaceful conditions, and systems that support or inhibit peace. The Peace Education Working Group at UNICEF defines peace education as:

> the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. (UNESCO, 2002, p. 6)

Peace education programs usually include methods of handling conflict, such as negotiation, mediation, or facilitation (Harris & Morrison, 2003). Peer mediation is a component of many peace education programs and the most common form of conflict education in the United States (Jones & Bodtker, 1999b; Jones & Kmitta, 2000).

Gavriel Salomon (2002), a noted peace education scholar, suggested three types of peace education programs: (1) those in intractable regions, (2) those in regions with interethnic tensions, and (3) those in regions of experienced tranquility. Following the postelection violence in Kenya, peace education was included in the school curricula to develop an awareness of causes of conflicts and ways to resolve conflicts more constructively.

> In East and Central Africa peace education is a way for individuals and communities to shun a culture of violence. . . . These new attitudes will then see peaceful conflict resolution practiced at the intra-communal level and regionally across countries. (Nairobi Peace Initiative Africa, 2008, p. 1, cited in Shaw, 2010, p. 120)

The Pacific Island country of Fiji is also using peace education to build peace in a fractured community. As noted by Mosese Waqa, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) Pacific Islands representative, "For emerging, new, and fragile democracies of the Pacific Islands, Peace Education . . . can be developed to teach the universal values, standards and principles essential for peaceful futures" (personal communication, June 10, 2010, as cited in Shaw, 2010, p. 120).

Often in high-conflict contexts, when schools are a place where segments of warring society are brought together to heal—places like Sierra Leone, or Serbia, or Northern Ireland—peace education has a strong element of human rights. Indeed, these programs often argue that peace should be a human right. "Human rights education addresses injustices brought about by political repression, human suffering, misery, civil strife, and prejudice. This kind of peace education has a literal and broad interpretation. Peace educators are guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (Harris & Morrison, 2003, pp. 66–67).

The Delors Commission report, *UNESCO Learning—The Treasure Within* (cited in Lenhart & Savolainen, 2002), focused on learning about human rights and learning for human rights. Learning for human rights helps

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a person understand political and social structures that influence rights. Learning for human rights puts "the emphasis on social competencies, including solidarity and collective action for the fulfillment of the basic needs of the community" (Lohrenscheit, 2002). As a result, in peace education programs where human rights concerns are prominent; mediation, negotiation, and advocacy skills are critical.

Spotlight on Exemplary Programs

This section spotlights some exemplary CRE programs that have proven effective in developing constructive conflict communities domestically and globally. For SEL curricula, the exemplary programs are PATHS, Second Step, and Strong Start curricula. Mediation and negotiation programs, bullying prevention, and restorative practices are also reviewed.

Exemplary Social and Emotional Programs

PATHS. The PATHS Program is a classroom-based curriculum implemented by teachers for elementary grades and is effective for regular and special-needs students (Greenberg & Kusche, 1996). The PATHS curriculum helps children develop problem-solving, self-control, and emotional-regulation skills. The program consists of 57 lessons of 20- to 30-minute duration taught two to three times per week. A pretest–posttest control group design with random assignment of (N = 6,500 students) 198 intervention classrooms and 180 matched-comparison classrooms showed that PATHS decreased aggression and disruptive behaviors and improved classroom climate (Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 1999). One- to two-year longitudinal findings suggest that the PATHS curriculum has lasting effects on emotional understanding and interpersonal social problem-solving skills (Greenberg & Kusche, 1996). The curriculum is supported by teacher training, teaching materials, and parent resources. However, since PATHS is a lengthy and intensive curriculum, teachers can become burned out, resulting in poor implementation that decreases expected outcomes (Ransford, Greenberg, Domitrovich, Small, & Jacobsen, 2009).

In a study with randomly assigned special education classrooms in Grades 1 to 3, PATHS was proven effective for children with special needs (Chi-Ming, Greenberg, & Kusche, 2004). Data were collected for 3 years, and growth curve analysis indicated that PATHS reduced internalizing and externalizing behaviors and depressive symptoms—impacts that lasted 2 years beyond the intervention.

The WHO (2009) has endorsed PATHS as a "best practice" program for life skills programming. WHO reports that PATHS has been adopted in Australia, the United Kingdom, and other countries as both a universal and a targeted program (for children at high risk of antisocial behavior).

Second Step. The Second Step Program is a classwide social skills program implemented by teachers in preschool through middle school. It is the most commonly used elementary school SEL program in the United States, partly because of the excellent instructional materials that focus on the three critical areas of empathy, impulse control, and anger management. The program consists of 30 classroom lessons (approximately 35–45 minutes each) typically taught one to two times per week. In a typical Second Step lesson, the teacher has a card that shows a picture of an interaction, and the teacher asks students, using a series of specified discussion questions, to think about what the picture depicts and the nonverbal cues they see that lead them to make that assessment. Students are then encouraged to think about similar situations in their own lives (e.g., when they have felt

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proud of an accomplishment, when they have done something in anger that they knew they should not have done). In some lessons, the teacher then models skills that students can use. In earlier grades, these demonstrations and modeling discussions can be done by the use of hand puppets to keep students engaged in the lesson.

Second Step has proven effective in developing desired prosocial behavior. In a recent pretest–posttest control group design with random assignment of schools to training versus control that was conducted with 790 second and third graders (Grossman et al., 1997), students participating in Second Step exhibited less physical aggression and more prosocial behaviors than students in the control condition, and treatment effects were maintained over a 6-month period. Washburn (2002) found that Second Step was particularly effective with low-income urban, minority students.

Strong Start/Strong Kids Programs. The Strong Start/Strong Kids programs, from the Oregon Resiliency Project (Merrell, 2010), are designed to be used pre-K through Grade 12 as a brief and low-cost way to promote SEL and CRE. Caldarella, Christensen, Kramer, and Kronmiller (2009) evaluated the effects of Strong Start on second-grade students, using a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control group design. Results revealed statistically significant improvements in teacher ratings of students' internalizing and peer-related prosocial behaviors, particularly for students at greater risk. Conversely, control group students experienced significant worsening of internalizing behaviors and decreased levels of peer-related prosocial behaviors. Strong Start was also evaluated in kindergarten students (Kramer, Caldarella, Christensen, & Shatzer, 2010) using a time-series design. Results indicated gains in students' prosocial behaviors and decreases in internalizing behaviors, as rated by teachers and parents. Research on the Strong Kids and Strong Teens versions (Merrell, Juskelis, Tran, & Buchanan, 2008) in Grades 5, 7 to 8, and 9 to 12 is also supportive. Three groups participated in either the Strong Kids (Groups 1 and 2) or Strong Teens (Group 3) programs, receiving 1-hour lessons and associated assignments once a week for 12 weeks. In all three studies, students increased social and emotional knowledge and decreased negative emotional expressions.

Peer Mediation and Negotiation

Peer mediation programs train students to act as impartial third parties who help fellow students negotiate peaceful resolutions to their conflicts. Structurally, peer mediation programs vary in how they are linked with academic content and with other CRE components. In cadre peer mediation, mediators are trained outside of classes and mediate disputes after class time. In curriculum or class-linked peer mediation, students have classes in integrative negotiation and simple mediation process skills, rotate as mediators, and conduct mediations in class. Mentoring peer mediation models involve student mediators training younger students as peer mediators within the same school or across educational levels in the same district. Peer mediation is one of the oldest and most common CRE programs in the United States and around the world (Jones, 2004a; Turnuklu, Kacmaz, Sunbul, & Ergul, 2010).

Cadre Peer Mediation. Cadre peer mediation positively affects students' conflict competence. Johnson and Johnson's (1996) comprehensive research review focused on peer mediation programs in a cooperative learning context and found increases in students' conflict knowledge, self-reported prosocial behavior, and negotiation skills and positive impacts on classroom climate. Burrell,

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Zirbel, and Allen's (2003) meta-analysis of 43 studies (published between 1985 and 2003) shows that peer mediation increases students' conflict knowledge and skills, improves school climate, and reduces negative behavior. Mediators in middle school cadre programs, when compared with nonmediators, increased their knowledge of constructive conflict (Bell, Coleman, Anderson, Whelan, & Wilder, 2000) and their self-esteem and self-concept—even for aggressive students (Fast, Fanelli, & Salen, 2003).

The impact of peer mediation on critical skills like perspective taking has received considerable research attention. Mankopf (2003) hypothesized that mediators would have better perspective taking, negotiation ability, attitudes toward fighting, and connectedness to school and family than nonmediators and that mediators who mediated more would demonstrate greater developmental gains. He found that mediators did score higher on perspective taking and negotiation ability, although experience did not play as much of a factor as anticipated. In two studies, Pamela Lane-Garon studied the impact of peer mediation on cognitive and affective perspective taking of mediators and disputants in Grades 4 through 8. In Lane-Garon's (1998) first study, both mediators and disputants showed a significant increase in cognitive and affective perspective taking, but mediators' scores were significantly higher than disputants. In a second study, Lane-Garon (2000) examined the impact of peer mediation on cognitive perspective taking, strategy choice, and school climate and found significant increases in mediators' perspective taking and selection of problem-solving conflict strategy. Potts (2002) examined the impact of mediation on interpersonal negotiation strategies (a measure of perspective taking and social problem solving) and found that mediators demonstrated higher levels of interpersonal negotiation strategies, and more experienced mediators had the highest levels.

Class-Linked Mediation. The Teaching Students to be Peacemakers Program (TSPP) developed by David and Roger Johnson at the University of Minnesota creates a cooperative learning context, instructs students in integrative negotiation and mediation skills, and uses in-class peer mediation sessions. Johnson and Johnson (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of 17 studies examining TSPP effectiveness in two countries. Students, from K to 9, learned the conflict resolution procedures, retained their knowledge throughout the school year, applied the knowledge to actual conflicts, transferred skills to nonclassroom and nonschool settings, and used the skills similarly in family and school settings.

The Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) program was developed for urban middle schools that serve predominantly African American students. RIPP is a social–cognitive conflict education curriculum, with problem-solving and peer mediation components (Farrell, Meyer, Kung, & Sullivan, 2001). In one evaluation of RIPP with sixth graders at three urban middle schools, students were randomized to intervention (n = 321) and control groups (n = 305). RIPP participants had fewer disciplinary violations and in-school suspensions than control students—an impact that lasted for 12 months after program implementation (Farrell, Meyer, & White, 2001). In one middle school, students who participated in RIPP-6, as compared with control students, reported lower approval of violent behavior, more peer support for nonviolent behaviors, less peer pressure to use drugs, and lower posttest frequencies of physical aggression, drug use, and peer provocation (Farrell, Valois, & Meyer, 2002).

Mentoring Peer Mediation. In a peer mediation mentoring model, older student mediators train younger students to be mediators. Bickmore (2002) evaluated 28 urban elementary schools

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using high school mediators to train elementary mediators and collected data on younger mediators' understanding of conflict, attitudes toward conflict, perceptions of school climate, attendance rate, suspensions, and academic achievement. Peer mediation had significant positive results for mediators' understanding of conflict and perceptions of school climate. Suspension rates decreased and academic achievement increased in schools with mediation programs. Lane-Garon and Richardson (2003) reported on a cross-age mentoring mediation program in which university students served as mentors to elementary school mediators; peer mediation training increased elementary school mediators' cognitive and affective perspective taking and perceptions of school climate, especially in the area of perceived school safety.

Comparative Research in Peer Mediation Programs. The Comprehensive Peer Mediation Evaluation Project (Jones et al., 1997) involved 27 schools in three communities (Philadelphia, Laredo, and Denver) in a 3 × 3 design that compared peer mediation cadre, curriculum-linked, and control schools across elementary, middle, and high school levels. Data were collected over 2 years from 430 peer mediators, 5,400 control students, 1,400 conflict-training students, and 1,225 teachers/administrative staff. Exposure to peer mediation programs, whether cadre or class-linked, had a significant impact on students' conflict attitudes and behaviors. Exposure to peer mediation reduced personal conflict and aggressiveness and increased the tendency to help others with conflicts, prosocial values, perspective taking, and conflict competence.

Negotiation and General Conflict Curricula. DuRant, Barkin, and Krowchuk (2001) studied a negotiation skills curriculum used with low-income, minority sixth graders in four middle schools (treatment n = 292; control n = 412). Students were taught interest-based negotiation skills and problem solving. From pretest to posttest, there was a decrease in the use of violence by students in the intervention group and an increase in the use of violence in the control group. Heydenberk, Heydenberk, and Bailey (2003) implemented Project Peace, a teacher-delivered CRE program in fourth- and fifth-grade classes, and evaluated the impacts on students' moral reasoning and attitudes about conflict. All treatment classrooms showed significant increases in moral reasoning ability and constructive conflict orientation. Studying conflict resolution in younger students, Heydenberk and Heydenberk (2007) compared SEL and CRE curricula in kindergarten and first-grade students and found that the CRE curriculum with more problem-solving emphasis was superior in helping students manage conflict. In a 2-year study of the impact of a conflict education curriculum in middle and high school special-needs students (in an alternative disciplinary school), researchers found that the conflict curriculum significantly decreased students' misconduct rates, hostile attribution, and aggressive orientation when compared with control students (Jones & Bodtker, 1999a).

Bullying Prevention

Bullying is a global epidemic. As Currie and colleagues (2004) concluded, in a cross-national study with 35 participating countries, 35% of young people reported that they had bullied others and 34% reported that they had been bullied at least once in the past 2 months. Every 2 years, the Centers for Disease Control summarizes data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which is required of all students in Grades 9 to 12 in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The results for 2009 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010) indicated that nationwide 19.9% of students had been bullied on

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school property during the 12 months before the survey administration.

Considering these data, it is understandable that bullying prevention is the most prioritized conflict education program in the United States (Whitted & Dupper, 2005) and that most global regions have initiatives to address this problem. Bullying prevention programs are being used in countries as diverse as Turkey (Alikasifoglu, Erginoz, Ercan, Uysal, & Albayrak-Kaymak, 2007), Bangladesh (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2006), Korea (Jong-Un, 2006), Finland (Pöyhönen, Juvonen, & Salmivalli, 2010), and Hong Kong (Chi-hung & Hing-kwan, 2009). Bullying prevention initiatives are mandated and comprehensive in Norway, the United Kingdom, and Australia; with 47 U.S. states having legislation mandating bullying prevention programs (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2009).

The phenomenon of bullying is integrally linked to issues of prejudice and bias. Members of nondominant or marginalized groups are more likely to be targets of bullying. One of the most targeted groups is LGBT2Q (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, queer, and questioning) students. In a recent national survey of 5,487 LGBT2Q students conducted by GLSEN (the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network), 73.6% of LGBT2Q secondary students reported hearing homophobic remarks at school, 86.2% reported being verbally harassed, and 44.1% reported being physically harassed at school for their sexual orientation. These data correspond to other research that LGBT2Q students are much more likely to be victimized and bullied at school than other students (Harris Interactive & GLSEN, 2005) and that teachers and school staff are unlikely to intervene when they witness this harassment (Kosciw, Diaz, & Greytak, 2008). This dynamic is not only in the United States (Bekaert, 2010) and the harm done can be long-lasting. One U.K. survey (Rivers, 2004) found that LGBT2Q adults who had been bullied at school are likely to have depression and anxiety and to consider and/or attempt self-harm or suicide.

Students with social skills deficits or high-functioning autism (like Asperger syndrome) are often targets of bullying (M. J. G. Biggs, Simpson, & Gaus, 2010). Sadly, these children are more likely to be social isolates, less likely to have defenders willing to stand up to the bullies, and more likely to be blamed by peers and teachers for "causing" the bullying (Allen, 2010). Alarmingly, when bullying targets disadvantaged students, there is a greater tendency for the bullying to be done by groups of students against a single target (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vaderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier, 2009), where other students are actively urging the bullies to continue or increase the behavior.

Bullying prevention can be focused on religious, racial, or ethnic harassment. One example is the Columbia University curriculum that helped Muslim students in New York City following the attacks on September 11, 2001 (Kenan, 2005), when there was a strong anti-Muslim backlash. Teachers College designed a special curriculum called *(Re)embracing Diversity in New York City Public Schools: Educational Outreach for Muslim Sensitivity* and obtained the endorsement of the New York City Board of Education. The program was learner centered, so students could engage in activities that foster problem solving, critical reflection, and collaborative learning to overcome religious bias.

A shortcoming of many antibullying programs is framing bullying as an incident between students rather than as an offense against the larger community. Jones (2006) argued that bullying prevention efforts should be seen as human rights issues and as the responsibility of the entire school community. Too often, teachers and administrators give little tangible protection to targets of bullying, especially if those targets are from nondominant groups; teachers are more likely

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to discount bullying behavior than students. Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O'Brennan (2007) conducted a survey of student (n = 15,185) and staff (n = 1.547) perceptions of and experiences with bullying in 75 elementary, 20 middle, and 14 high schools. The results indicated that staff at all school levels (elementary, middle, and high) underestimated the number of students involved in frequent bullying. Several studies document that teacher attitudes about bullying prevention efforts and teacher support for those programs have significant impact on whether students embrace and enact lessons in bullying prevention (B. K. Biggs, Vernberg, Twemlow, Fonagy, & Dill, 2008).

There is considerable research about bullying behaviors and consequences (Espelage & Swearer, 2003), but too few studies in the United States examine the efficacy of bullying prevention programs. Some programs use more general conflict resolution training to reduce bullying. Orpinas, Horne, and Staniszewski (2003) studied the application of the Peaceable Place program developed by the Mendez Foundation to teach K–5 students conflict resolution skills, anger management, respect for self and others, and effective communication as a bullying prevention effort. There was a 40% reduction among younger children (K–2) in self-reported aggression and a 19% reduction in self-reported victimization. Among third to fifth graders, there was a 23% reduction in mean reported victimization but no significant differences in self-reported aggression.

The majority of bullying programming and research in the United States concerns the Olweus program. Olweus is a whole-school bullying program with core components implemented at the individual, classroom, and school levels. The whole-school approach is predicated on the assumption that bullying and peer victimization are systemic problems, and intervention programs must be directed at the entire school rather than individual bullies or victims.

Studies of the efficacy of the Olweus Bullying Prevention program in Canada (Pepler, Craig, Ziegler, & Charach, 1994) and England (Whitney, Rivers, Smith, & Sharp, 1994) provide positive support. However, some have argued that the Olweus program is too labor-intensive and complex to be effectively implemented in poorly resourced schools (Hong, 2009).

Some bullying prevention programs are more streamlined and have proven benefits. Evers, Prochaska, VanMarter, Johnson, and Prochaska (2007) developed a transtheoretical model bullying prevention program that used three half-hour computer sessions during the school year for the students and a 10-page manual each for staff and parents that included optional activities. Research was conducted in 12 middle schools and 13 high schools in the United States with a diverse sample of 1,237 middle and 1,215 high school students. There were significant treatment effects for intervention groups when compared with control groups for both the middle and high school programs.

Restorative Practices in Schools

Andreopoulos (2002) argued that accountability is essential for peace building, it is a "foundational step towards intergroup tolerance and respect for diversity" (p. 242). In the past three decades, restorative justice has developed into a movement that combines accountability for harm and emphasis on reconciliation rather than punishment (Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2007; Varnham, 2005).

Restorative justice programs for schools highlight accountability in a system of nonpunitive reconciliation and community building. These programs help students think in terms of the rights of all and advocate on behalf of community members whose rights have been infringed. Lane (2005/2006) reminds us that these programs can have profound influence

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on children at the time in their lives when identity formation is key and their notion of belonging to and being responsible to a community is forming. The challenge is to connect students as citizens within their school communities with a sense of caring and accountability for others; this challenge has not been well met by more traditional punitive discipline measures that tend to shame and alienate students (Macready, 2009). As Alice Ierley and David Claassen-Wilson state (2003),

> A growing number of school communities across the United States have begun to explore the use of restorative justice processes as a means of addressing the limitations of these punitive discipline measures. In states like Colorado and Minnesota, educators are implementing a variety of restorative discipline alternatives to traditional measures such as detention, suspension, expulsion, and police charges. In schools using restorative justice practices, an offending student is given the opportunity to participate in a restorative discipline process as a means of repairing the harm done to those affected by the wrongdoing. These processes are voluntary for the parties and may be offered in lieu of punitive discipline measures, as a reentry process following traditional discipline, or in combination with reduced sanctions. (p. 200)

There are three basic restorative processes—victim offender mediation, group conferencing, and circles. Victim offender mediation is led by an adult (usually a teacher or administrator) and involves the student who was harmed and the student who did the harm; they are brought together to have the student who did the harm take responsibility and make amends and/or restitution. The mediation is never about whether the harm occurred—the accountability portion is critical. In a group conference, the mediation format is expanded to include family and friends of the students on both sides of the conflict so the "community" can consider how they can help to repair the harm. Circles are a form of dialogue process used for addressing larger conflict issues affecting the school.

How do these components of restorative justice work separately and in concert to develop reconciliation after a harmful conflict? In 2010, South Philadelphia High School had a series of racial conflicts between African American students and Asian American students that ended in Asian American students leaving school with the support of their families. The Asian American community protest was fueled by reports that previous incidents of fighting and harassment between the student groups had not been effectively addressed by the School District of Philadelphia. As one part of the healing process, the school had circle dialogue processes about racial tensions in the community; the circles involved students, family, and community members from all the sides. In these circles, trained facilitators used dialogue process to have participants share their personal experiences with the racial tensions in the community and discuss how these tensions were affecting the school and community. The goal of circle processes is to increase awareness and understanding of experiences and perceptions; but problem solving or action strategies are not part of this process. Victim–offender mediation could be used between a student who had harassed another and the student targeted. Victim–offender mediation assumes accountability for the harm and is acknowledged from the beginning, so the focus of the mediation is to allow the target to confront the harasser, to encourage the harasser to take responsibility for the harm, and to guide both to consider forms and practices of restitution to repair the harm. Conferencing would involve the family and friends of the harasser and the target as well as the students, with the focus on how the specific incident of harassment affected not only the target but all of the gathered members. In conferencing, as in victim–offender mediation,

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the process focuses on a particular incident of harm and how that should be understood and repaired.

Restorative justice programs are increasingly common in the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. There is a strong emphasis in New Zealand to teach citizenship in formal education and develop school cultures based on the restoration of relationships rather than punishment. These programs draw heavily from the traditional Maori customs, one of the sources of original inspiration for the concept of contemporary restorative justice efforts (Wearmouth, McKinney, & Glynn, 2007).

In June 2003, Rigby and Thomas (2004; cited in Wearmouth et al., 2007) conducted a study of 50 primary and secondary schools throughout Australia to assess the quality and impact of restorative practices programs. They report a wide variety of implementation practices, noting the difficulty of full school implementation; and most schools used mediation but not full school conferencing processes. A national evaluation of restorative justice practices in 32 schools in nine pilot areas across England and Wales has provided encouraging evidence (Bitel, 2004). The research involved surveys from more than 5,000 pupils and 1,150 staff, as well as more than 600 individual interviews with key stakeholders. Data on school performance indicators were gathered at the beginning of the evaluation in 2002 and at the end in 2004. Before the restorative justice programs, the schools had high levels of victimization and behavioral problems. Youth Offending Teams were then given the responsibility of implementing restorative justice practices in the schools. After the programs, 95% of all conflicts had been resolved through mediation and conferencing, and there were significant reductions in the levels of bullying and victimization.

In Scotland, restorative practices were implemented in 2004 to provide support for students with behavior problems (Kane et al., 2008). The Scottish educational model of restorative practices is a whole-school initiative; restorative practices are for all staff and pupils. The initial pilot study included 18 schools with comprehensive data collection, including surveys, interviews, observations, and behavioral incident records. Results indicated that commitment to restorative practices was critical in delivering positive outcomes of reduction of playground incidents, discipline referrals, expulsion, and use of external behavior support (McCluskey, 2010).

This discussion of exemplary CRE programs touches on important programs and practices that are proven to help schools create constructive conflict communities and safe learning environments. As the review subliminally suggests, these programs should always begin with SEL that builds basic conflict and social competencies like empathy and impulse control. Once students have developed these competencies, hopefully in elementary grades, mediation and negotiation programs teach them to apply skills in actual conflicts, a practice that not only hones their conflict competence but also helps manage conflicts in the school. For issues of intolerance and discrimination, issues that invoke human rights and questions of community values and cohesion, bullying prevention and restorative justice practices are schoolwide programs that assume a systemic and engaged responsibility for conflict management and student safety. All of these exemplary program areas can be used together in a sophisticated, integrated approach to CRE in a school and/or district.

Building Educational Systems to Support CRE

CRE and SEL programs have been in existence for some time, and in some cases, the diffusion of these programs has been

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widespread. CRE is becoming more prevalent around the world, with particular strongholds in European countries such as Norway, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Northern Ireland. For example, Norway requires peer mediation and bullying prevention programs in all elementary and secondary schools—by mandate of the King of Norway. There is also considerable interest in CRE in South America (e.g., Columbia and Brazil), where programs like Responding to Conflict Creatively (sponsored by the Educators for Social Responsibility) have been widely introduced in secondary schools (Lantieri & Patti, 1996). And, especially relevant for conflict-ridden societies, CRE has been increasingly used in Africa (e.g., Ghana, Sierra Leone, and South Africa) (Shaw, 2010). Perhaps the best example of CRE on the African continent is the reliance on restorative justice and mediation programs in schools in South Africa to enhance reconciliation and racial integration (Jones, 2004b). Asia (e.g., Thailand and Japan) and the Middle East (e.g., Israel, Lebanon, and Jordan) have struggled with implementing CRE programs but are making progress (van Woerkom, 2004).

CRE Systems Development

Building educational systems is a long process and requires networks that can support change. The following sections discuss aspects of systems development from global to local levels.

Developing Global Networks for Support. Working across global regions and learning best practices has been very important for the development of CRE and related fields. GPPAC, a worldwide network of civil society organizations dedicated to promoting peace through conflict prevention, is providing one structure for supporting CRE around the world. GPPAC, formed in response to a call by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, generated its Peace Education Working Group at a United Nations conference in July 2005. Representatives from 27 nations developed an action plan for 13 global regions to work toward peace education and CRE. The key strategic areas for the Peace Education Working Group include the following:

- Building the capacity of regional educators and practitioners
- Exchanging resources including manuals and curriculum
- Promoting good practice in collaboration with ministries of education for inclusion in the national curriculum and in professional development
- Supporting faculty exchanges between countries
- Organizing international and regional conferences to exchange ideas and strengthen collaboration (Shaw, 2010, p. 114)

Curriculum Infusion and Integration. The global initiatives supporting CRE and related fields are very encouraging. But there is considerable work needed in developing systems of support in the United States where the traditional service delivery mechanisms have proven problematic (Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg, 2003).

CRE programs have traditionally been introduced into schools through external channels and treated as add-on programs rather than integrated into ongoing curricula, classroom activity, and everyday operation of the school. This works when resources are available. Unfortunately, when resources dwindle and pressures to "teach to the test" increase, ancillary programs are often terminated, downsized, or underresourced. CRE and SEL educators have learned that the best means of institutionalizing these programs is to make them a part of the daily life of the school through the daily work of its teachers

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and school staff. It maximizes their impact and their staying power (Elias et al., 2003). Teachers and administrators need more information about best practices in integrating and infusing CRE and SEL (Buchanan, Gueldner, Tran, & Merrell, 2009).

Insights from the National Curriculum Integration Project (NCIP), a 3-year study of curriculum infusion and integration in middle schools in four states (Jones & Sanford, 2003), indicate some best practices. NCIP used a pretest–posttest control group comparison design in each state and examined the effect of teaching condition (NCIP experienced teaching, NCIP new teaching, and control teaching) on more than 1,000 seventh- and eighth-grade students' emotional and conflict competence (conflict orientation, emotional management, perspective taking, and hostile attribution) and classroom climate. NCIP increased students' perspective taking and use of problem-solving strategies and improved classroom climate. In terms of teacher's ability to infuse CRE, there is strong evidence that teachers are capable of integrating these concepts and practices in their ongoing curricula (Durlak et al., 2011).

Peaceable School/Whole-School Programs. Few CRE efforts are truly "whole school" because of the time and resources it takes to achieve this level of integration, but research suggests that the work is worth it. At the elementary school level, Responding to Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) has been the focus of an excellent evaluation (Aber, Brown, & Jones, 2003). RCCP includes teacher training, classroom instruction and staff development, program curriculum, administrator's training, peer mediation, parent training, and a targeted intervention for high-risk youth. RCCP is a complex, multiyear, multilevel CRE program. Four waves of data on features of children's social and emotional development known to forecast aggression and violence were collected in the fall and spring over 2 years for a representative sample of first to sixth graders from New York City Public Schools (N = 11,160). RCCP, when delivered as designed by the classroom teachers, reduced aggressive attitudes and behaviors and increased orientation to academic achievement. Program fidelity was identified as a critical factor. Students in classes where teachers delivered some RCCP but not the amount or nature proscribed actually performed worse on dependent measures than control students.

Shapiro, Burgoon, Welker, and Clough (2002) evaluated a middle school CRE intervention (The Peace Builders Program) that trains all school staff to infuse CRE through all aspects of everyday school life. The program was implemented in three middle schools and three elementary schools with one control middle school and one control elementary school and sampled almost 2,000 students with pre- and postprogram assessment. There were significant, positive program effects on knowledge of psychosocial skills, self-reported aggression, and teacher-reported aggression; and there was a 41% decrease in aggression-related disciplinary incidents and a 67% reduction in suspensions for violent behavior.

Yet some research on whole-school programs does not report success. Orpinas and colleagues (2000) evaluated a multicomponent violence prevention intervention, measuring reduction of aggressive behaviors among students of eight middle schools randomly assigned into intervention or control conditions. The intervention included the formation of a School Health Promotion Council, training of peer mediators and peer helpers, training of teachers in conflict resolution, a violence prevention curriculum, and newsletters for parents. All students were evaluated in the spring of 1994, 1995, and 1996 (approximately 9,000 students per evaluation). Cohort and cross-sectional evaluations indicated little effect in reducing aggressive behaviors, fights

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at school, injuries due to fighting, or missing classes because of feeling unsafe at school or being threatened to be hurt.

Guidelines for Systems Development

The organizational and systems challenges in education are considerable. To guarantee benefits of CRE, educators must be strategic about what it takes to build programs in systems with poor resources, crowded curriculum, expectations of inclusive school community, and economic upheaval (Bird & Sultmann, 2010). CASEL has provided suggestions for best practices to implement programs at the classroom, school, and district levels (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007). Among their guidelines for developing SEL initiatives are direct teaching and modeling of skills, developmentally and culturally appropriate instruction, integration into extracurricular activities, school–family–community partnerships, quality staff development and support, outcomes evaluation, and dissemination factors (Zins & Elias, 2007; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004).

Linking with the larger community is important but difficult. Looking at peace and reconciliation work in Northern Ireland, Cairns (1996) and Smith, Daunic, Miller, and Robinson (2002) both confirm that school-based initiatives require community links and support to succeed. While school-based programs may be able to develop individual skills, without involvement of community members in the program, the skills wane and the impacts to intergroup and social peace building are less likely to happen (Williams, 2004).

Conflict Resolution Education in Teacher Education: The Most Important Step

CRE is also beneficial for teachers in desperate need of constructive conflict communities that enable them to concentrate on teaching and remain in the teaching profession. If that sounds overly dramatic, consider the following facts about teacher challenges and teacher attrition. "Unsafe learning environments" are unsafe for teachers as well as students. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES; Robers et al., 2010) reported that during the 2007–2008 school year, about 10% of teachers in city schools and 6% of teachers in suburban or rural schools reported being threatened with injury. During the same period, 4% to 5% of teachers were actually physically attacked. Furthermore, the NCES (Robers et al., 2010) indicates that 34% of teachers reported that student misbehavior seriously interfered with their teaching. These problems are more pronounced in secondary schools than in elementary schools and in urban schools than in suburban or rural schools. But all types of schools report persistent and serious issues.

With these data, it is not surprising that many teachers are deciding to leave the teaching profession. In 2008–2009, about 8% of public school teachers and 16% of private school teachers left the teaching profession (Aud et al., 2011). As Graziano (2011) concludes, with an average 10% attrition each year, we have a crisis in the United States:

> About 30 percent of new teachers flee the profession after just three years, and more than 45 percent leave after five . . . according to the National Education Association . . . the [annual] cost to school districts nationwide is staggering—an estimated $5.8 billion. (p. 1)

The bottom line, as Levine (2006) describes, is an annual shortage of about 200,000 teachers each year in the United States, with population shifts promising to worsen that shortage in the coming years (Carlson, 2007).

The increasing percentage of public school students identified as special-needs students, who require more intensive and specialized teaching support, exacerbates teachers' stress. The attrition rate for special educators is

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actually greater than for general educators. McLeskey, Tyler, and Flippin (2004) reported that more than 13% of special education teachers leave the profession or transfer to general education classrooms each year. In a recent report, Griffin, Winn, Otis-Wilborn, and Kilgore (2003) identified a number of factors contributing to the stresses of special education teachers in their first year of teaching, and lack of collaborative work environments, inability to handle conflicts with parents and other teachers, and overwhelming caseloads were among the most important reasons cited.

Teachers need to be equipped with the skills, either through teacher preparation programs or through targeted professional development, to effectively communicate, collaborate, and problem solve regarding decisions that directly affect the education of students (McLeskey & Waldron, 2002). Many CRE and SEL programs exist for students, although they are often not well implemented due to lack of teacher training. The focus should be on systematic provision of CRE instruction in preservice and in-service teacher education.

New teachers complain that teacher education programs are not properly preparing them in classroom management. Leighfield and Trube (2005) completed a survey of faculty in 2-year and 4-year teaching institutions in Ohio during Spring 2003 and reported that 89% report being completely or seriously underprepared in their teacher preparation programs in the areas of CRE and SEL. Ninety-two percent of the respondents indicated that "it is important that teacher candidates in my licensure area have knowledge and skills in conflict management" (p. 411).

Motivation to incorporate CRE and SEL is increased when state standards change. In Wisconsin, an applicant for a teaching license is required to demonstrate competency (as verified by a professional education program or school district supervisor) in resolving conflicts and assisting pupils in learning methods of resolving conflicts. As a result, the University of Wisconsin's School of Education, Teacher Certification Program has a Conflict Resolution requirement (6 hours of coursework or equivalent in outside training; www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsis/tel/pi3sub2.html).

On the policy front, a series of hopeful signs indicate that the U.S. government and state educational agencies are becoming more supportive of SEL and CRE. In the United States, the Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act of 2009 (House Resolution 4223) was introduced in December 2009. If passed, the bill will build teacher capacity to deliver conflict resolution skills in the classroom (Shaw, 2010). Several states, most notably New York and Illinois, have teaching standards for SEL (Barth, 2010). While these policy efforts continue to build, it is imperative that teacher education programs, especially in preservice teacher education, be developed and tested.

CRETE Program. CRETE is a national initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Education and private foundations (2004–2012), helping approximately 30 teacher education programs in higher education institutions educate preservice and in-service teachers in 12 states and the District of Columbia about CRE. CRETE curriculum and protocols were developed in 2004 to 2006; and from 2006 to 2012, CRETE was field-tested with more than 3,000 preservice and in-service teachers. CRETE content is theoretically grounded in social climate theory, social cognition and perspective-taking theory (Selman, 1980), and emotional competence theory (Saarni, 1999).

CRETE introduces teachers to the entire field of CRE so they can think about how to develop their own conflict management skills, how to incorporate CRE into their classroom management and as part of their regular curriculum, and how to help build systems

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of programs in the school that create a constructive learning community. CRETE materials and protocols incorporate best practices in teacher professional development (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007) to develop their knowledge and skills in CRE/SEL so they may transfer this learning to classroom practices and infuse CRE/SEL into teaching of core curricula. CRETE meets the criteria of a SAFE program (sequenced step-by-step training, active forms of learning, sufficient time on skill development, and explicit learning goals) that have been proven superior to non-SAFE programs in all six areas of SEL outcomes in meta-analyses reviewed earlier (Payton et al., 2008).

CRETE uses training programs and/or semester-long CRETE courses. CRETE Training is a 4-day, 28-hour training using active learning principles and emphasizing theory-to-practice skills development. The CRETE semester courses are offered at both graduate and undergraduate levels and include foundational theory and research, systems analysis, and skill development. Some colleges have all of the teacher education majors taking a CRETE course the semester before they do student teaching so they can develop action plans for use during that time. Others infuse CRETE as a seminar structure during the student teaching semester, because being in the teaching environment helps students appreciate how critical CRETE content is to successful teaching.

CRETE instructional materials include a Blackboard website with reading, instructional, and assessment materials; training programs; a clearinghouse website (www.creducation.org); and two searchable CDs with 1,200+ pages of field-tested CRE/SEL lessons. Pretest and posttest data in CRETE versus control groups revealed that CRETE increased teachers' perceived ability to manage conflicts, model conflict skills, and teach CRE/SEL skills (Jones, 2008). Preliminary research on CRETE suggests that CRETE and similar CRE teacher education efforts have strong potential to affect students' social and emotional competencies and academic behavior, the building blocks of constructive conflict communities as discussed earlier.

CRETE increases teachers' CRE infusion in class curricula and classroom practices. Evidence shows clearly that teachers are able to learn how to infuse CRE/SEL and achieve significant effects (Durlak et al., 2011). Teacher CRE attitudes, enhanced by CRETE, increase teachers' motivation to use CRE and their confidence in their conflict management (Jones, 2004a).

CRETE has been adapted to work with teachers in some Caribbean countries, like Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia, and Belize. Components of CRETE have been used to provide teacher training in Turkish Cyprus, Thailand, and Costa Rica. The underlying CRETE framework was developed into an online course cosponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Association for School Psychologists (www.creducation.org) and subsequently used as the basis for a teacher education initiative in Armenia. Many other global regions are embracing teacher education efforts. For example, in the Philippines, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed Executive Order 570, Institutionalization of Peace Education in Basic Education and Teacher Education, which provides the legislative framework to strengthen peace education in school curriculum through courses for teachers and preservice teachers (Shaw, 2010).

Summary

CRE and related fields provide programs that can help address the challenges of unsafe learning environments and educational system distress that currently prevents the development

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of constructive conflict communities domestically and globally. CRE includes valuable initiatives in SEL, multicultural education, and peace education. The research indicates that these programs improve student social and emotional competencies, increase prosocial behavior (including academic achievement), reduce aggression and violence, and increase tolerance and cultural sensitivity. Exemplar programs are discussed in SEL, mediation and negotiation curricula, bullying prevention, and restorative practices. However, to build better educational systems, it is critical that initiatives in teacher education and global networks are given more attention. One initiative currently focusing on teacher education (CRETE) is discussed as a model of future activity.

Research on CRE initiatives has continued to expand and provide us with powerful insights about what makes these programs work and how to implement them most effectively. As indicated in this chapter, there are a number of truly impressive meta-analyses (Durlak et al., 2011; Payton et al., 2008) that attest to the social and academic importance of this work. But what additional research is important? Three areas of research are most critical at this juncture.

First, understanding the most effective ways to prepare teachers and administrators to teach CRE is essential. Programs like CRETE are moving in that direction, but there is too little research that specifically compares instructional and professional development approaches for teachers and how that work has an impact on what teachers are doing in the classroom and how that is affecting students and the community.

Second, CRE programs that build safer communities based on rights and responsibility—bullying prevention and restorative practices—are seriously understudied. Bullying prevention is an acknowledged need but the research demonstrating what works and why is sadly lacking, especially in the United States. There are no large-scale research studies of restorative justice programs in U.S. schools, although evidence from the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand is encouraging. In both of these program areas, there is much to understand in terms of how to best develop empathy, how to create and support upstander/bystander communities, and how to address harassment that borders the school and community (e.g., cyber bullying).

Third, throughout this chapter, the reference to community has been consistent. So it is appropriate that the chapter ends with a call for investigation of how best to involve parents, family, and community members in CRE efforts. What program designs work best in when and how community members become involved? What learning situations are most effective for developing conflict competencies in community members? How does community involvement affect the personal, social, and academic impacts for students, classes, and schools? These questions only begin to identify needs in this area. The hopeful message is that the field of CRE is mature enough to warrant these efforts. CRE works in helping build constructive conflict communities; the challenges for the next generation of educators is to think in terms of systems change and development to make these programs a reality for all schools.

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16

Conflict Management in Health Care Settings

Jessica Katz Jameson and Kelly Fudge Albada

The level of attention to U.S. health care by the public, politicians, and the media makes the charge of writing an overview of conflict in health care somewhat daunting. Conflict is present throughout the health care system due to its complex structure and ambiguous lines of authority and the large number of stakeholders involved (Marcus, Dorn, Kriteck, Miller, & Wyatt, 1995). In fact, it has been argued that the term *health care system* is a misnomer, as a system implies a "coordinated, planned, and connected set of people, organizations, and functions. . . [while] no single, coordinating entity governs health care in our country" (Miller, 1995, p. 151). The very nature of health care, composed of multiple public and private organizations, including hospitals, health maintenance organizations, insurance companies, and independent providers, often with divergent or competing interests, creates fertile ground for conflict. It is no surprise that communication scholars have devoted significant time and attention to studying conflict management in this context. Our goal in this chapter is to summarize the contributions of (primarily) communication scholars to our understanding of and approaches to conflict and its management in health care delivery at three, often overlapping, levels of analysis: (1) interpersonal/dyadic, (2) group, and (3) organizational (see Figure 16.1).

Recent literature reviews on conflict in health care settings indicate that the majority of articles focus on conflicts between health care providers and patients or their family members or conflicts among health care providers (such as doctors and nurses) (Brinkert, 2010; Shin, 2009). These reviews reported lack of collaboration and/or effective communication to be a dominant theme in conflict management with consequences ranging from poor working conditions to economic and social problems along with the more commonly recognized outcomes such as poor health care decisions, medication errors, patient injuries, and death. While conflict may also be present in health prevention and promotion research focusing on health

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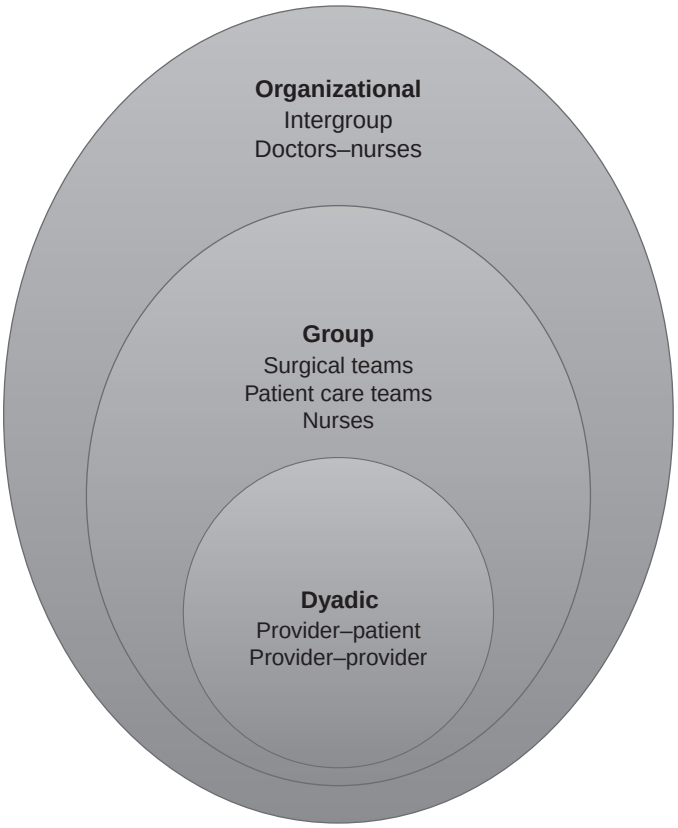

Figure 16.1 Levels of Conflict in Health Care

NOTE: For the sake of parsimony, the figure represents a hospital, yet this could represent any health care facility.

communication campaigns, media coverage of health care, and in issues related to health policy, the scope of this chapter is limited to conflict at all levels of health care delivery. The chapter is organized into three major subsections: (1) conflict management between health care providers,[1] patients, and their families; (2) conflict management among health care providers; and (3) the prevention and management of conflict in health care.

Conflict Among Providers, Patients, and Families

Roter and Hall (2006) purported that "talk is the fundamental instrument by which the doctor–patient relationship is crafted and by which therapeutic goals are achieved" (p. 4). When talk or, more broadly, communication, is discussed within the provider–patient relational context, however, conceptualizations and operationalizations of communication can vary widely—from examinations of communication style of the provider or patient to information sharing and decision-making models. Much of the research on provider–patient interaction and/or conflict is heavily contextualized, focusing on populations with specific illnesses (e.g., congestive heart failure, diabetes, cancer), specific medical specialties (e.g., pediatric oncology), specific medical care locations (e.g., private offices, nursing homes), or specific

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demographic characteristics of patients (e.g., elderly women). While it is difficult to make broad generalizations about the pervasiveness of interpersonal conflict between providers and their patients, the disparate studies identify common sources of conflict among providers and patients and providers and patients' families.

Occurrence of Conflict in Health Care Provider–Patient Relationships

By best estimation, conflicts occur within 25% to 40% of health care provider–patient interactions. For instance, more than one third of the 1,027 physicians surveyed reported experiencing interpersonal challenges in about 25% of their patient visits (Levinson, Stiles, Inui, & Engle, 1993), while another study reported that 31% of patients who suffered congestive heart failure experienced conflicts with their physicians involving their care (Zickmund, Blasiole, Brase, & Arnold, 2006). Similarly, Weingarten et al. (2010) reported that 40% of patients in their study provided accounts of conflicts with primary care providers. Yet, as Lask (2003) pointed out, the occurrence of conflict is not necessarily a problem unless it is frequent, poorly managed, or interferes with treatment or the provider–patient relationship. It may also be difficult to identify instances of conflict due to the power asymmetry inherent in the provider–patient relationship. In a discourse analytic study of diagnosis delivery among general practitioners and patients in the United Kingdom, Heath (1992) found that "despite the potential conflict which underlies delivery of diagnosis, actual disagreement is very rare" (p. 258).

Sources of conflict can be difficult to disentangle as there may be multiple sources of conflict and differing attributions between provider(s) and patient. Lask (2003) extracted eight sources of conflict from his case analyses of patients with cystic fibrosis and their physicians: (1) poor communication, (2) impaired trust and confidence, (3) differing expectations, (4) power imbalance, (5) social–cultural differences, (6) emotional reactions, (7) developmental changes (e.g., children becoming teenagers), and (8) team reactions. Other researchers have identified similar sources or expanded on the nature of these sources in their studies of health care providers and patients with various medical conditions. Based on their interviews with physicians regarding communication challenges, Vanderford, Stein, Sheeler, and Skochelak (2001) conceptualized the major conflicts with patients as falling into two broad categories: (1) conflicting beliefs about cause–effect relationships and (2) conflicting views about appropriate provider–patient roles, norms, and relationships. Based on this research, we summarize the sources of conflict into four categories: (1) providers' "bedside manner," (2) expectations of patients' roles and decision making, (3) power, and (4) contributions of the patient's characteristics and illness. Table 16.1 provides an overview of the most commonly found causes of conflict between providers and patients and providers and patients' families.

Health Provider "Bedside Manner." As of 2004, the board overseeing the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination mandated that medical students pass a clinical skills examination, or bedside manner test. "Bedside manner refers broadly and informally to the interpersonal behaviors shown by physician or other health care provider, especially those that foster trust and a sense of wellbeing in patients" (Martin & Friedman, 2005, p. 8). Zickmund, Hillis, Barnett, Ippolito, and LaBrecque (2004) found that being treated unkindly, being rushed, not being listened to, or being misunderstood were common patient complaints. These problems were then associated with patients' disliking of the provider or perceptions of feeling disliked by the provider. Patients reported feeling particularly vulnerable when they perceived that the provider ignored them. Additional factors that produced patient dissatisfaction

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Table 16.1 Conflict in Provider–Patient–Family Interaction

Providers' "bedside manner"
Interpersonal skills
Communication styles
Expectations of patients' participation
Amount of information exchanged
Patient involvement
Power
Doctor-as-agent model
Shared decision model
Patient access to medical information
Patient characteristics
Communication style
Demographic characteristics
Medical condition

with the relational aspects of health care delivery included lack of feedback, insensitivity to and misinterpretations of relational needs, failure to express empathy, and disregard for the other's input in decision making (Kreps, 1988). Perhaps, as a result of these findings, medical schools are screening applicants based on their communication skills, and professionally oriented publications, such as *Physician Executive*, include articles about improving communication and managing conflict with patients. Individualized care models and patient-centered communication are also highly touted approaches to improving medical encounters (Levy-Storms, Claver, Gutierrez, & Curry, 2011; Zaleta & Carpenter, 2010).

Communication skills that are relevant to effective interpersonal communication and conflict management include self-disclosure, explaining, active listening, perspective taking, reframing, and brainstorming (Deutsch, 2000). Deutsch pointed out that the ability to understand each other's perspectives might lead to more trusting and open communication by producing a reciprocal effect in interaction. Other researchers have found that the strength of the doctor–patient relationship is related to the provider's level of friendliness, empathetic behavior, and positive talk (Roter & Hall, 1989). Similarly, research has noted that the physicians who spent more time with their patients, used humor and laughter, employed more orienting statements (e.g., "I will examine you and then we will discuss your tests"), used more facilitating comments, elicited patient's opinions, clarified patients' understanding, and addressed patient questions were at lower risk for litigation (Levinson et al., 1993). Harres (1998) analyzed types of tag questions for their ability to interrogate, confirm information, show empathy, encourage patient involvement, discourage patient involvement, and convey attitudes about the physician–patient relationship. Physician understanding of how communication affects patient comfort, satisfaction, and participation in the interaction is essential to effective doctor–patient conflict management.

Nonverbal communication is another skill area that has garnered communication scholars' attention. Heath's (1992) finding that doctors' nonverbal behaviors influenced whether

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patients asked follow-up questions suggests that doctors need to directly encourage patients to ask questions. Beck, Daughtridge, and Sloane (2002) found that head nodding, forward lean, uncrossed legs and arms, direct body orientation, arm symmetry, and gaze appropriate for the situation were related to patient satisfaction, understanding, and lowered anxiety. It is also important to recognize that all nonverbal communication is not equal. In interactions where the doctor is male, interruptions by either party are associated with lower patient satisfaction, but in female–female dyads, interruptions are related to greater patient satisfaction (Hall, Irish, Roter, Ehrlich, & Miller, 1994). Touch and eye contact are also context dependent, thus training to increase nonverbal competency should strive to teach a flexible system of responses rather than recommending across-the-board increases or decreases in discrete behaviors (Lee, Back, Block, & Stewart, 2002).

Expectations of the Patient's Role in Health Management. Provider and patient communication is strongly influenced by each party's expectations regarding power differences and appropriate roles in the relationship. Cegala, McGee, and McNeilis (1996) found that perceptions about information exchange are a major source of misunderstanding between providers and patients. Their study revealed that information exchange is more important to patients and providers than relational communication when evaluating each other's communication competence. Others have found that providers tend to underestimate patients' desire for information (Waitzkin, 1989).

Disagreements about information exchange may reflect differences in perceptions about the patient's role in health management. Goodyear-Smith and Buetow (2001) explained that disagreements are likely to occur when patients' choices seem misguided to providers, and providers are unwilling to accept the right of the patients to make informed decisions. For instance, Vanderford et al. (2001) found that conflicts occurred when providers and patients disagreed about necessary medical procedures and the sources of the ailments, especially when the provider believed the source to be psychosocial. Patients who violated providers' professional boundaries, including office procedures, appointment times, and methods of access, were typically deemed difficult and demanding. Providers reportedly used directives, topic control tactics, and citations of office policies in response to these challenges. However, when faced with conflicts regarding diagnosis and treatment, providers relied on persuasive tactics such as additional explanations and appeals to logic and fears. Despite what they considered to be time-consuming efforts, providers often stated that they failed to reach the patients and that some patients responded with anger and withdrew from medical care. They saw these hostile and angry patients as violating the norms of the provider–patient relationship, which typically privileges the physician's medical judgment and control.

Power Relations Between Providers and Patients. Within the provider–patient relationship, there are several different models of power relations (Goodyear-Smith & Buetow, 2001). At the one extreme are the paternalism and doctor-as-agent models (doctor makes a decision based on perceived patient preferences). At the other extreme, the informed decision-making model specifies that the doctor's role is to offer information to the patient or consumer while the patient makes the decision (Mead & Bower, 2000). While the shared decision-making model attempts to strike a balance between doctor and patient input, the balance of power often favors the doctor (Charles, Gafni, & Whelan, 1997). The adoption of a provider-centered power relations model may be particularly prevalent with

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certain patient populations, such as the elderly and residential care patient populations, due to the patients' declining or impaired mental/communicative abilities, their resident status, and their need for routine care.

Several studies have examined the role of the Internet in leveling the power distance between providers and patients (Broom, 2008; Hurley, Kosenko, & Brashers, 2011). While increased access to health information may improve patient knowledge, providers may engage in strategies that discourage participation (e.g., disapproving or arguing with the information gained from the Internet, treating the patient as a problem patient), thus enforcing a more consultative model of communication. Providers also respond to patient attempts to participate nonverbally. Hurried entrances and exits, rapid speech, interruptions, longer speaking turns, sitting or standing with a backward lean, looking at the chart while the patient is speaking, and so on indicate that the provider is not interested in the patient's information sharing. Failure to match or mirror the patients' affiliation cues further reinforces the power distance between the provider and the patient, leading to lower levels of rapport and decreased patient involvement across the board (Martin & Friedman, 2005). Thus, whether use of the Internet and mobile technologies is empowering for patients depends, according to Broom (2008), on how receptive providers are to the information and how willing they are to include the patient in the decision-making model. The impact of information obtained via the Internet or other sources also depends on the patients' willingness to participate actively in their health care by sharing this information with their doctor.

Characteristics of the Patients and/or Their Illness. Patients' communication styles, demographic and cultural characteristics, and the illness itself may also contribute to conflicts with health care providers. Street, Krupat, Bell, Kravitz, and Haidet (2003) have emphasized the reciprocal relationship between providers and patients in examining communication styles. In one study of doctor–patient interactions, active patient participation and physician partnership building were found to be mutually predictive of each other. Approximately 14% of patient participation was predicted by physician partnership building, yet one third of physician partnership building occurred in response to active patient participation. So while the two communication approaches are related, the physician's accepting response to patient communication appears to be more important in creating a climate for shared decision making than the physician's particular style of communication or attitude toward patient care overall. The finding suggests that training patients to communicate effectively with physicians may produce positive outcomes, yet it also underscores the power of the physician to set the tone and shape expectations for communication.

Patient communication style may be associated with demographic characteristics such as age, gender, race, or ethnicity. The patient's age may be a source of conflict as a result of perceived power differences (Calasanti, 2003), yet these perceptions are not consistent over time. Power may increase with age to some point but then decrease during the elderly years (Levy-Storms et al., 2011). Studies in nursing home contexts have described residents' perceptions of being treated like a child, being bossed around, or otherwise being disrespected by younger nursing assistants (Levy-Storms et al., 2011). Bergstrom and Nussbaum (1996) suggested that older patients might be less likely to question physicians and are likely to adopt differing conflict styles than their (often younger) physicians.

Similarly, problems may arise in racially or culturally discordant provider–patient relationships for many reasons, one of which is discrepant forms of conversational speech. Rawls

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(2000) argued that those who self-identify as White are more likely to engage in categorical talk, a form of conversation in which information about each other (e.g., occupation, place of residence) is freely asked and exchanged. Those who self-identify as Black, however, are more likely to engage in setting talk, emphasizing topics about the immediate context. In interracial conversations, he proposed, Blacks may feel interrogated by White categorical talk because the information sought is seen as personal or private. Perloff, Bonder, Ray, Ray, and Siminoff (2006) extended this argument to doctor–patient communication; Black patients may not see a White physician's line of questioning as necessary, and White physicians may eschew small talk that could establish trust and rapport. Oliver, Goodwin, Gotler, Gregory, and Stange (2001) further found that physicians spend less time chatting with Black patients than with White patients and that Black patients ask fewer questions than do White patients. According to Oliver et al. (2001), Black patients also shy away from discussing their medical conditions and refrain from making inquiries that they think will be met with objection. As a result, doctors may believe that they are less concerned about their medical conditions or lack the ability to process health information. Not surprisingly, researchers have demonstrated that Black patients treated by White physicians are less satisfied, rate their visits as less participatory, and are less likely to use needed medical services than Black patients treated by Black physicians (Ashton, Haidet, Paterniti, Collins, & Gordon, 2003; Cooper-Patrick et al., 1999; LaVeist & Nuru-Jeter, 2002).

Language, religious, and cultural differences can be sources of conflict or disagreement, as noted in nursing home and hospice care research. Nursing home residents described feeling excluded or talked about when their nursing staff spoke in Spanish, for instance (Levy-Storms et al., 2011), and religious differences may contribute to disagreements or misunderstandings over end-of-life treatment decisions (Norton, Tilden, Tolle, Nelson, & Eggman, 2003; Planalp & Trost, 2008). Cultural beliefs and practices regarding the institutionalization of aging family members were similarly cited as factors within family member–nursing home staff conflicts (Majerovitz, Mollott, & Rudder, 2009).

In addition to demographic characteristics, the patient's medical condition may factor into conflict episodes. For instance, "revolving door" psychiatric patients often cause medical irritation due to lack of treatment success, lack of patient compliance, or perceptions of patient manipulation (e.g., a patient who is claiming to have certain disorienting experiences in order to receive stronger medication; Shaw, 2004). Frustration with psychiatric patients can result in hostility toward them, and there may be attempts by the physicians to refer them to another medical provider (e.g., psychiatric hospital). On the other hand, studies have found that patients who are anxious, educated, ask more questions, and express more negative affect actually receive more information from their providers during diagnosis (Street, 1991). Expressing negative affect, such as anxiety, sadness, or depression, may be more acceptable and expected during diagnosis and early stages of treatment, while anger may be less acceptable overall. It could also be that negative affect is more effective during diagnosis stages than in ongoing health management, especially with hard- or impossible-to-cure illnesses. AIDS patients, for example, were found to respond in both participatory and angry ways to their nurses at different stages of their illness and treatment regimens (Kemppainen, O'Brien, & Corpuz, 1998). In contrast, communication problems occurred more commonly with breast cancer patients who were less optimistic about their disease and who had

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nonassertive coping styles (Lerman et al., 1993). Zaleta and Carpenter (2010) noted that doctors engaged in more positive rapport building and patient activation behaviors than emotional rapport building during dementia diagnoses.

To summarize, causes of provider–patient conflict include provider and patient communication styles, expectations regarding roles and decision making, power relations, and characteristics of the patient such as communication style, culture, and medical condition. Intense emotions, financial, and practical burdens and loss of autonomy combine to make conflict a rather frequent experience for health care providers and patients. Studies in nursing home and hospice care contexts have also pointed to the contributions of patient impairments (e.g., speech, hearing, dementia) and changes in autonomy and lifestyle to frustrations and communication difficulties between nursing assistants, volunteers, and residents (Levy-Storms et al., 2011).

Conflict Between Providers and Family Members

Most of the research in this area is focused on circumstances within which family members make critical decisions regarding the patient's care. This occurs when the patient is a dependent or is temporarily or permanently incapable of making his or her own health care decisions. Several studies address issues in pediatric care, while others involve residential care and/or palliative care. Sources of conflict in these situations are similar to the sources identified in the provider–patient section. These sources are summarized briefly below, along with the unique factors that contribute to conflict when family members are acting on behalf of the patient.

In Moore and Kordick's study (2006), parents of children with cancer reported on five types of conflict with health care providers. The most common concerns of parents are (1) *data* conflicts, which involve receiving discordant or inappropriate amounts of information. While receiving too little or too much information was common at the point of diagnosis, a felt lack of information was also common at the point of survivorship. Families felt unprepared and abandoned when moving into this new stage of their life. (2) *Interest* conflicts typically relate to policies and procedures, such as rotating medical personnel and delays in receiving laboratory results or getting checked in, while (3) *structural* conflicts concern issues of unequal power, authority, and control between parties. Cancer patients and their families particularly felt this lack of power over their lives, their medical care, and their bodies as the disease progressed, and they became increasingly reliant on medical personnel and technology. (4) *Relational* conflict occurs in cases where the patient or the patient's family felt disrespected, disregarded, or discriminated against by the provider. Finally, (5) *value* conflicts reveal divergent goals. For instance, a treatment regimen perceived as appropriate or effective by the provider may cause medical side effects that are unacceptable to family members (e.g., weight loss). We review a few of these conflict sources in the sections that follow.

Information-Based Conflicts. Similar to patients, families describe conflicts with providers based on the lack of adequate or timely information and an unmet desire for involvement in health care planning and decision making (Majerovitz et al., 2009).

Norton and associates (2003) argued that the need for effective communication between health care providers and patients' families is rarely greater than during decisions about life-sustaining treatments, yet Baker et al. (2000) report that 30% of patients' families are typically dissatisfied with communication during this time. The stress and anxiety associated

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with end-of-life decisions contribute to and make conflict particularly distressing for the involved parties. Communication problems during end of life include lack of information about the prognosis and life-sustaining treatment options, absence of clinician-initiated discussions, poor access to clinicians, inconsistency in information—especially when multiple providers are involved, and failure to include family members in all stages of the decision making (Norton et al., 2003). Families frequently reported that information was withheld about the seriousness of the condition and that they lacked adequate and timely information on which to make an informed decision regarding life-sustaining treatments. Some families felt purposefully deceived and made various attributions about the providers' behaviors, such as the provider did not want to admit that he or she could not "save" the patient, believed that the family could not handle the truth, or thought that the family would make a decision he or she disagreed with. Others described situations within which they came to understand that the death of their loved one was eminent only during the discussion about withdrawing life support. Family members also expressed the need for information in lay terms and the need for consistent information from the health care team. Other researchers have noted problems with providers and patients' families holding discrepant meanings for certain medical terms (e.g., do not resuscitate [DNR]; Jezewski & Finnell, 1998). Moreover, families resent having to repeat or rehash information as nurses and physicians rotated in and were confused by different assessments from attending and consulting physicians (Norton et al., 2003). In some cases, family members felt that their comments and requests went unheeded and felt guilty when they could not advocate for or honor the patient's wishes (i.e., DNR orders). From the perspective of the provider, patients may avoid or be resistant to discussions of death, and providers may struggle with balancing clear, straightforward communication with timing, patient preferences, and the need to offer realistic hope (Wenrich et al., 2001).

Differing expectations regarding roles in the care of the loved one (Kirk, 2001), power dynamics based on medical knowledge and expertise (Heath, 1992), and a lack of understanding about the health care system (Clarke & Fletcher, 2003) or health care stages and procedural changes over time are also information-based contributors to conflict between providers and family members. For instance, nursing homes' environments are rife with conflict based on these sources. Nursing home residents tend to enter this type of care arrangement permanently, requiring family members to acquiesce their role as primary caretakers to the nursing home staff (Majerovitz et al., 2009). This shift can result in guilt, relief, anxiety, sadness, anger, and uncertainty. Families may feel ill prepared and inexperienced with navigating residential care procedures and, as a result, may hold false expectations regarding the degree of personalized care that his or her loved one will receive. As the residents' health inevitably declines, families may experience conflicts with staff over timing of information, medications or treatments, and standards of care. Similar role-based distress has been noted in mothers of hospitalized children (Callery, 1997a, 1997b). Mothers prioritized their personal knowledge of the child, yet understood that nurse's held professional knowledge regarding the child's medical care. Conflict occurred when parental distress about their child's care ran counter to nurses' needs to be efficient in the delivery of that care.

Institutional- and Structural-Oriented Conflicts. Institutional practices and policies, such as the application of standardized and efficient care, are contributors to conflict between providers and family members. In several

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studies, interviews with nursing home staff revealed that family members expect individual and personal care of the resident, while the institution values efficiency (Majerovitz et al., 2009). As Abrahamson, Anderson, Anderson, Suitor, and Pillemer (2010) described, staff are expected to deliver care that is "uniform, efficient, and easily documented" (p. 39), while families evaluate staff member quality by their ability to provide personalized care. The staff members are typically left to figure out how to comply with the expectations of both parties, thus role conflict and role overload contribute to distress and dissatisfaction.

Understaffing is often seen as the root cause of other communication issues. Families perceived understaffing as a contributor to inadequate information, noting that they often do not have enough time to communicate with staff members due to the staff members' patient load and inconsistent schedules (Majerovitz et al., 2009). These high job demands, accompanied with low pay and lack of training, lead to high staff turnover in this field. Ironically, the lack of staff is most visible in the evenings and on the weekends when many families visit.

Social workers represent another group of providers who experience a great deal of conflict within the nursing home environment. One study found that directors of nursing manage conflicts with family members in about 6% of the cases, while social workers mediate conflicts in 43% of the cases (Vinton, Mazza, & Kim, 1998). Yet social workers' ability to advocate for residents may be hindered by their status as facility employees (Allen, Nelson, Netting, & Cox, 2007). The social worker is often caught between the resident and facility or between doing what is best for the resident and the resident's desire for autonomy. For instance, the social worker may try to influence coworkers to accept the resident's right to noncompliance. Social workers may also mediate conflict between family members and nursing staff when care expectations are incongruent or when biased perceptions are operating. Family members may see nursing staff as uncaring, and nursing staff may see family members as meddlesome and demanding. These perceptions can lead to relational conflicts.

Relational Conflicts. Disrespectful, insensitive, or disconfirming messages may be exchanged between providers and family members within the context of these often stressful situations. These messages may lead to conflict or occur within conflicts.

In Majerovitz et al.'s (2009) study, staff members described how family members' anxiety and guilt over nursing home placement can be projected onto the staff and come off as "second guessing" or "disrespectful." Even statements such as "Handle her with care" may suggest that the family member does not trust the nursing assistant or believes that the assistant is not trying her best. Despite the time that the nursing home assistants spend with the resident, family members may fail to ask the assistants for their input about the resident's needs, resulting in the staff members feeling dismissed or unappreciated. From the perspective of the family members, staff members may be perceived as judgmental or uncaring. Staff members who speak in a hurried manner or spend little time with the patient or patient's family may elicit such perceptions. Comments that reflect cultural differences regarding the institutionalization of family members or religious beliefs about an end-of-life decision have been described within their accounts as well.

Similar findings emerge in other health care environments. For instance, discourse analytic studies of interactions between mothers and nurses (Heritage & Sefi, 1992) and midwives and expecting mothers (Bredmar & Linell, 1999) portray the role of the health care provider as one of support

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and surveillance. As such, communication that queries care of self or baby or directs the mothering in a certain way is often perceived by the mother as face threatening.

Moore and Beckwitt's (2003) narrative analysis of parents' reactions to conflict with health care providers noted that parents employed the five common conflict strategies of (1) problem solving, (2) yielding, (3) withdrawing, (4) inaction, and (5) contending, and they typically used more than one strategy within a conflict. The authors described a turning point process, wherein contending emerged as a strategy following a breach of norms and crisis concerning their child's health care. These narratives portrayed a transformative experience that resulted in a parent-as-advocate role and, in some cases, led to a social justice activist role.

Summary of Provider, Patient, and Family Member Conflict

Based on the preceding review of research, we surmise that conflict occurs within various health care contexts (e.g., hospital, residential care), across various patient populations (e.g., children, adults, elderly) and health concerns (e.g., cancer, heart disease, depression), and within a wide range of provider–patient relationships (e.g., doctor–patient, nurse–family, social worker–family). Studies conducted through case study, discourse analytic, ethnographic, and survey research approaches contribute to our understanding of both the contributing factors and consequences of conflict within this context. Table 16.1 illustrates that sources of conflict are diverse—from communication style and power relations to the nature of the patient's illness. Improving communication, and minimizing conflict, between patients, family members, and health care providers is critically important in several regards. Poor communication has been associated with greater dissatisfaction with care (Grau, Teresi, Burton, & Chandler, 1995), less frequent visiting (Port, 2004), poor patient outcomes (Anderson, Issel, & McDaniel, 2003), higher instances of aggressive behavior (Vinton & Mazza, 1994), lower provider job satisfaction and performance (Cohen-Mansfield, 1995), higher staff turnover (Anderson, Corazzini, & McDaniel, 2004), and higher staff burnout (Abrahamson, Suitor, & Pillemer, 2009). As Roter and Larson (2002) argued, the designation of effective communication practices as "patient centered" fails to take into account the reciprocal relationship between providers and patients, and hence, should be recast as "relationship-centered" communication.

Research that examines various conflict prevention and management interventions will be discussed in the third section. The overview provided in this section also suggested that the structure and processes of health care organizations create opportunities for conflict. Hence, we turn our attention to conflict within health care organizations, spanning all three circles in Figure 16.1: (1) organizational, (2) group, and (3) dyadic contexts.

Conflict Within Health Care Organizations

While health care settings face conflicts similar to any organization, the structure and complexity of the health care system presents several unique challenges. Among the causes of conflict to be described in this section include issues of power and status, ambiguity, role conflict and role strain, and cross-disciplinary communication. These structural and relational causes of conflict may be exacerbated by more concrete, task-related concerns based on economics, threats of litigation, different opinions about patient care, and organizational practices.

This section starts at the most macrolevel in Figure 16.1, conflict within health care groups

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Table 16.2 Sources of Conflict Within Health Care Organizations

Status inequities
Organizational/professional culture
Competing discourses
Communication structure
Tensions of autonomy and connection
Role ambiguity

and teams and culminates with an overview of research at the most micro, dyadic level: conflict between and among doctors, nurses, and residents. The main causes of conflict within health care institutions and medical personnel are summarized in Table 16.2.

Conflict Within and Among Health Care Groups and Teams

The outer two circles of Figure 16.1 illustrate the potential for intraorganizational conflicts across and within groups of providers. Key contributors to conflict include perceptions of status inequities, organizational and professional culture, cross-disciplinary communication, and communication structure.

Perceptions of Status and Hierarchy. Graham's (2009) ethnographic study of interdisciplinary discharge rounds (meetings held among a group of providers before discharging patients) described competing views of hospital hierarchy that reinforce ambiguous power structures. A belief that power is based on rank (institutional hierarchy) suggests that physicians are at the top, followed by interns, residents, medical students, and then nurses. A rival system, the social/expertise hierarchy, is based on tenure and the amount of time the provider spends with the patient, suggesting that nurses often have more power and credibility due to cumulative years of experience and time spent with patients. Graham found that providers who perceived themselves as subordinate to physicians used politeness strategies to have their professional opinions included in decisions about follow-up health care. Through interviews and observations of team meetings, Graham illustrated how the institutional culture complicated provider communication and became a source of conflict. Several other studies using a discourse analytic approach have reported similar findings, demonstrating that nurses (Riley & Manias, 2007) as well as interns (Erickson, 1999) and other providers (Kerosuo, 2007) struggle to balance the tension between respect for the physician's authority and confidence in their own knowledge and contributions to patient care.

Organizational and Professional Culture. Perceptions of organizational rank and status are also affected by organizational and professional culture in the hospital setting. Kressel, Kennedy, Lev, Taylor, and Hyman's (2002) study of an urban teaching hospital emphasized a culture that privileged doctors' voices, resulting in conflict avoidance. Specific intergroup conflicts described in this study were often related to economic issues or treatment decisions. While hospital administrators have interests in cost-effectiveness and must ensure that insurance information is on file, doctors have an economic incentive to see patients quickly so they can move onto the next one. Because nurses spend more time with the patient and family members, nurses were found to go "behind the doctor's back" to make sure patients' needs were met. Conversely, a study of the negotiation of unplanned emergency surgeries found that doctors may also "tell fibs about what

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might be an emergency" to satisfy their own interests (Lum & Fitzgerald, 2007, p. 101). Conflict also erupted between departments when they either battled for or refused to treat certain patients, either to meet teaching/research needs or to minimize their department's liability (Kressel et al., 2002). Because several aspects of hospital culture can reduce trust, each of these authors recommended improved communication and coordination among hospital units and personnel.

Cross-Disciplinary Communication. A third category of conflict among health care providers comes from the need for cross-disciplinary communication and the challenge of competing discourses. Lammers and Krikorian (1997) observed that surgical teams might be characterized by stable or constantly changing membership. The degree to which the team members have previous history with each other and have negotiated status distinctions is likely to affect how well conflict is managed in these high-stress settings.

In their examination of the operating room list (which governs the surgery schedule), Riley and Manias (2007) found competing discourses of medicine and management. These discourses created ambiguity around what constituted an emergency, and nurses were found to navigate this difficulty based on their local knowledge of different surgeons and their expectations. In another study of surgical scheduling, Lum and Fitzgerald (2007) also reported ambiguity about the definition of "emergency" as well as the tension resulting from ambiguous power structures among doctors. While surgeons are generally perceived to have highest status, informants in Lum and Fitzgerald's study found that patient care is sometimes sidelined while surgeons, anesthesiologists, and other specialists address "tribal differences" and "power struggles" (p. 100).

Communication Structure. A more holistic approach advocated by some (e.g., Kerosuo, 2007) may be hindered by limited structural opportunities for interprovider communication. Long, Iedema, and Lee (2007) claimed that informal "corridor conversations" represented the majority of interactions among providers of different specialties. These conversations are critical to effective care for patients with multiple illnesses as they reduce the negative impact of status differences on interprovider communication. The disadvantage of reliance on corridor conversations is that they are often undocumented (not recorded on the patient's chart), potentially leading to miscommunication with the patient, lack of clarifying communication between providers, and/or compromised continuity of care.

The studies reported in this section point to cultural and structural causes of conflict among health care professionals who are expected to work together in teams. Issues of power and status require constant negotiation as medical specialists from multiple units and professional cultures attempt to coordinate patient care. Ambiguities surrounding health care, such as how to define an emergency and how to treat patients with multiple illnesses, further exacerbate the problem. The difficulties of competing professional cultures and identities are further revealed in studies that examine the dyadic relationship between and among doctors, residents, and nurses. This directs our attention back to the bottom center of the health care system portrayed in Figure 16.1.

Conflict Among and Between Doctors, Nurses, and Residents

Communication scholars often study health communication in the context of conflict among or between doctors and nurses. The sources of conflict are similar to those discussed above, such as status inequities, competing discourses, and ambiguity; yet the level of interdependence required makes it even more challenging for these health care providers to balance competing tensions of autonomy and connection. In this section, we examine these often overlapping sources

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of conflict in the context of dyadic conflicts among health care providers.

Status Inequity and Role Ambiguity. As described above, doctors and nurses often find themselves in situations where status distinctions are ambiguous. Apker, Propp, and Ford (2005) found that even though nurses are typically seen as subordinate in their communication with doctors, they are the de facto leaders in patient care teams with patient care assistants. In these team settings, nurses are given higher status compared with other team members, while they are expected to act as equals. Similar to the experiences of nurses in teams with doctors, patient care assistants reported that nurses delegated tasks that they could often do themselves and did not communicate with them as peers, causing them to feel devalued.

Nurses commonly experience role ambiguity in that they are expected to be nurturing and supportive but are also relied on to be patient advocates and keepers of the rules. Apker et al. (2005) found that nurses needed to distance themselves from their patients to be perceived as legitimate by doctors while simultaneously feeling pressured to make eye contact, listen with empathy, and show concern for patients. Similarly, Gardezi et al. (2009) found that operating room nurses experienced role conflict in their performance of the preoperative checklist. Using a checklist met the nurses' needs to enforce the rules, yet it contradicted their role as supporting the surgeon and challenged the doctor's authority. Faced with this paradoxical situation, Gardezi et al. found that nurses often chose silence and conflict avoidance. This is a situation in which the absence of conflict is problematic. In an interview with a nurse, Jameson (2004) was told a story of a doctor who insisted on prepping a patient for surgery even after the nurse pointed out that the patient had eaten within the previous 30 minutes. While in this case the patient was unharmed, complications could have arisen. This story illustrates why doctors and nurses need to be able to engage in constructive and respectful conflict management rather than silence and conflict avoidance.

Role ambiguity has also been found to create conflict in doctor–resident interaction. Atkinson (1999) found that medical students in the United States and the United Kingdom wanted to be seen as knowledgeable and be treated as equals by doctors but were challenged when the doctor asked questions and even quizzed the medical students in front of patients. Atkinson pointed out that this conflict is exacerbated by the fact that doctors typically spend less time with the patient than other providers do, yet they are ultimately held accountable for patient care (e.g., physicians are most likely to be named in medical malpractice lawsuits because they have the greatest financial capacity to offer monetary damages). This contradiction between the amount of time spent with patients and ultimate responsibility for their care also creates a tension between autonomy and connection in interactions between doctors and nurses.

Tensions Between Autonomy and Connection. The practice of providing anesthetics in much of the United States provides another example of a structure in which providers feel compelled to protect their autonomy and status while simultaneously relying on the other. The typical model is that one anesthesiologist supervises two to four patients simultaneously, while the certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) remains with the same patient throughout a surgical procedure (Jameson, 2004). Through in-depth interviews with anesthesiologists and CRNAs, Jameson found that while anesthesiologists acknowledged that they needed the CRNAs to manage all their patients, they also wanted to protect their status as specialists in the eyes of colleagues (e.g., surgeons) and administrators. CRNAs reported that anesthesiologists

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were condescending, while anesthesiologists complained that CRNAs did not acknowledge their additional years of medical training. While this study is specific to the anesthesia context, the tension between autonomy and connection is a potential source of conflict among doctors, nurses, and residents and other health providers, as described above.

Competing Discourses. As was found in doctor–patient communication, conflict among nurses, administrators, and other health care providers is also caused or exacerbated by different expectations. Nicotera, Mahon, and Zhao (2010) described a phenomenon they called "structurational divergence" that occurred when nurses were unable to prioritize one set of rules over another. Nicotera et al. (2010) provided an example of structurational divergence in a hospital geriatric care unit. In this case, the relational leadership style of the unit director and the task leadership style of the assistant director created a contradiction that made it difficult to coordinate even mundane tasks such as scheduling. While the director needed the assistant director to take a task-focused approach to balance her relational style, the nurses resented what they perceived to be the assistant director's autocratic leadership. When nurses complained to the director, she expected them to be able to work it out collaboratively and referred them back to the assistant director. This situation led to continued frustration among the nursing staff, low morale, and high turnover. This is an example of a negative spiral caused by structurational divergence that could only be resolved by creating a new discourse that merged the task and relational leadership styles rather than seeing them as competing.

Summary of Conflict Within Health Care Organizations

As summarized in Table 16.2, conflict is endemic to the health care system due to the nature of the hierarchy and ambiguous power structures, as well as the interdependence of diverse providers with sometimes competing institutional and professional identities and interests. Communication scholars (as well as those in health, sociology, and public policy) have made important contributions to our understanding of the complexity of communication and coordination of health care providers. Much of the research reported in this section is qualitative in nature, using methods such as discourse analysis, critical ethnography, and analyses of individual and focus group interviews with hospital staff and medical providers. It is important to recognize the large body of research on conflict in the nursing profession that was not included in this section (see Brinkert, 2010). Much of that research has included implications for conflict prevention and management in health care, the final topic of this chapter.

Health Care Conflict Prevention and Management

In this section, we summarize research that has described specific communication strategies and procedures to improve health care delivery, medical education and training programs, patient education and training programs, and dispute system design in health care settings. Table 16.3 includes a list of dominant ideas and models for improving communication and conflict management in health care delivery.

Strategies for Improving Communication and Conflict Management

Several studies have recommended procedural changes to improve communication and/or conflict interaction. One example of a procedural change is the "firm" system,

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Table 16.3 Conflict Prevention and Management Strategies

Improved communication skills
Education and training
Physician training
Nurse training
Patient training
Coaching/mentoring
Dispute system design

which groups providers into teams so that they work with the same people on a routine basis (Graham, 2009). Some administrators believed that this practice increases trust while reducing ambiguity and the impact of the hierarchy. Graham's evaluation could not support whether the firm structure was successful, as he surmised that gendered roles and expectations had more influence over communication norms than the team structure. Another proposal for improved team communication was to institutionalize a 1- to 3-minute preoperative team briefing (Gardezi et al., 2009). The authors evaluating this process concluded that the role of the institutional culture and societal relations between doctors and nurses impeded the practicality of attempts to routinize communication in this way.

Recommendations for improving communication among interdisciplinary teams treating patients with multiple illnesses included improved information sharing through technology (placing microchips in health insurance cards or improved computer networks) and the creation of written "care agreements" (Kerosuo, 2007). The author and participants noted that limitations of these ideas included diverse professional norms and language, not knowing what information each group needs (and the risk of information overload), and creating cumbersome processes.

Other studies have focused on improving communication through the process of principled negotiation (Kendall & Arnold, 2008). Examining the challenges of communication at end-of-life decisions, Kendall and Arnold advised doctors to learn about the patient's and their family's story, beginning the discussion with genuine curiosity and focusing on the individuals' concerns and narratives. Within these narratives, doctors should attend to patients' past relationships with doctors, their sources of medical information, and their life goals. Doctors should also find out how the patient/family wants information to be presented to them. Second, Kendall and Arnold recommended that doctors attend to all emotions—their own, their patient's, and the family's. Acknowledging the emotions and allowing them to be expressed was believed to allow the patient to move on to understanding the medical information. Finally, these authors suggested that doctors discuss the patient's core values and integrate them into development of shared treatment goals.

Another study examining doctor–patient–family communication at the end of life suggested a modification in the interaction process (Norton et al., 2003). Rather than simply withholding their prognosis until they reach a certain degree of certainty (which increases family stress due to lack of information), physicians should talk to patients and their families about the difficulty of making an accurate diagnosis. This provides a venue for offering anticipatory guidance in case the situation becomes less optimistic. This strategy may engage patients and their families in a dialogue that can be revisited on a regular basis while they await more specific information. While written in the

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context of end-of-life decisions, the approach is equally relevant for any doctor–patient interaction in which the patient suffers from multiple illnesses or a difficult diagnosis and is relevant whenever family members are highly involved, such as in pediatric cases.

A final example of improving procedures for conflict prevention and management relates to the omnipresent threat of malpractice litigation. While physicians and administrators may typically practice defensive medicine that limits information disclosure, a program called IACT (Integrated Accountability & Collaborative Transparency; iactprogram.com/) challenges this trend. According to its developers, IACT is a collaborative model that encourages earlier information disclosure to patients as well as expressions of regret or remorse that address emotions for both physicians and patients (Scott, 2011). IACT proponents suggest that early disclosure of information strengthens trust between patient and provider, reduces the number of claims and lawsuits, and reduces legal expenses.

Medical Education and Training Programs

Researchers have found that institutionalization of improved communication is impeded by organizational and professional culture, status inequities, gendered roles and expectations, and patient health literacy. This reinforces the need for integrated health communication training for medical professionals and patients. One study that examined conflict in the medical education system further illustrated the challenges of incorporating conflict management into medical education (Sawa et al., 2006). Based on interviews and a focus group with medical students, educators, and administrators, the study concluded that medical professionals are faced with communication challenges that make it difficult to be both "professional" and "caring." A specific example lies in the unrealistically high expectations of medical students. While it makes sense that medical professionals should be held to high standards given the nature of their work, interviewees used the word "godly" to describe the expectation, which reinforces a system in which error or uncertainty leads to shame. Other central themes of the interviews included the culture of extreme competition, high stakes involved in educational success, and the existence of a culture of fear (of making a mistake or being yelled at). The authors concluded that medical students learned to cope with this culture through denial, secrecy, isolation, and relying on third parties as allies. These strategies reinforce a climate in which difficult topics are not addressed and politics are privileged over policy and transparency in decision making. When extreme fatigue is added to fear, distrust, and protection of emotions, it is not surprising that those who succeed in medical school would be cynical and lack open communication when they enter the profession. Sawa et al. (2006) suggest specific changes to medical education, including faculty support, student support, modeling of clear and direct communication, transparency, and due process in the evaluation of student performance. The following sections review training programs for physicians, nurses, and patient education.

Physician Education Programs. Training programs for physicians focus on communication skills, patient-centered communication, and delivering bad news. Studies that have evaluated the effectiveness of these programs have reported mixed results. One conceptual model for physician communication skills training, the Comskil model (Brown & Bylund, 2008), consists of six categories: (1) establishing the consultation framework (negotiating the agenda with the patient), (2) checking patient understanding,

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(3) questioning, (4) empathic communication, (5) information organization, and (6) shared decision making. Brown et al. (2010) evaluated the impact of Comskil training for oncology fellows through self-report surveys and videos of patient communication before and after the training. The authors found a significant increase in use of the skills after training, mostly in the category of establishing the consultation framework. Self-report data suggested that participants had increased confidence in their communication skills.

Other investigators have also found positive impacts of communication skills training for physicians. Penticuff and Arheart (2005) reported on a program designed to improve information sharing in a neonatal intensive care unit. They found parents' comprehension and satisfaction improved significantly (including less decision conflict) as a result of the program. Similarly, Helitzer et al. (2011) reported that primary care providers who were trained in patient-centered communication, general communication skills, and methods for discussing adverse childhood events evidenced significant differences in these areas over the control group and maintained these improvements over a 24-month period.

Another training framework, COMFORT, is a patient-centered communication model for sharing bad news (Villagran, Goldsmith, Wittenberg-Lyles, & Baldwin, 2010). The COMFORT framework includes communication, orientation, mindfulness, family, ongoing, reiterative messages, and team. The communication component emphasizes use of clear and adaptive verbal and nonverbal messages. Based on observation of simulated interactions between 24 medical students and a "standardized family member," Villagran et al. concluded that the COMFORT model holds promise, but use of this patient-oriented model may require a cultural change for doctors who have adopted the normative "detached" model and who may experience compassion fatigue.

Nurse Education Programs. Brinkert's (2010) review of the nursing profession suggests that effective communication and collaboration has been identified as an important indicator of motivation, satisfaction, and perceptions of job effectiveness. He reports on several professional development programs in nursing that have led to improved conflict communication, including those designed specifically to teach conflict management strategies (Haraway & Haraway, 2005) or performance of specific roles and protocols (Davies & Lynch, 2007). Brinkert's (2010) review highlighted several mentoring and support programs that provided evidence of success, including a 3-year study of a nurse mentor–mentee program in an academic hospital. Nurses served as mentors and advocates, and the study reported improved perceptions of nurses by others, increased nurse retention, and improved patient care.

An intervention that blends the concepts of training and mentoring is conflict coaching (Brinkert, 2011). Conflict coaching entails a coach working individually with a "client" to help him or her assess a conflict and consider alternative conflict management strategies and outcomes. Brinkert conducted a study in which 20 nurse managers in a hospital received 12 hours of training in conflict coaching. Data were collected over an 8-month period to determine perceptions of effectiveness from the coaches and their 20 supervisees. Coaches reported that they used the skills to help nurses reflect on recurring difficult situations, effectively address team conflict, or communicate with nurses who had been verbally inappropriate. Obstacles to the conflict coaching intervention included tensions between the managers' role as leaders and facilitators and the tension between fully

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appreciating the complexity of the coaching model while needing to keep it as simple as possible due to time constraints. Despite its challenges, the coaching model appeared to have utility as it provided increased mentoring and support as well as improved conflict management skills.

Patient Education Programs. Cegala (2006) identified and reviewed 18 studies of patient communication training. He found that most training programs focus on information-seeking skills and question asking; and while some programs report large gains, most studies indicated that the impact of the training was moderate. A smaller training topic focused on providing information and helping patients clearly and completely express their concerns and report symptoms. Cegala and colleagues (1996) have included these skills in their interventions and have experienced success, noting improved diagnosis and treatment decision making on the part of providers. Last, some training programs focus on patient-verifying skills by directing them to check their understanding, request repetitions and summaries, and encourage forecasts that indicate what information may be sought or provided at some later point. These programs have found improved patient recall and immediate understanding. Cegala (2006) concluded that few studies have examined the influence of patient training on health outcomes (see Kaplan, Greenfield, & Ware, 1989, for exception) and that more research is needed to determine if patient outcomes persist beyond the immediate training and can be transferred from one health care setting to another.

Cegala (2006) cautions that medical interventions are most effective when they are tailored to patients' individual needs. Examples of training for specific audiences include patients who use alternative medicine (Bylund, D'Agostino, Ho, & Chewning, 2010), underserved populations (Bylund et al., 2010), older adults (Weitzman & Weitzman, 2003), African American women (Weitzman, Hardaway, Smakowski, Weitzman, & Levkoff, 2002), and patients with diabetes (Shue, O'Hara, Marini, McKenzie, & Schreiner, 2010). Typical contents of patient training include active listening, asking questions, brainstorming possible medical treatments, and explaining their feelings and concerns. Older patients are specifically trained in asking questions, taking notes, and bringing someone with them to appointments to improve retention and compliance (Weitzman & Weitzman, 2003). Training for older women has been found to decrease conflict avoidance and increase patient directness (Weitzman et al., 2002).

In related research, Haskard et al. (2008) investigated whether training was more effective when both physicians and their patients received training. They concluded that trained physicians, relative to the untrained physicians, demonstrated significantly improved health behavior counseling of patients and connected-sensitive communication. They also reported that patients of trained physicians indicated higher quality of care and indicated greater willingness to recommend their physician to others. Patient training produced higher physician satisfaction with the data collection process but did not have concomitant effects on patient satisfaction, perhaps due to the brevity of the training. When only one party was trained (as compared with when both or neither parties were trained), physicians reported lower satisfaction, less interest in relational change, and greater stress.

Haskard et al.'s (2008) study points to the need to train both providers and patients, to evaluate the training and outcomes of the training from both participants' perspectives, and to include short- and long-term evaluation measures in communication training programs and studies. Moreover, the authors point to a confounding factor in that

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organizational changes during the course of research may have contributed to outcomes. This leads us to conflict intervention at the organizational or systemic level.

Institutional Conflict Interventions and Dispute System Design

All of the aforementioned models of education and training emphasize the value of addressing conflict management on a systemic level and focusing on prevention through improved training and procedures that minimize harmful conflict interaction. Just as a preventive health system does not eradicate disease, however, conflict management systems do not prevent the occurrence of conflict. Institutionalization of conflict practices may, however, facilitate systemic changes that help participants interact in more productive, constructive ways. This section summarizes systemic interventions, including mentoring, third-party intervention, and conflict management systems in health care.

Mentoring Programs. Interviews with health care leaders by Dellve and Wikström (2009) demonstrated a paradox in attempts to balance administrative and occupational roles. Specifically, providers may privilege their clinical work to be seen as loyal to their colleagues, thus downplaying their administrative or managerial role. While this strategy may improve relationships with peers, it creates stress and conflict when they need to put on their "administrator hat" and make decisions in the organization's best interests. Faced with this situation, leaders are torn between denying their role as administrators and losing the trust of colleagues. Dellve and Wikström suggested that leadership development, mentoring, and social support are needed to help health care leaders achieve transparency and open communication.

Third-Party Intervention. Health care organizations often have informal or formal third parties available to assist with conflict management. Lum and Fitzgerald's (2007) study of surgical teams found that anesthetists often acted as informal third parties in emergency room conflicts between surgeons and nurses. This dynamic was successful because the anesthetists were seen as neutral to the individual interests of the surgeons and nurses. Kressel et al. (2002) devoted significant attention to the question of how informal conflict managers intervened in an urban hospital. Interviews with 17 staff members who had a reputation among employees for being effective conflict managers found that the managers enacted the roles of neutral mediator, mediators with power (i.e., nursing supervisors), problem solvers, consultants, or direct advocates for their constituents. While these were not formally appointed roles, the work of these third parties prevented conflicts from going to the formal grievance process. These studies suggest that health care delivery could benefit from a more formalized system of third-party conflict management.

Dispute System Design in Health Care. Porter-O'Grady (2004) recommended building a programmatic structure for conflict management that is accessible at every level of the organization. More specifically, he suggested that conflict resolution skills training should be offered to all health care personnel, that leaders should implement a staff mediation program, and that conflict management processes should be routinely evaluated. Knowing that there is someone to go to for assistance may reduce the tendency toward silence and conflict avoidance discussed above.

In a study of internal dispute resolution (IDR), Rabinovich-Einy (2007) used the term *internal transformative resolution* to describe a process of conflict management that promotes

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ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and proactive measures for addressing problems in an Israeli hospital setting. Based on the transformative model of mediation (Bush & Folger, 2005), internal transformative resolution is presented as part of a comprehensive IDR system. The advantages of such systems include cost savings, enhanced employee morale, productivity, stability, and preventing the public airing of disputes. IDR is also frequently more efficient and more flexible in terms of remedies than legal proceedings (disputes may often be transformed with an apology, for example). Perhaps most important is the potential of such systems to change the conflict environment by contributing to organizational learning. More issues may be openly discussed, and participants in the process may feel empowered to manage future conflicts in more productive ways. While Rabinovich-Einy (2007) acknowledged the potential dark side of mediation—keeping issues such as discrimination private when they may need to be made more public to set precedent for future behavior—the author contended that transforming conflict management was necessary to change the culture of communication in health care.

Summary of Conflict Prevention and Management in Health Care

The majority of studies reviewed in this chapter frame conflict in negative terms, suggesting outcomes such as provider stress and burnout, patient dissatisfaction, and compromised patient care. Yet studies describing conflict avoidance also present negative outcomes such as increased ambiguity, dissatisfaction, and procedural violations that can put patients at risk. The purpose of this final section was to highlight specific communication skills, communication training programs, and conflict management interventions that not only serve to prevent negative conflict but also assist providers and patients in their ability to voice concerns and manage conflicts in collaborative and productive ways. Communication scholars are actively involved in research that identifies new health care communication strategies and skills, models of training for providers and patients, and systemic interventions. We expect that scholars of health care delivery from all disciplines will seek collaboration with communication scholars, and our field will continue to play a key role in designing and discovering practical interventions for improved health communication and conflict management.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to review the contributions of communication scholarship to our understanding of the causes, consequences, and management of conflict in a variety of health care delivery settings. Concluding thoughts regarding the utility of a communication perspective for studying conflict in health care are presented around three themes that have been woven throughout this discussion (1) the challenge of ambiguity, (2) the challenge of power, and (3) the challenge of complexity. These themes are presented below in terms of their implications for research and practice.

The Challenge of Ambiguity

The popular television show *House* in which talented doctors attempt to diagnose patients with complicated symptoms portrays the ambiguous nature of medicine: No matter how much medical preparation doctors have, obvious and simple diagnoses are not always possible. The level of ambiguity with which health care providers, patients, and family members are faced clearly serves as a major source of conflict. In addition to dealing with the ambiguous nature of illness,

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providers also face uncertainty about their patients, including their communication preferences, their expectations, and their lifestyles. Reducing this uncertainty not only requires more time than providers can allocate but also violates typical interactional norms of privacy and self-disclosure. Patients experience this ambiguity as well, having less medical knowledge and experience and often knowing little about their provider's background, credentials, and decision-making methods. Moreover, ambiguity for providers and patients may change over the course of disease management, as health is a dynamic state and treatments change in effectiveness, availability, and appeal. Family members similarly encounter ambiguity as they attempt to advocate for the patient, navigate health care organizational policies and procedures, turn over their primary care giving role, and assist the patient in adjusting to his or her new environment or reality. Finally, the changing mechanisms of health care delivery in the United States present challenges for providers, patients, and health care organizations. Federal and state policies, insurance revisions, emerging technologies, and so on may simultaneously reduce and increase ambiguity for patients and providers. Given the unique relationship between providers and patients, it is not surprising that each party needs to acquire a sophisticated set of communication skills to effectively negotiate this relationship. While many of the articles reviewed here point to ambiguity as a source of conflict, future research should emphasize this framework and seek to answer questions about how providers, health care organizations, and patients/family members effectively address and reduce ambiguity. Since many of the studies conducted have examined microcommunication in highly specific contexts, it would be particularly fruitful to conduct a meta-analysis or replicate previous studies of ambiguity in health care contexts to develop a set of generalizable recommendations for reducing and managing ambiguity.

The Challenge of Power

The studies reported here illustrate that power relationships among providers change routinely throughout the day as they find themselves in positions of higher or lower power depending on who they are working with and what values are privileged within the culture. The structure is also difficult for medical and nursing students, who struggle to prove themselves in their interactions with patients, peers, and supervisors, often feeling caught in the middle of what appear to be competing interests related to procedures, economics, efficiency, and the emotional needs of the patient. These students are expected to model the communication and interactions of their mentors and supervisors and are socialized into a medical culture that reifies and reinforces power differences and prevents systemic change. Future research must include theories of institutional, professional, and organizational culture, as well as theories of change, to develop recommendations for integrating new forms of communication into health care practice from both the bottom-up and the top-down.

Patient-centered care models that emphasize the medical encounter as a collaborative practice between providers and patients seem to be headed in the right direction—suggesting that each party must respect and acknowledge the experience of the other, while simultaneously maintaining their individual accountability for the process and outcome. This general advice not only is appropriate for the provider–patient relationship but also works for the inter- and intragroup conflicts described as well. While this may be easier said than done, communication scholars can model this practice by conducting engaged scholarship

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in which the researcher, provider, and patient are equal partners in a collaborative research process. Just as collaborative medicine honors the knowledge of the patient and may lead to enhanced medical practice, more collaborative research should lead to new and exciting questions and improved recommendations (see Campus Community Partnerships for Health, http://www.ccph.info/, for examples of engaged research).

The Challenge of Complexity

From the complexity of individual illnesses to the complexity of diverse structures, policies, and providers, the challenge of sharing, integrating, and coordinating knowledge and medical information is overwhelming. We contend that challenges in health care are likely to become even more complex. Vanderford et al. (2001) and others have argued that conflicts between providers and patients are likely to increase given newer approaches to health delivery that seek to empower patients and create partnerships in health management. While advances in technology provide increased patient access to information, they also increase ambiguity and complexity of decision making. New technologies have the potential to enhance the gathering and storing of patient information, enable efficient and timely communication, and facilitate administrative work, yet the diffusion of these innovations will require time to learn and institutionalize. Knowledge gaps will continue within certain populations based on health and computer literacy, access, and cultural beliefs and values. So while technological innovations may alleviate or minimize some sources of conflict, new sources of conflict are likely to emerge.

With medical advances, people are living longer, revealing new and more complex illnesses. This leads to greater need for collaborative health care teams, as well as for more intergenerational and intercultural conversations among providers and patients. Changes in the institutions with which health care organizations interact are also likely to change, as health care reforms (e.g., insurance, medical malpractice) continue to be debated and adopted.

While the scholarly works described in this chapter are often limited by small samples, a focus on a singular relationship or party, and are heavily contextualized, these studies highlight the need for health care providers and patients to develop a sophisticated repertoire of interpersonal skills that includes reading others' needs and self-monitoring. They also point to the important role for hospital administrators in creating a culture that values the professional contributions of all medical providers, acknowledges the role of the patient, and commits resources to conflict management. Communication scholars are well poised to make an important contribution to the needs of health care providers and patients by continuing research to identify key factors across contexts and samples, evaluating the effectiveness of conflict training programs and interventions, and developing more sophisticated conceptualizations of effective communication to enhance theoretical development and expand the applicability of practical recommendations for conflict management in health care.

Note

1. The term *provider* is used here to refer to doctors, nurses, physician assistants, technicians, therapists, and other professionals who provide direct care to patients.

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17

Systems Within Systems

Law, Management, and Participation-Based Conflict Management Systems Within Organizations

Kirstie McAllum And Mary Simpson

Organizations have always had conflict management strategies such as lockouts, legal proceedings, arbitration, facilitation, and mediation, yet some of these options are neither efficient nor effective (Nabatchi & Bingham, 2010). Most of the literature in the field of organizational conflict highlights the detrimental effects of ineffective conflict management strategies on organizations and employees. We argue that conflict that is hidden, ignored, or suppressed can be damaging, as organizations lack any catalyst to change policies and processes that underpin the conflict. Even in relatively nonlitigious situations, the negative consequences of unresolved organizational conflicts have increased the popularity of conflict management strategies that deal with conflict closest to the source.

Conflict management systems (CMS) are "the structures that are developed in an organization to facilitate processing conflict" (Conbere, 2001, p. 217). CMS within given organizations simultaneously reflect and inform organizational goals, values, and structures. Our approach is to position CMS as systems within systems. We treat organizations as systems with permeable and fluid boundaries that shift and shrink or expand in response to environmental events and emerging internal changes (Putnam & Stohl, 1996). The same goes for CMS. In our view, a systems perspective enables us to highlight the differences in the nature of the conflict that different CMS are designed to engage with. Using a systems perspective, we analyze three clusters of conflict strategies that can be adopted or adapted by organizations, which we term as *law-based, management-based*, and *participation-based frameworks*. We then use a well-documented New Zealand case study involving multilevel

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conflict within an organization to illustrate how a systems perspective helps inform approaches to conflict management.

Legal and Organizational Context

In the United States, the desire to respond to conflict before it lands in court is arguably one of the key drivers behind the redesign of CMS. De-unionization, concurrent with rapid growth of legislation governing individual employee rights, situated workplace conflict as individually based rather than collective. The resultant surge in employment-related litigation overburdened the federal and state courts and led to long, costly delays in achieving settlements. Moreover, the "liti-gotiation" system (Galanter, 1983, as cited in Stipanowich, 2004) that developed around employment tort law did not always afford satisfactory outcomes (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001), and in worst-case scenarios, there was no outcome at all. For example, labor–management conflict was so endemic at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) that in 1996 the backlog of grievances was 69,555 (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1997), and USPS employees could face waits of up to 10 years before a formal equal employment opportunity complaint was heard in court (Bingham & Napoli, 1999). USPS's use of transformative mediation (Bush & Folger, 1994) within its REDRESS program was designed to reduce the high incidence of serious workplace conflicts.

Simultaneously, changes in the extraorganizational climate such as flatter organizational structures, growth in team-based project work, and greater workplace diversity have changed the dynamics of conflict. Despite the advantages of team-based organizing, the interdependence of stakeholder groups with potentially competing interests and distinctive patterns of interactions increases the likelihood of conflict about what is fair or appropriate (Cutcher-Gershenfeld & Kochan, 1997). Many of these conflicts do not merit escalation into full-blown disputes and may be better dealt with closer to the source. Consequently, organizations have started to strategically design CMS that better meet organizational needs (Costantino & Merchant, 1996). Specifically, organizations have shifted from a fight-or-flight method of dispute resolution, where formal grievance procedures create a "winner" and a "loser" or employees leave the organization rather than confront the issue, to intervention strategies such as noncourt arbitration, mediation, and negotiation. In the face of escalating court costs and prolonged trials, the development of CMS that aim to deal with conflict at the lowest possible organizational level has been promoted as a core element of effective conflict management (Lipsky & Seeber, 2006).

These trends within the legal system and workplaces accompany a shift in the ways in which we view conflict itself. Gleason (1997) argued that a *traditionalist* approach frames conflict as disruptive and destructive. Alternatively, a *behavioral* approach views conflict as natural yet avoidable, and a *principled* approach goes still further and sees organizational conflict as productive and necessary. Conflict management, then, moves on a similar continuum, from unilateral repression or elimination of dysfunctional organizational behaviors, through resolution, to practices and processes that involve all employees generating more creative and transformative solutions to conflict. The Association for Conflict Resolution encapsulates the principled approach in its suggestion that organizations ought to develop a culture that welcomes dissent and disagreement and to develop support structures that coordinate, manage, and concurrently train organizational members in dealing with conflicts competently (Gosline et al., 2001). Emphasis on meaningful work and empowerment has

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also increased employees'—and in particular professionals'—expectations that they will participate in the resolution of workplace conflicts.

The underlying issues or motives for the conflict differ in each case. Ury, Brett, and Goldberg (1988) suggest that conflicts are driven by power, rights, or interests. *Power-based* conflicts, that use lockouts and strikes for example, impose high costs on each party and seldom address the underlying cause of the conflict. Even managerial strategies such as the separation of disputing parties by forced restructuring (Karambayya & Brett, 1994) and workplace reorganization tend to replace overt hostility with hidden conflict, which becomes harder to identify and manage. *Rights-based* conflicts arise due to questions about the fairness of a decision, process, or outcome and are most often expressed as formal grievances. Strategies such as fact-finding investigations, arbitration, adjudication, and potential litigation are used to determine who is "right." *Interest-based* conflicts revolve around divergent needs, concerns, or perspectives and can be addressed by strategies such as mediation, facilitation, or negotiation.

CMS or the type of structures, strategies, and policies that enable organizations to address conflict can be construed in similar ways. Organizations' sets of conflict management strategies may aim to *contend*, *settle*, or *prevent* (Lipsky & Seeber, 2006; Lipsky, Seeber, & Fincher, 2003). Organizations with a "contend strategy" respond to conflict by litigating, whereas settlement and prevention orientations to conflict management opt to manage conflict at the lowest possible organizational level. Settlement- and prevention-oriented organizations are also more likely to try interest-based strategies before employing rights-based or power-based strategies. The current preference for interest-based alternative dispute resolution (ADR) strategies explains the conflation of ADR with CMS. From our perspective, ADR is only one possible component of a CMS.

Embedded assumptions about conflict and conflict management also influence CMS design decisions. Organizations may adopt one dominant strategy for addressing conflict, such as USPS's choice of mediation. In this case, the conflict management program tends to operate as a stand-alone silo or stovepipe that is not linked to other organizational units. One issue with silo or stovepipe CMS is that organizations may opt for an off-the-shelf ADR solution such as voluntary mediation and negotiation rather than selecting, or even developing, strategies that best fit the organizational context (Costantino & Merchant, 1996). Mediation currently enjoys best practice status as a conflict management strategy (Bingham, 2004b). However, the ways in which mediation, for example, differs from other strategies is not always clear. Bingham (2004b) distinguished among evaluative mediation (Waldman, 1998), facilitative mediation (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991), and transformative mediation (Bush & Folger, 1994), and Lipsky and Seeber (2006) identified peer mediation, managerial mediation, internal mediation, external mediation, and mediation arbitration as possible conflict management strategies. As Stipanowich (2004) suggested, the vague terminology and "breathtaking range of approaches and strategies that we lump under the heading of 'ADR'" (p. 845) do little to assist researchers to evaluate its outcomes.

In fact, the impact of ADR-based CMS is not always easy to ascertain, since a strategy can undergo considerable transformation due to the CMS' linkages with other organizational and extraorganizational systems. For instance, in their efforts to avoid recourse to the legal system, some organizations have created an internal pseudolegal system. Organizationally based CMS may reduce the costs of conflict and improve the balance sheet yet fail to

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foster the sense of self-determination and organizational justice that are hallmarks of meaningful work and workplace participation (Bingham, 2002; Blancero, del Campo, & Marron, 2010). If an organization's system is not perceived to be fair or neutral, organizational members may choose to channel conflict in more destructive ways. To mitigate this risk, organizations may choose an alternative design structure that offers organizational members multiple options for dealing with a broad range of conflict issues. These integrated CMS vary considerably in their inclusion of interest-based and rights-based options and recourse to internal and external processes. Research on employee voice in integrated CMS has shown mixed results, depending on organizational size, sector, and the type of conflict management strategies used (Lipsky & Seeber, 2006).

Assessing empirical work on CMS is further complicated by generational changes in research focus. Whereas first generation research questioned justice at the societal level, second and third generation research examined macro-organizational outcomes and micro-level practice, respectively (Costantino, 2009; Lipsky & Avgar, 2004). Systems thinking is useful, in the first instance, as it links together all three levels. Specifically, Hall and Fagan (1968) defined a system as having four dimensions: (1) objects, (2) attributes, (3) internal relationships, and (4) environment. Within organizations, *objects* include people, structures and processes. *Attributes* or properties include the characteristics of organizational culture and purpose. *Internal relationships* concern the interactions between the objects within the organization. However, systems do not exist in a vacuum but are affected by global and local trends and the political, cultural, and economic *environments* in which they operate.

Within organizational systems, *objects* include the people involved, their roles, responsibilities, authorities, and the conflict management strategies employed. The key *attributes* of the system are determined by the culture and purpose of the organization, which in turn influence the orientation toward conflict. The types of *relationships* among the objects are affected by the degree of prescription or flexibility permitted within the organization and its selected conflict management strategies. Finally, the overall *environment* within which the organization operates plays a role in its orientation toward managing conflict—that is, how CMS and subsequent strategies are selected and enacted. The interplay between these four dimensions constitutes the system.

To explore CMS, we anchor our approach with a definition of conflict: "Conflict is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatibility and the possibility of interference from others as a result of this incompatibility" (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2008, p. 4). We take the view that, as systems, organizations depend on the perceptions and interactions between individuals within those systems. The culture, however, of a given organizational system and its relationship with its environment influence those individuals and the choices they make. Thus, the ways in which conflict plays out affect, and are affected by, the chosen strategies adopted by the organization.

We believe that a systems perspective enables us to highlight the considerable differences in the nature of the conflict that each CMS is designed to manage—differences that can be overlooked by empirical work that compares outcomes such as employee satisfaction and case closure rates (Mahony & Klaas, 2008). The conflict management strategies within CMS are not simply a response to *the phenomenon* of conflict; rather, the specific "interaction patterns and interpretive processes" (Putnam, 2001, p. 17) embedded in

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each strategy create, contest, and reinforce particular conflict patterns.

Therefore, in this chapter, we utilize a systems perspective to analyze three distinct conflict perspectives or clusters of conflict strategies that can be adopted or adapted by organizations. We designate these options as (1) law-based, (2) management-based, and (3) participation-based frameworks for CMS design. As most macro-organizational research to date has tended to use a combination of statistical analysis and case studies using data from CEOs, we focus on the impact of the various CMS on other stakeholders, and employees in particular. We then use a well-documented case concerning multilevel conflict within an organization to illustrate how a systems approach helps inform approaches to conflict management. The case is that of the "unfortunate experiment" at National Women's Hospital (NWH) in New Zealand. Beginning with a systems analysis of the conflict, we then use the lenses of law-based, management-based, and participation-based conflict management frameworks to highlight the effects of choices, strategies, and outcomes. We conclude with discussing key problematics associated with the systems of conflict management available to organizations and suggest areas that merit further research.

Analysis of CMS

Our review of the extant literature reveals three broad frameworks of CMS that can be utilized, adapted, or adopted by organizations. We provide an overview of the key features of each CMS and the issues that pertain to each, and these are outlined in Table 17.1. As Nicotera and Dorsey (2006) pointed out, communicative behaviors determine how a conflict process will unfold; each orientation brings a different perspective to a given conflict situation.

Law-Based CMS

Law-based CMS take a fundamentally adversarial approach to rights-based conflicts. Early law-based strategies originated in an era where unions took on a third-party role to remedy the power imbalance between workers and management (Bendersky, 2003). In the contemporary industrial relations environment, these strategies can ensure that organizations recognize and implement workplace rights. Bingham (2004a) noted that well-designed law-based CMS within the U.S. diamond and cotton industries have developed rules in an adaptive way. However, evidence also shows that third parties who are not organizationally neutral have co-opted these strategies and systems, threatening employee protections in nonunionized workplaces in the United States (Lipsky & Seeber, 2006) and in Australia (Van Gramberg, 2006). We examine why organizations can abuse law-based CMS processes and suggest three design areas that merit particular attention if law-based systems are to achieve their intended purpose.

The first key process involves labeling an action or an omission as a transgression of rights, which gives rise to a specific and identifiable dispute. From this perspective, laws, principles, and the terms of employment contracts specify appropriate organizational behaviors. Only when policies or practices explicitly violate rights set out in relevant documents (e.g., harassment, discrimination, or poor working conditions) are organizational members legitimized to take their "case" to the relevant conflict management body. Identifying rights becomes problematic when policy documents offer vague or inadequate guidelines. Clair's (1993) analysis of institutional discourses of sexual harassment concluded that framing terms in a strategically ambiguous way discouraged victims from using policies.

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Table 17.1 Key Features of Law-Based, Management-Based, and Participation-Based Conflict Management Systems

Systemic Dimensions		*Issues*	*Law-Based System: Closed System That Aims to Confront Transgressions of Rights*	*Management-Based System: Internally Contained System That Aims to Solve Problems*	*Participation-Based System: Open System That Aims to Encourage Collaboration*
Objects	People	Quality and characteristics of neutrals	High level of third-party power—legal experts make decisions	Third parties (ombuds within organization/neutral outside organization) used as process managers who assist organizational members	Those stakeholders involved and those potentially affected. May involve inside or outside process facilitation
	Structures	Independence from organizational interference	Distinct legal departments and expert committees	In-house programs and alternative dispute resolution resources	Participant driven with external resources accessible
	Processes, policies, and procedures—nature of intervention	Potential of the process to escalate or reduce elements of the conflict	*Policies/procedures:* Arbitration, adjudication, peer review, employee appeals boards, executive panels, and mediation arbitration	*Policies/procedures:* Hot lines, open-door policies, suggestion boxes, employment assistance programs, and mediation	*Policies/procedures:* One to one, incident-driven facilitation and negotiation, group- and organization-wide processes, such as Strategic Options Development and Analysis
			Processes: Labeling, judging according to principles and rules, resolving, and eliminating conflict through system of blame and retribution	*Processes:* Identifying problems, preventing, containing, minimizing, problem solving, and apologizing	*Processes:* Inviting stakeholders, expressing, exploring, creating new solutions, naming, and reframing

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Attributes (= conflict culture)		Rights based	Interest based	Relationship based
		Retrospective analysis of Specific cases—past orientation to time	Analysis of organizational functioning—current orientation to time	Ongoing analysis of stakeholder participation/timeless orientation
		Focused on documents	Focused on productivity	Focused on people
Internal relationships	Due process protections	Rigid to rational/ cognitive	Rigid to flexible	Flexible
		Paper trail of documentation	Increased organizational control over how conflict is managed	Personalized, tailored to the situation, and fluid, responsive, and unpredictable
Environment	Impact of other systems on the overall conflict management system design	Overloaded legal system leads to use of noncourt legal processes. Causes driving "repeat offenders" not addressed by stand-alone system.	Focus on team dynamics and work groups but ignores more hidden forms of power	Focus on process and relationships requires skilled participants and facilitators to achieve goals
Aim of the system		Focus on processes that decrease costs	Focus on outcomes that minimize the probability of escalated conflict	Focus on relationships that empower stakeholders
		Aim is to avoid litigation	Aim is to avoid publicity and maintain work performance	Aim is to improve relationships

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Definitional issues are also significant in so-called ethical conflicts and when differences of opinions emerge among professionals who are experts in the field (Fox, Myers, & Pearlman, 2007). Additionally, those called on to judge the facts of the case must delineate the object of their inquiry and, by doing so, create clear beginning and end points to the conflict. The frames that are imposed specify whether evidence will include immediate or longer-term effects, direct or indirect costs, or the impact of the conflict on financial viability, organizational image, staff morale, and future standards of ethical behavior (Nelson, Weeks, & Campfield, 2008).

The second process requires an expert third party, rather than the stakeholders involved, to judge the facts of the case. Through law-based CMS strategies, such as arbitration, adjudication, peer review, employee appeals boards, executive panels, and mediation arbitration, third-party "neutrals" attempt to eliminate the conflict by assigning blame and responsibility to one of the parties and ensuring that the "loser" makes appropriate reparation to the wronged "winner." Empirical evidence suggests that employees seldom win, either because third parties are not organizationally neutral (Meltzer, 1998), or because larger organizations benefit from the repeat player effect or learning by experience how to manage the system to best advantage (Bingham, 1997). In response to criticisms that law-based CMS strategies compromise procedural justice and fairness (e.g., Feuille & Chachere, 1995), the United States has implemented the Due Process Protocol to protect organizational members during arbitration of statutory disputes (Zack, 1999). Representatives from labor associations, arbitration providers, and civil liberties organizations signed the protocol, which provides guidelines about the right to representation, cost sharing, access to information, and the training and selection of arbitrators. Significantly, the parties did not reach an agreement about whether employers have the right to insist on mandatory arbitration as a precondition to employment (American Arbitration Association, 2006).

Irrespective of improvements in practice, CMS designers and users need to critically examine three guiding principles at the systemic level: (1) the assumption of rational decision making, (2) the exclusively retrospective focus, and (3) the confront/avoid dynamic inherent in law-based CMS design. First, the complexity of conflict situations suggests that the rigid application of rationally determined categories and procedures to evaluate and settle rights-based cases is insufficient or inappropriate. In many cases, outcomes and procedures do not fit a neat right–wrong binary, and multiple paths are possible. For this reason, Fox et al. (2007) pointed out that the conflicts within ethics committees are frequently resolved by *voting* rather than by applying standardized procedures. In contrast to legal proceedings, which are public documents, law-based strategies such as arbitration and mini trials that operate in parallel to the legal system are frequently private and confidential, creating an institutional conspiracy of silence (Conrad & Taylor, 1994). Organizational interests are cloaked by an external guise of rationality and due process. Chew (2011), for example, found that employees who experience racial harassment fare far worse in arbitration cases than in court proceedings.

Second, present conflict situations are analyzed solely from a retrospective analysis of facts in light of particular rules, policies, and procedures. In some settings, relying on experts to interpret how current cases fit organizational policies is particularly problematic. For example, the head of emergency medicine at Canada's Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre pointed out that policies to resolve emergency room conflicts between doctors and patients' families already exist but that "the process usually takes a few

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days and the necessary personnel aren't available after hours" (Sibbald, 2001, p. 74). Critics have argued that lack of analysis of root causes underlying conflicts means that similar types of conflicts are likely to recur (Nelson et al., 2008) and "repeat offenders" are less likely to be identified. More proactive approaches to conflict management are needed for systemic change of organizational processes.

Third, although law-based CMS seem to foster *confrontation* about rights, organizations can also *avoid* challenges (van de Vliert, 1997) through strategic system design. When claims to rights threaten highly institutionalized policies and practices, more powerful parties may structure the CMS in such a way that the weaker party cannot initiate a case. In New Zealand, employer federations successfully lobbied the government to implement 90-day trial periods for new employees that deny them their right to file a personal grievance (Lansbury, Wailes, & Yazbeck, 2007). Bingham (2004a) pointed out that mandatory arbitration designed solely by one party can result in the deliberate creation of transaction costs that are so excessive that the other party decides not to pursue the claim. Some national sports organizations in Canada, for example, refer arbitration cases involving athletes to the independent Court of Arbitration for Sport, located not in Ottawa but in Lausanne, Switzerland (Haslip, 2001).

Management-Based CMS

ADR proponents usually term the development of management-based CMS as a *Copernican revolution in conflict management* because instead of negatively framing organizational conflict as a destructive force to be eliminated, conflict becomes a positive, active "means through which groups define the terms of their interactions and adapt to changing conditions" (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003, p. 194). We explain how this conflict frame influences practice at three levels and then identify the systemic implications of using a management-based CMS. First, the types of conflicts that management-based strategies claim to address are broader than substantive conflicts about workplace rights and may include interpersonal differences and disagreements about task processes or organizational goals.

Second, in lieu of narrowly defining conflict in terms of zero-sum gain disputes, management-based CMS use a range of interest-based policies and procedures that at face value emphasize mutual gain by all parties involved (Caverley, Cunningham, & Mitchell, 2005). Third, management-based CMS have been touted as fostering more democratic workplaces since ADR strategies attend to voice and give participants more control over the outcome of the conflict.

ADR cynics, on the other hand, have described some management-based procedures as a more nuanced "human resource strategy" (Mahony & Klaas, 2008, p. 259) that serves management's rather than employees' interests in two ways. First, hot lines, suggestion boxes, managerial mediation, open-door policies, and the use of organizational ombuds or employee assistance programs alert managers to problems before they mushroom into full-blown conflicts. Folger and Cropanzano (1998) discussed how skilled mediators can then use referential accounts to play down organizational members' claims by comparing their experiences with others who are worse off. Second, the use of ADR strategies does not always translate into organizational action. Open-door policies, for example, usually fail to effect any significant changes since higher-level managers tend to support decisions made by lower-level managers (Mahony & Klaas, 2008). Such organizational inaction or "deaf-ear syndrome" (Harlos, 2001) explains why some employees choose not to use ADR options.

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Additionally, unless the organizational culture cultivates the expression of dissent, organizations may view complaints as a form of protest (Harlos, 2010). Articulating a complaint may escalate the conflict and lead to negative consequences such as poor performance ratings or fewer chances of promotion (Colvin, 2003). Despite a long-standing organizational open-door tradition, Le Flanchec and Rojot's (2009) survey of French IBM employees found that only 12% had used *la porte ouverte* (the open door). Employees' reluctance stemmed from fear that using the open door would be poorly perceived by management and thus slow their career progression. In such cases, policies function "so that employees and managers voluntarily conduct themselves in the way management would like them to with a minimum of surveillance or coercion, but backed up by the twin threats of discipline or social disapproval" (Gadlin, 2005, p. 371).

Other management-based strategies such as external mediation with trained neutrals seem to resolve the problems of managerial bias and organizational inaction, as has been the case at the USPS. However, in the majority of cases, neither procedures nor outcomes can be publicly scrutinized due to strict confidentiality clauses. Adhesive binding mediation, for example, leads to confidential awards that preclude class action (Bingham, 2008). Moreover, in contrast to litigation, which both takes into account the past and creates future precedents, the individualized, organizationally contained nature of management-based strategies results in a lack of consistency across cases. Outcomes may be manifestly unfair, as in the case where managers inflate initial disciplinary action, knowing it will be toned down later through confidential mediation (Poitras, Belair, & Byrne, 2005).

Mediation used within a management-based system only works when both parties want to find points of commonality. Walker and Hamilton's (2011) study of the use of external, legally binding mediation to address grievance cases is illustrative. Walker and Hamilton focused on the process and outcome of 14 cases, using real-time data from interviews, direct observation, and analysis of premediation written submissions from employees, employers, and mediators. Even employees who "won" felt that their employment was not secure. Some of these employees left several months later due to a loss of workplace trust. In contrast to employees that company representatives forcibly "encouraged" to leave during the mediation process through monetary payouts, the employees who exited postmediation received no financial compensation.

The lesson here is that orientation to conflict management determines the ways in which strategies are used. Management-based conflict systems ultimately serve the goals of the organization, even when this negatively affects the individuals involved. CMS oriented toward management goals, and implemented by management in organizations, tend to operate with a top-down view and may only use consultative or relationship-based methods when these are seen to benefit the organization.

Participation-Based CMS

Trends in flatter organizational structures, team-based work, and changing workplace diversity and a broader conceptualization of organizational stakeholders all influence the nature of participation in organizations as well as approaches to conflict more specifically. We noted above that management-based strategies address conflict issues beyond workplace rights. Similarly, participation-based systems extend beyond situations identified as "conflict" to include stakeholder involvement in consultation, planning, and problem solving within organizations (Bryson & Anderson, 2000; Schwarz, 2005).

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If we take the view that democratic participation is participation of "the managed" in "management" (Arnstein, 1969), then participation implies a cooperative relationship between the managers and the managed. Thus, at the heart of participation-based CMS is a focus on relationships and an underlying assumption that such participation has benefits at personal, organizational, and societal levels. Maintaining a collaborative culture within the organization will enhance the system and the quality of life for those within it. Because of the multitude of differences among and within organizations, participation-based frameworks recognize that there are multiple ways for an organization to achieve its goals and to manage conflict at interpersonal, intraorganizational, and interorganizational levels—the principle of equifinality (Hall & Fagan, 1968).

One major influence on participation in organizations has been the increase in awareness of "stakeholders," which may be broadly defined as any group who will affect or be affected by an organization's decisions, actions, or strategies, including the "nominally powerless" (Bryson, 2004, p. 22). Their contributions can alert the organization to factors, issues, and concerns that management fail to see. Openness to unexpected input from internal and external stakeholders means that the organization remains responsive to internal and environmental changes.

A second influence is the increasing recognition that conflict and conflict management within organizations are not discrete episodes erupting outside of the norm but rather result from ongoing tensions among organizational goals, stakeholder issues, and a changing sociopolitical environment. Thus, the organizational culture has to not only allow but also enable and encourage stakeholders to be involved and initiate change at different stages of the conflict process. Conflict prevention begins with involvement in determining and agreeing on the overall purpose of the organization so that different stakeholders are clear about how the work that they do contributes to the organizational mission. Such participation may include "focused conversations" (e.g., Stanfield, 2000) or "strategic conversations" (van der Heijden, cited in Bryson, 2004) that seek to understand different viewpoints on the issue at hand before moving to decision and action.

A third influence on participation in organizations, and in particular conflict management, concerns the capacity of the organization to promote self-regulation at different levels of the system: (a) interpersonal; (b) group, team, and department; (c) organization; and (d) external relations. Such capacity is influenced by organizational culture, organizational goals, and systemic infusion of resources and programs that enable employees to develop appropriate interpersonal conflict management skills at a group or individual level (e.g., McCrane, Wilson, & Cammock, 2005). Trainers for a World Health Organization Healthy Communities initiative, for example, aimed to encourage stakeholders to express their own opinions and views using a dialogic model, yet without direction and guidance participants milled about in confusion and apparent apathy (Zoller, 2000).

Several practitioners have advocated facilitated group methods for meetings, teams, and large groups of people who rely on each other to achieve specific goals (Schwarz, 2005; Stanfield, 2000). Since such methods rely on an identified facilitator who manages the group *process* and attends to the relational dimensions of the group, group facilitation (Schwarz, 2005) and facilitative mediation (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001) emphasize developing understanding and the co- or reconstruction of a conflict situation (e.g., Harris, 2008; Putnam, 2004). Similarly, large-group interactive methods engage a wide range of stakeholders to increase the amount

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of information about key concerns and to build commitment to solutions (Bryson & Anderson, 2000). These methods are not specific to conflict management, but by focusing on common issues, they serve to build a relational foundation that allows conflict to be addressed as it emerges. Facilitated mediation, for example, has powerful effects on groups in conflict by enabling them to exchange points of view and reach a solution independently. Facilitative approaches also encourage participants to recognize the value of agreement, which confers long-term mutual benefit and reduces postcrisis tensions (Beardsley, Quinn, Biswas, & Wilkenfeld, 2006).

Organizations can adopt or adapt these process models, but there must be compatibility between the outcome and relational goals of the models and the organizational system. Rabinovich-Einy's (2007) analysis of Israeli hospitals, for example, found that the information gathering needed for participatory problem solving, systemic improvements, and organizational learning left hospital staff vulnerable in legal proceedings, and therefore, organizational members lacked incentives to document practices. This lack of compatibility compromises the integrity of participatory approaches and limits stakeholder input to superficial, short-term goals.

From a systems perspective, organizations that remain closed to input from unexpected but influential quarters will atrophy and fail to adapt to emerging environmental changes. Thus, participation-based methods rely on skill development at the individual and group levels, as well as systemic recognition of the part they can play in creating relational foundations conducive to effective conflict management. Conflict management methods that rely on dialogue help foster a sense of self-determination, relational commitment, and organizational justice.

We conclude this section on the three types of CMS available to organizations by considering when these systems will work effectively for an organization. *Law-based systems* best address bilateral conflicts about substantive concerns that have clearly defined parameters. The facts of the case need to be unambiguous, and the terms of reference about what is included and excluded must be acceptable to both parties in the conflict. Finally, the procedure whereby facts are selected, presented, and adjudicated must be perceived to be fair. *Management-based systems* require that individuals trust that the system possesses the resources for conflict management to be effective. Key resources include an appropriate neutral person to manage the process and managers who take action when conflict occurs. Individuals in conflict must have enough flexibility to engage with each other and to imagine that "they could behave nonadversarily (and that such behavior could produce a viable solution)," even though this "may be outside their lived experience to date" (Gray, 2006, p. 195). Such reframing requires a skilled facilitator who can help participants buy in to a schema revision process. To overcome the problems associated with organizationally contained decisions, process managers should also utilize organizational boundary spanners who can ascertain how strategies that foster organizational justice have been used in other settings. *Participation-based systems* need to identify relevant stakeholders, as failure to include the right people can result in failure to achieve organizational goals. These stakeholders must appreciate that the conflict may be resolved in multiple ways and possess the skills to participate fully in the process and contribute to the creation of outcomes.

From a systems perspective, organizations can choose to implement a law-, management-, or participation-based CMS that aligns with their organizational culture and overall purpose, interests, and goals. After all, one central characteristic of systems is "equifinality" (Hall & Fagan, 1968); there are many orientations and strategies available for a system to adopt

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in achieving its purpose. The next section explores a case study to illustrate this flexibility and the impact of strategy choices on the outcome of ongoing, multilevel conflict.

Problematizing the Three Systems: The Case of the "Unfortunate Experiment" Carried Out at New Zealand's National Women's Hospital

This case study is a story of conflict between medical personnel that began with competing views on what was the "correct" intervention when women presented with a given set of clinical indicators. It later developed into arguments about informed consent and patient rights. The case has also been framed as an abuse of power by the medical profession over the lay population, a gendered conflict between male doctors and female patients, and a "feminist witch hunt" that wrongly castigated medical practitioners (Bryder, 2009; Corbett, 1990). We take a systems approach to show how different CMS provide useful lenses on the conflict and offer alternative intervention strategies. We begin with a case summary and then undertake a detailed analysis before examining the case from law-, management-, and participation-based perspectives.

Case Summary

The NWH case is somewhat unique in that data are available from all the key players within the system as well as external sources. Sources include Coney and Bunkle's (1987) interviews with hospital staff and patients, statements from the commission of inquiry (Cartwright, 1988), published medical research articles (e.g., McCredie et al., 2008), opinion pieces in professional journals (e.g., Cameron, 2008), and extensive media reporting from 1987 onward.

Background. The environment within which this case took place changed from the 1950s–1960s to 1987 when the case became public—a period of considerable social change. Postwar policy in New Zealand focused on family health, full employment, and economic growth. Women worked primarily within the home and local community. The welfare system provided free medical care to New Zealand citizens, and the medical profession was generally held in high regard. Consistent with international standards of the time, however, no hospital in New Zealand had an ethics committee. It was not until 1964 that the World Medical Association *Declaration of Helsinki* (1964/1975) stated the need for informed consent and then too only for medical trials with no therapeutic benefit. In 1974, the New Zealand Accident Compensation Commission Act introduced a no-fault medical system that precluded individuals and institutions suing for medical misadventure, negligence, or malpractice.

Key Events. Associate Professor Herbert Green was head of the cervical cancer team at NWH from 1956 to 1982. He believed that women whose clinical results showed abnormal carcinoma in situ (CIS) cells would not later develop invasive cervical cancer. Green considered that the standard treatment of the time, a hysterectomy, was unnecessary "mutilating surgery" and so began to limit his interventions to cone biopsies to verify that malignant tissues had been removed.

The early success of less invasive procedures in managing CIS impelled Green to begin a longitudinal clinical trial in 1966 to document its "natural history" without treatment. Consequently, Green left lesions untreated, delayed the removal of abnormal tissue, and withheld biopsies for women below 35 with a "clear conscience" because he was convinced that the two diseases were distinct (Coney, 1988). Green proposed to use

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various diagnostic tests to satisfy himself that the women did not have invasive cancer from the outset. Although the experiment received the approval of the NWH medical committee in 1966, Green never requested or obtained patient consent.

Up until 1976, 131 women (of 948 in total) presented with persistent equivocal or abnormal cytology. Later analysis found that these women were 24.8 times more likely to develop cancer than those who received prompt treatment (McIndoe, McLean, Jones, & Mullins, 1984). By 1984, 8 of these women had died of invasive cervical cancer, as well as 4 more from the remaining 817 (McIndoe et al., 1984). Although McIndoe, McLean, and members of the NWH cytology department raised concerns about the trial, the hospital's management reaffirmed Green's assertion that the treatment plan would be discontinued if it posed significant risks to the women involved.

Subsequently, four clinicians engaged in a discrete whistle-blowing attempt within professional circles by publishing the clinical results in an international medical journal (McIndoe et al., 1984). Response was minimal until two health advocates stumbled across the article in 1987. After interviewing the key players, they ran the story in a national magazine, *Metro*, creating widespread public outrage (Coney & Bunkle, 1987). Two weeks later, the government initiated a commission of inquiry to investigate the CIS trial.

The commission (Cartwright, 1988) condemned Green's treatment as inadequate and the hospital management's lack of ethical oversight as negligent. It also called for a rigorous ethics approval process, legislated patient rights, the provision of patient advocates to remedy power imbalances in doctor–patient relationships, and the establishment of a health and disability commissioner to handle patient complaints about medical treatments.

Twenty-five years after the commission released its findings, this case remains contentious: Interpretations of the medical data and the commission's castigation of the medical profession have been criticized for reducing staff morale and damaging patient–clinician relationships (Overton, 2010; Paterson, 2010). Yet the outcomes resulting from the commission of inquiry have also been applauded for bringing long-term benefits to health consumers.

A Systems Analysis of Conflict

We begin our analysis by detailing the *objects, attributes, internal relationships*, and *external forces at work* in NWH as a system. We then examine the implications of applying the three CMS to the case.

Objects. In a system, *objects* include the people involved; their roles, responsibilities, and authorities; the conflict management strategies employed; and the organizational structures. NWH was a system within the Auckland Hospital Board system with additional relationships to another organization, the University of Auckland Medical School (the University). NWH was managed administratively by the Auckland Hospital Board, with Dr. Fred Moody as the medical superintendent-in-chief. Within NWH itself, the medical superintendent, Dr. Algar Warren, was responsible for its management. The Auckland Hospital Board employed clinicians, while research and teaching staff were attached to the University's medical school, which supervised postgraduate obstetrics and gynecology students. The University employed Professor Dennis Bonham, the head of NWH's Post-Graduate School, and Associate Professor Herbert Green (MDs). NWH's dual purpose heightened conflict about treatment and research goals and exacerbated relational tensions among medical professionals

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who perceived that others would prevent them from achieving their goals.

Coney (1988) claimed that within the hospital, University staff enjoyed higher status than clinical staff. The composition of the NWH medical committee reflected this status differential: Bonham chaired the committee, while Warren was only a member, along with Green, heads of clinical teams, the radiologist, and the head pathologist. Other significant members of staff were NWH colposcopist Dr. Bill McIndoe and pathologist Dr. Jock McLean, who both initially worked closely with Green. Green's research relied on careful monitoring of women's symptoms, and in this, the clinical services of McIndoe and McLean were pivotal. McIndoe published a study with Green in support of conservative treatment of CIS (McIndoe & Green, 1969). It can be seen that the degree of interdependence between staff and their respective organizations was high.

Attributes. Critical to the case was conflict about what counted as medical knowledge and whose views were privileged by the system. As a researcher during the medical trial, Green worked closely with pathologists and developed histological as well as clinical experience. Consequently, he challenged and sometimes *changed* McIndoe and McLean's diagnoses based on his knowledge of a case. Green's interference in his colleagues' area of specialization was exacerbated by his forceful personality. The commission of inquiry report described him as strongly opinionated with total confidence in his own judgment and little tolerance of criticism (Cartwright, 1988). McLean contested Green's ability to interpret cytology results without "adequate training and background" (Bryder, 2009, p. 79). Green (1985), however, framed results as opinions rather than facts. Certainly, neither man operated in an environment of medical "fact" as vigorous international debate about the relationship between CIS and invasive cancer continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Ostor, 1993).

Although McIndoe, McLean, and Green were professional peers, Green's access to the international research literature and prestige as a graduate teacher-researcher contributed to his ability to continue with the medical trial. McLean recalled his isolation from other doctors who did not want to incur Green's wrath by associating with McLean: "They feared I would open my mouth too wide. They have spoken behind Herb's back, but they won't confront him" (Coney & Bunkle, 1987, p. 58). The dissent, therefore, went largely underground, for while individuals questioned Green's views, they remained unchallenged by the system. The system privileged medical research rather than medical care and framed dissent as a "personality issue" that interfered with the system's purpose. From a conflict management perspective, the conflict that was hidden from the wider system continued to fester at the interpersonal level.

Internal Relationships. Even though NWH medical management was the responsibility of the medical superintendent (Warren), University staff exerted significant influence on clinical practice. Hospital structures afforded some opportunities for staff input into the decision-making process. Clinicians could bring up matters of concern at staff meetings, but the NWH medical committee, headed by Bonham, made final decisions. In response to Green's proposal to carry out a longitudinal study on CIS, McIndoe presented a memo on June 20, 1966, stating that tissue diagnosis would be inadequate. Despite his concern, the medical committee approved Green's study the same day. Peter Mullins, NWH statistician, claimed that McIndoe became "worried sick" about the research as he noticed the spread of CIS cells in some women from one diagnostic test to the next.

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Another pathologist, Dr. Stephen Williams, noted that Green removed cases from his research series where CIS had progressed to invasion on the basis that invasive cancer had been present—and under-diagnosed—from the outset (Jones & Fitzgerald, 2004).

In 1971, the first acknowledged death of a woman in the research occurred from invasive cervical cancer. The interpersonal conflict became more serious. While Green was abroad in 1971, McLean attempted to make internal system changes by establishing the NWH "Tumour Panel," where any staff member could introduce and openly discuss difficult cases. McLean remembered that junior resident doctors attended the Tumour Panel, which was convened by McIndoe, to be "entertained" by hearing the three men "slugging it out" (Coney & Bunkle, 1987, pp. 53–54). McIndoe and McLean also attempted to shift the debate outside of the system. At an international pathologists' conference in 1972, McIndoe mentioned that Green had unfairly reported the CIS results. The allegations created a rift in the two men's collegial relationship. Senior University staff also witnessed multiple, intense verbal arguments between Green and McIndoe (Coney & Bunkle, 1987).

In a further attempt to make system changes, in 1973, McIndoe and McLean formally requested that Warren reappraise the CIS policy. Warren took the complaint to Moody, but the Auckland Hospital Board's chief executive turned the decision back to NWH, and specifically the hospital medical committee, stating that the complaint required a clinical rather than an administrative decision. This demarcation of responsibility meant that the medical subsystem continued without any major new inputs from the wider system.

The NWH medical committee responded by establishing an internal committee to verify if the current CIS treatment protocols aligned with the 1966 policy. The 1975 report stated that "all staff members . . . have acted with personal and professional integrity" and that those embroiled in the conflict needed to "[subjugate] their personality differences in the interests of scientific enquiry" (Bryder, 2009, p. 83). The report also blamed the 1971 death on a "colposcopic miss." This action served to reinforce the medical dimensions of the conflict and suppressed it even further.

From 1974, however, individuals began to undermine the interdependence necessary for Green to continue his work. McIndoe refused to provide colposcopic services and McLean noted that doctors stopped transferring patients, although neither Bonham nor Warren was clear when the trial actually finished. These individual actions sought to reclaim the organization's health care goals over Green's research agenda. Green retired in 1982, but concern about Green's ongoing influence led McIndoe and McLean to publish the trial's results (McIndoe et al., 1984).

External Forces at Work. Significantly, the conflict at NWH, which resulted from poorly articulated roles and an administrative structure that deferred to medical expertise, was organizationally contained. The violent arguments about the tensions between therapeutic doctor–patient and research roles were part of the system's attempt to self-regulate and return to homeostasis. NWH members received no input from the wider system and their efforts to seek such input failed due to management's expectation that clinicians and researchers could work things out. Mclndoe and McLean also attempted but failed to get inside or outside third-party assistance. It took a complete outside force to blow open the system: the media (i.e., Coney & Bunkle, 1987).

Extensive media coverage tended to simplify the issues surrounding complex medical science, administrative structures, individual choices, and interorganizational relationships. Two powerful interest groups emerged from

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the media debate, with Green and his supporters on one side and feminist health advocates who took on the interests of the women under Green's supervision on the other. In the polarized media environment, both parties claimed to be "right."

CMS Analysis: Three Possible Lenses on the Case

Acknowledging that we can learn about multilevel conflict from this case, we now examine the impact of a law-based CMS on the conflict at NWH before turning to the potential effects of management-based and participation-based CMS.

The First Lens: A Law-Based System. The establishment of a commission of inquiry about the unfortunate experiment meant, de facto, the implementation of a law-based approach. We assess the outcomes of a law-based CMS using Hall and Fagan's (1968) systems analysis. The *objects* of the system that fell within the terms of reference of the commission were primarily confined to individuals, organizational roles, and administrative structures associated with NWH. In line with law-based CMS' tendency to rely on expert third-party intervention, the *Cartwright Report* recommended that regional ethics committees, independent of hospitals, be established. Ironically, despite law-based systems' claim to neutrality, the members of the commission became participant actors in the conflict and insisted that the hospital system in its current state, and medical practice more broadly, needed to be changed. Indeed, the inquiry was instrumental in drawing up new codes of practice (see http://www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/) combined with systemic change of practices around informed consent, patient rights, and external peer review.

The *environment* of extensive media coverage and public outcry that surrounded the inquiry meant that the *attributes* of the law-based system reinforced an ongoing win–lose rather than an integrative solution. The shift to the public arena amplified the desire to assign blame and responsibility for the deaths of those women who had already died (and those dying at the time). The choice of a semi-legal process—a commission of inquiry—as a conflict management strategy, reframed the conflict in terms of rights rather than interests: *patients' rights* during medical research and *women's rights* to make decisions about their own health and the medical profession's *rights* to choose care and research interventions. The rights-based emphasis polarized the conflict along oppositional "right–wrong," "perpetrator–victims," and "heroes–villains" lines. The medical professionals at NWH and Green in particular became easy targets. In contrast, the media hailed McIndoe, who had died of a heart attack in 1986, as an unsung hero.

Unfortunately, since the groups involved were fighting about different issues, they failed to listen to each other. Some of Green's concerns, however, such as loss of women's fertility and the creation of needless fear of cancer in women with minor conditions, may have resonated with some feminist concerns about women's health. Moreover, the creation of two adversarial groups obscured the needs of highly diverse members of the New Zealand medical profession and women who had been Green's patients. While young doctors tended to validate the findings of the inquiry and embrace its emphasis on patient-centered care, many older doctors who had been "[serving] patients well for 40 years to the best of our abilities" (Pryor, 1990, p. 355) resented criticism of their practice. The possibility of a generational divide between women who accepted the word of the "god-like professor of medicine" (Brookes, 2009, p. 111) and those who would not also deserves investigation. However, a law-based CMS was

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unlikely to consider these nuances, since its narrow focus limited the scope to the organization under investigation and privileged experts' judgments about whose voices were more convincing.

The new set of *internal relationships* brought about by the commission of inquiry emphasized the importance of medical accountability and health consumers' rights. Increased codification of policies and procedures aimed to meet both of these goals. The Auckland Area Health Board[1] responded to the inquiry's recommendations by instituting a disciplinary policy for medical staff who did not comply with the informed consent guidelines, perhaps reinforcing the need for colleagues to blow the whistle to expose poor practice. The Board also established a complaints procedure for patients to bring rights issues to the attention of a patient advocate, the medical superintendent, the Auckland Area Health Board Committee, a disciplinary body of medical practitioners, or the health commissioner. Each of these interventions in that order represents an escalation in the scale of the conflict.

The case complexifies the notion of whether conflict will be negative or positive and for whom. Patients may seem to benefit from advocacy and the privileging of their perspectives within medical interactions and doctors might lose through lowered process and decision control (Ross & Conlon, 2000). However, we argue that both sides have lost due to lowered levels of trust. Patients assume that doctors may not act in their best interests and doctors fear complaints and public exposure. Law-based CMS' rights focus downplays the possibility of identifying common interests and does not address the impact on relationships within the system. While participatory models of practice are still possible at an interpersonal or small-group level, rights-based conflict management processes ignore the role of interdependence.

The Second Lens: A Management-Based System. Management-based CMS aim to prevent, minimize, and resolve conflict. In this section, we suggest how a management-based CMS could have been implemented and identify its possible outcomes. As the interpersonal and professional relationships between these two groups were central to the conflict, the *objects* within the management-based CMS are likely to have included the clinical staff employed by NWH as well as the teaching and research staff employed by the University. We propose that private, mandatory mediation could have been used to clarify their respective roles and responsibilities, as some organizational members such as Green and Bonham dealt with the conflict by ignoring opposition and may have refused to participate voluntarily. In this case, we suggest that two organizationally neutral mediators would be needed. Given the importance attached to status within the hospital community, a University professor who was not an obstetrics and gynecology specialist, and therefore not swayed by Green's influence, might have contributed to perceived procedural justice. We suggest that the second neutral person be an ethicist, since the 1974 working party received some of the harshest criticism by the inquiry for "confusing etiquette with ethics" (Cartwright, 1988, p. 88). These resources were readily available in 1987: Epidemiologist Dr. Charlotte Paul and medical ethicist Professor Alistair Campbell were called as expert advisors in the course of the inquiry.

The *attributes* of a management-based system frame conflict in terms of apparently incompatible interests. Management-based processes, such as mediation, aim to help parties find points of convergence so as to maintain productivity and work performance. For example, the mediator may have shifted the discussion from disagreement about what did or did not constitute evidence of CIS to discussion of appropriate scientific design,

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reporting, and evaluation of medical research. Another key area may have involved negotiating ethical guidelines. Nonetheless, although mediation may have democratized intraorganizational decision making, the CMS might not have explicitly considered criticisms by stakeholders from outside the bounds of the organizational system.

Consequently, we speculate that the mediation process may not have integrated patient advocates into the system as they fell outside the immediate organizational boundaries. Although individuals such as McIndoe, McLean, and other non-NWH medical committee doctors outside the "Herb Green camp" emphasized health over research outcomes, the conflict was still framed as an interest-based dispute between doctors who disagreed about what was best for patients. Hence, strategies involved peer review within the hospital and the international research community without reference to (or interference by) broader society and the issues that might concern people if they knew.

The *internal relationships* that result from a management-based CMS increase organizational control of its members. Review and clarification of the obligations and roles of employees and subsequent reorganization of hierarchical reporting lines and ethics committee membership and the establishment of guidelines for questions relating to medical ethics would all be mechanisms that give managers greater levels of control over the behavior of individual clinicians. Increased internal accountability would likely maintain the health system's status quo: The medical profession would maintain its reputation and medical trials deemed by doctors to have therapeutic benefit would continue with informed consent.

The Third Lens: A Participation-Based System. The commission of inquiry may have involved a broad range of stakeholders, but we argue that this was not participation. Although the commission opened NWH's organizational system to public critique, the CMS was not participatory as the relationship between parties to the inquiry tended to be adversarial rather than cooperative. In fact, relationship conflict was so entrenched that implementing a participatory strategy could have amplified the negative impacts rather than moderating the conflict (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003). A participation-based CMS also needs to provide appropriate mechanisms for feedback/input that are legitimized by the system itself. NWH, however, did not legitimate any form of feedback from external sources, so when the media weighed in, breaking all the rules, people took sides without engaging the other.

The *objects* within an effective participation-based CMS have the broadest scope of any CMS. Relevant stakeholders would include all the parties affected by the events at NWH and power differentials in health provision more generally. For example, women's health groups, women who were happy with the treatment they received, and women who had never been to the hospital would need to be included. Trainee doctors, medical educators, general practitioners, and community health specialists would also be important participants, in addition to staff from the University and NWH. These stakeholders would have determined, together, the issues that the group should address. Participation-based CMS would be likely to address broader questions such as the nature of the therapeutic relationship between doctors and patients in light of informed consent and the role of medical research.

The key *attribute* of participation-based CMS is the development of ongoing relationships. Before these stakeholders could discuss their perspectives on the events at NWH, facilitators would need to encourage participation and repair relationships among some of these groups. A facilitator would be vital to monitor progress and establish goals

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since this process could easily derail over to the long time period needed to (re)build trust. Since dialogic models that aim to encourage participants to express their own opinions and views can fail without appropriate guidance, group leaders would also need to ensure that participants could confidently and skilfully articulate their perspectives and experiences without feeling overwhelmed by the complex science involved in the case.

The *internal relationships* of participation-based CMS would give rise to outcomes that reflect the composition of and relationships within the group. A community panel might contain medical representatives and laypersons of various ethnicities and professional backgrounds. The outcomes are also likely to be adaptable as the environmental conditions and members' needs change. However, we suggest that the implementation of diverse forms of patient advocacy and the introduction of a medical ethics committee would be likely outcomes of ongoing community consultation.

Summary

What is significant is that all three approaches to conflict management are likely to deliver similar outcomes with respect to patient rights/support and medical ethics. This is not surprising, given that equifinality is an important aspect of systems. However, the internal relationships among the objects of each system could be quite different. Specifically, since law-based CMS operate by assigning blame to one party, the upshot was that patient advocates and doctors adopted adversarial positions about patient rights. Management-based CMS would likely maintain current organizational systems and relationships without addressing the tensions between professional competence and patients' rights. We suggest that the governance of a management-based CMS would then to be entrusted to a self-regulating professional body. Imagining a participation-based CMS is the most challenging, as it would likely foster ongoing fluid, emergent, cross-sectorial, and collaborative partnerships, perhaps leading to long-term change in the goals of the system.

Finally, the case underscores how the purpose for implementing a CMS influences decisions about the inclusion and sequencing of conflict management strategies within a CMS. Purpose can include ensuring *compliance* with legal requirements, minimizing the *costs* of conflict, avoiding or mitigating a publicly embarrassing *crisis*, or effecting *change* within an organizational culture so as to align mission and practice (Lynch, 2001). While a management-based CMS would focus on averting crisis and participation-based CMS on creating conditions for change, in this case, the first three *C*s influenced the design of the new law-based health system, which shifted power from doctors to patients. Patients became "clients," and the third parties that monitor conflicts between clients and providers included "powerful" patient advocates (Cartwright, 1988), women's health and consumer groups, and, as a last resort, an independent health and disability commissioner. The institutional arrangements have consolidated this change in the distribution of power (Aula & Siira, 2010), which perhaps explains the controversy and division that the commission's findings and outcomes continue to generate 25 years later.

Future Directions and Conclusions About CMS and Organizing

Much of the CMS literature has documented a paradigm shift in the way we understand conflict and the type of conflict strategies that organizations select due to changes in the environment within which organizations operate. We have shown that environmental

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influences operate in conjunction with the objects, attributes, and internal relationships within organizational systems to create CMS frameworks. A *law-based CMS* framework focuses on developed disputes about rights and takes a retrospective, adversarial approach to assigning blame. New non-court procedures such as arbitration or peer review aim to decrease the time and financial costs associated with judging and eliminating organizational conflicts. A *management-based CMS* frames the conflict in terms of interests and addresses a wider range of conflict issues. Strategies such as mediation and open-door policies aim to prevent and contain the conflict at the lowest possible level to enable an organization to maintain and protect its own interests. A *participation-based CMS* engages all stakeholders and creates opportunities to contribute to organizational planning and problem solving using procedures such as focused conversations or facilitation. Its aim is to empower stakeholders and to foster ongoing relationships. We do not advocate one framework that will work for every organization but instead that organizations select an appropriate CMS framework mindfully and consider how combining elements from diverse frameworks will have an impact on the system as a whole.

The systemic perspective, moreover, is valuable from a theoretical as well as applied perspective, as it shows that CMS research cannot treat organizations as contained entities. As the NWH case demonstrated, we need to conceptualize CMS as systems within broader organizational systems, which contain multiple subsystems and have permeable boundaries. Not only are organizational boundaries increasingly blurred, but the types of interrelationships among overlapping systems are also becoming more complex. The prevalence of interorganizational collaborations that combine organizational systems and CMS and communities of practice that create extraorganizational specialist groups with common interests and goals create new challenges for CMS research. It would also be fruitful to integrate organizational research about the tensions between organizational CMS and wider professional systems, as professional bodies act as an extra-organizational resource. Specifically, while research has investigated what CMS might look like in for-profit and government settings, we need to investigate how nonprofit organizations use CMS. We also need to consider the effects of corporate and government partnerships, for-profit and nonprofit collaborations, and nonprofit and government initiatives on CMS design.

Furthermore, the spatial and temporal dimensions of processes and procedures within the CMS have also become more fluid. The evolution of online dispute resolution and its impact on law-based, management-based, and participation-based CMS also merits investigation. Online communities may expand the number of stakeholders in participation-based systems, for instance, and need to be carefully integrated with face-to-face conflict management strategies. We also suggest that media have played, and continue to play, an important role in the ways in which CMS are designed, implemented, and evaluated. The role of media—and in particular the implications of social media for CMS—need to be interrogated further. Finally, and in line with best practice understood as flexibility and adaptability, we call for further research in a range of cultural and organizational settings that show how CMS respond to the needs of diverse populations and address local issues and dynamics.

The case reinforces the principle that each CMS has strengths and weaknesses depending on the type of conflict and the organizational systems and environment within which the conflict is embedded. Nonetheless, much of the current discussion about CMS focuses on the adoption of a specific set of best-practice strategies. Lipsky et al. (2003)

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described the current environment as one in which we are searching "for the dominant model" (p. 22). We suggest that implementing off-the-shelf solutions to CMS design is problematic. The paradox of best practice is that the more one prescribes how CMS ought to operate, the more inflexible systems become. To avoid system atrophy, implosion, or explosion, system designers need to consider whose rights, interests, and voices are privileged and to what extent these are flexible in a system. Best practice, then, means having the courage to look at all the approaches on offer and decide, or even develop, approaches that meet the needs of the stakeholders involved at that particular moment.

Note

1. The Auckland Health Board and the Auckland office of the Department of Health merged in 1988 to form the Auckland Area Health Board, which was subsequently responsible for National Women's Hospital.

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SECTION 3

COMMUNITY CONFLICT

Introduction to Community Conflict

John G. Oetzel and Stella Ting-Toomey

Community has many meanings, contexts, and definitions. Community can refer to psychological sense of community (Glynn, 1981; Parker et al., 2001), an aggregate of physically colocated individuals (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988), individuals who share a pattern of interaction (Hunter, 1974), social capital and social networks (Kawachi, Kennedy, Lochner, & Prothrow-Stith, 1997), or a political entity (Long, 1986). For our purposes, community is a collection of people who share interaction, location, and/or a sense of belonging to one another. Community is often thought of as a neighborhood or group of people, who share the same physical space; yet virtual communities constructed through social media and other "traditional" Internet resources (e.g., e-mail) are prevalent.

Scholars over the past decades have lamented about the loss of community or the loss of close interpersonal relationships in a physical space (Putnam, 1995). There are a number of challenges to constructing healthy communities, including citizenship deficits, scarce resources, increased economic competition, greater focus on individualism, and globalization. The loss of community is important as healthy communities have positive health, social, and economic outcomes for its members (Kawachi et al., 1997; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997).

The challenges to healthy community are generally factors that relate to conflict. People from different cultural backgrounds, scarce resources, and increased competition are all factors that can lead to increased conflict in a community. Many scholars illustrate the negative effects of community conflict. For example, Warfield (2006) illustrated the ways in which disenfranchisement of minority groups can lead to interethnic conflict under certain conditions. In these conditions, the conflict often leads to violence and distrust among groups. In the first edition of this *Handbook*, we noted that the consequences of community conflict

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appear to polarize individuals and lead to violence more so than in the previous two contexts (interpersonal and organizational). We argued that the conflict over scarce resources that typifies community conflicts results in "us versus them" scenarios because the parties involved perceive lack of intimacy/closeness or lack of coordinated activity. Yet the "us" and "them" often live and work in close physical proximity or have social structures that are interdependent, and thus, conflict communication becomes a frequent activity.

The authors of the chapters in this section focus on exploring these types of community conflicts. They do not advocate for trying to minimize or avoid conflict because of the importance for addressing the underlying causes of community conflict and also the ongoing nature of the conflict (i.e., the conflict continually needs to be managed). Rather, they emphasize the effective management of conflict that may reduce the negative consequences and facilitate growth and opportunity from conflict. The authors see the necessity of conflict and yet explore ways to learn and address conflict in an ethical and constructive manner to build trust and positive relationships. We organize this section by first having a chapter that provides an overarching framework for conflict communication, ethics, and civic engagement. Then, we include four chapters of specific types of community conflicts: environmental conflict, trust/conflict in community–academic partnerships, religion and conflict, and moral conflict. We conclude this section with the chapter introducing the notion of designing dialogue to address community conflict.

In Chapter 18, Cheney, Beck, and Cline bring together three separate strands of literature to create an integrative framework for examining community conflict: (1) conflict, (2) engagement, and (3) ethics. Their purpose in bringing these strands together is that they see that scholars of conflict need to consider ethics in their work with communities. By conflict, they focus on the commitment to air multiple viewpoints and work through conflict. By engagement, they synthesize literature that includes activities such as outreach, partnering, service learning, and community-based research. Finally, ethical concerns are relevant when considering community intervention or effecting change in a community. In addition to reviewing and critiquing the literature in each of these areas, they integrate these strands using a case study of Libby, Montana, which experienced high levels of asbestos and the negative health effects associated with it. Cheney et al. illustrate the intersection of conflict, engagement, and ethics as various entities tried to address the effects of asbestos in the community.

In Chapter 19, Peterson and Feldpausch-Parker address public participation in environmental conflict. The authors explain that the legal context and social demand for public participation have brought environmental conflict to the fore. They identify various approaches to engaging in public participation. In particular, they review, synthesize, and critique public hearings (the most commonly used method of public participation) and consensus-based processes. Finally, they discuss the development of promising research lines identified in the first edition of this chapter. Specifically, they note that frame theory provides a focus on the experiences that shape negotiators' respective frames for conflict. They also illustrate that critical performance study is an innovative approach to environmental conflict as it provides a rich basis for the sources and social dynamics of reflexivity. The third promising approach is systems analysis; it offers an integration of biophysical processes and social practices that converge in environmental conflict.

In Chapter 20, Lucero and Wallerstein address a particular type of community engagement: community–academic relationships in

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the context of health research projects. The authors begin with a case study to illustrate the conflict and trust issues that can occur in a community–academic partnership. They explain that building trust enables partnerships to have open communication, information sharing, and conflict management. Lucero and Wallerstein introduce the principles of community-based participatory research, a form of community engagement that emphasizes co-construction and equal power/influence in research projects involving communities. The authors then integrate these principles into a model of trust development and decline to illustrate how managing conflict and building trust can occur within this type of community engagement. They conclude by offering recommendations to future community–academic partnerships on how to improve their understanding of trust as a way to reduce conflict and also offer future research directions.

In Chapter 21, Croucher discusses the importance of religion for conflict in communities. Religion is a source for many community conflicts, and Croucher advocates for increased research in this area. He argues that religion should be studied from a cultural perspective in terms of values and identities. In the chapter, he explores the philosophical/doctrinal traditions and roots of conflict in Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism, the three largest religious groups in the world. He summarizes these doctrines in terms of geography, key beliefs, texts/figures, and denominations/sects. Croucher then examines how religious identification and strength of religious devotion (religiosity) have been studied in relation to various conflict traits/behaviors, including dissent, relational conflict, and conflict styles. He concludes by offering future work linking religious identification/affiliation and religiosity with conflict research as this is an underdeveloped area in communication studies.

In Chapter 22, Littlejohn and Cole introduce moral conflict—a clash created between groups or individuals based on incommensurate philosophical assumptions or moral orders. Communication in such situations can be strident and destructive, but with conscious intent and a creative approach, civil, even productive, discourse can take place in the face of moral difference. Productive discourse allows for rich opportunities for interpersonal learning, improved relationships, and creative collaboration. The authors begin by defining moral conflict and utilize a case study of Pornotopia in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to illustrate it. They then review the theoretical influences and case studies that have informed research on moral conflict. Littlejohn and Cole explore three discourses of conflict as they relate to moral conflict: (1) advocacy, (2) negotiation, and (3) redefinition. They argue that redefinition, through transcendent communication, holds hope for the transformation of intractable conflicts.

In Chapter 23, Barge and Andreas address the problem of community conflict as exacerbated by citizenship and democratic deficits. That is, people are participating less and less in community activities and also do not trust democratically elected leaders to represent their interests. They argue that deliberative democracy through dialogical practices is a key way to address citizenship and democratic deficits. Dialogue is a conversational process where parties take turns addressing each other to coordinate their meaning making and relationships. Barge and Andreas then use notions of communication as design and dialectical theory to articulate the challenges that designers of dialogues need to address when they create processes and events. Communication as design explicates ideals for communicative practice and creates thick descriptions of the interactional problems. Dialectical theory emphasizes the tensions of dialogues and the ongoing nature of conflict. The authors address three core questions in their chapter and offer examples of how these questions

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can be answered: What characterizes dialogical forms of communication? What dialectical tensions may emerge during dialogue? How can dialectical tensions be managed when designers plan and structure dialogue?

In sum, research on community conflict represents a variety of perspectives and communities. Underlying these chapters is a focus on belonging to one's own community and interdependence to other communities. These interdependencies create challenges that often result in conflict as communities attempt to reconcile value, moral, cultural, and religious differences. In addition, the importance of dialogue is paramount in addressing community conflict in an ethical manner that builds trust and fosters creativity. These chapters help illustrate the intricacies in managing community conflict.

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18

Community Conflict, Ethics, and Civic Engagement

George Cheney, Gary Beck, and Rebecca J. Cline

Introduction: Outlining and Casing the Terrain

This unusual but timely chapter explores the intersection of three areas of investigation—(1) *conflict* (resolution), (2) civic/community *engagement*, and (3) practical communication *ethics*. These may seem unaccustomed bedfellows. All three are of course well represented within the field of communication studies, both theoretically and practically; however, neither a well-established nor clearly articulated literature has developed at their intersection. Consequently, we delineated the boundaries for this review over the course of multiple iterations of this chapter. This unpopulated intersection is nevertheless important. Our focus is useful and important given trends toward outreach from the academy, pressing needs of our communities to deal with all sorts of conflict, and the bringing of applied ethics into the full view of the nonphilosophical world. Resources for this chapter are necessarily diverse. Using an integrative case study, based on a major piece of community-based research, we deepen discussion of the three themes and their interrelations.

Of course, it is important for us to visualize what we are talking about: especially, how scholars of conflict—and by extension, dialogue and peacemaking—can consider practical ethics in their work with and within communities. Part of the issue is the insularity of these arenas, as exemplified by scholarly and practical networks, publication outlets, and vocabularies. Thus, these three literatures have developed largely independently, in both academic and community circles. Given the maturation of all three areas, the time is right for their integration.

AUTHORS' NOTE: *The first two authors contributed equally to this chapter. The third author was invited to join the effort in the important but final stage to offer a profile of an in-depth case study featuring the three major subtopics addressed here.*

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The literature on *conflict*, as represented by this volume, is vast; we emphasize our selected treatment of it here. In addition to concern for sources, punctuations, and trajectories of conflict, we note that well-established lines of research on specific aspects of language, interaction, and rhetoric related to conflict—notably under headings like "dialogue," "neutrality," "reframing," "facilitation," and "reconciliation"—are relevant here. The two terms *alternative dispute resolution* and *mediation* are more precise in their points of reference than the five listed above, that is, at least to the extent that professional certification is often involved or implicated. This family of techniques and the accompanying perspective do not necessarily suggest strict neutrality. However, they invoke a strong commitment to airing multiple viewpoints and especially to allowing important sources of conflict to come to the table and be worked through (e.g., Wilmot & Hocker, 2010).

Engagement—in multiple senses of the term, including related concepts of outreach, partnering, service learning, and community-based research—is quite developed within and beyond communication studies. Community-based research as under this rubric has a 20-plus-year history that allows for some consolidation of findings about deliberate efforts to engage communities, on both small (e.g., university class–based) and large (program- or center-based) scales (Myers-Lipton, 2009). No longer of a marginal status in the academy, the serious "engagement of engagement" is making its way into program development, the profiles of universities and colleges, and reward systems for faculty (see, e.g., Harriger & McMillan, 2007). In communication studies, we find reports and publications on major, long-term projects related to community engagement. These address a variety of topics including racial relations, environmental protection, political participation, access to higher education, and community economic development (see, e.g., Spano, 2001). Engaged scholarship is becoming fully institutionalized as faculty reward systems begin to recognize its dual contribution to the community and the university (Gunn & Lucaites, 2010; Simpson & Shockley-Zalabak, 2006).

Applied or practical ethics is at the point of sophisticated applications and adaptations to many different areas, including the interrelationship of academic and community affairs, brought into the foreground in this review. Applied ethics is relevant to concepts and practices involving the communication process itself (Craig, 1989; see also the first discipline-wide collection in Cheney, May, & Munshi, 2011). However, applied ethics is also relevant even when communication itself is *not* the focus as when we consider the ways certain kinds of content (e.g., about aspects of difference, environmental classism, and racism) are framed and presented to community members and students. In other words, we may speak of both implicit and explicit ethical concerns and both communication-based and communication-related concerns.

Reflexivity enters into our discussion in that central to the traditions of community engagement, conflict resolution, and communication ethics is a reflection on the communication process itself (e.g., Hedges, 2008; Kendall, 2011). Finally, ethical concerns automatically come into play when considering community *intervention*. Even if research is not expressly framed as intervention, the capacity to effect change—and by implication, *harm*—should be acknowledged, as we discuss extensively below, in bringing together the three major themes of this chapter via a longitudinal, multidimensional case study.

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Reconsidering Communication and Conflict at the Community Level, With an Eye Toward Academic Engagement

This section of the chapter first addresses the arenas and sources, then the punctuation and trajectories, of conflict encountered at the community level. We draw principally from the conflict/dispute resolution and mediation literatures, and related applications, especially in psychology, sociology, political science, and education. The spirit of this inquiry is congruent with that of the analysis by Barge (2006), who wrote of the importance of transcending levels of analysis as well as boundaries between traditional and more engaged forms of inquiry in the interest of promoting genuine dialogue in situations of actual or potential conflict.

In this section of the chapter, our primary concern is *conflict itself*, with an eye toward how scholar-practitioners encounter it. We extract only a few highlights from the conflict literature and explain some links to engagement and ethics, especially in terms of community-based and -oriented research. We focus attention on (a) sources and origins of community-based conflict; (b) the punctuation and trajectories of community-based conflicts; and (c) the most relevant findings from the conflict management/resolution literature for engaged scholarship in situations where community conflict is present or emerges.

Arenas and Sources of Community-Based Conflicts

University-based research partners need to be aware of multiple factors involved in developing resources, interests, goals, and interactions for the community and community groups being engaged. The focus on *interest groups*, often associated with pluralism in political thought (see, e.g., Dahl, 1985), is helpful. That focus lends itself to communication-centered analysis, especially in terms of *what counts as interests* in the public domain and how the very articulation of interests affects the course of one's engagement of conflict or negotiations as well as the negotiations themselves (Mackenzie, 1978). Of course, what counts as genuine interests is in itself contested in theory and practice, given that what is observable and salient is part of a larger picture (Lukes, 1974). We define interests as *self-identified and expressed common concerns* that may have practical implications for community pursuits, including public policy formation. The interest-group emphasis lends itself to a communication-based analysis, particularly when the role of communication networks is brought in to sharpen the analysis or when the network analysis is used to reveal persistent patterns of segregation in a community (e.g., Safford, 2009).

Interest groups may consist of tightly knit and well-recognized entities or loose coalitions or even emergent (or incipient) networks. Such groups are situated not only within a matrix of political, economic, and social forces but also within the flow of their own experiential histories. For example, community groups that have been partners in failed projects (e.g., related to urban renewal, school improvement, health care access for the poor, or environmental preservation) may subsequently be reluctant to work together. Their contemplated pursuits are understandably shadowed by the memories of problematic attempts at collaboration. This may hinder future collaboration and further entrench the groups in their own accustomed networks and worldviews (see, e.g., Schein, 2010). In every city, a de facto hierarchy of neighborhood associations emerges (however formal or informal the structure may be). This hierarchy is rather quickly revealed with a well-established reputational methodology (i.e., identifying who are the

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most powerful players in this community/city/area; see, e.g., Hunter, 1953). These differing resources and influences should be understood and taken into account by the researcher(s) from the start. Role and status factors not only implicate initial expectations about how a conflict or a set of negotiations will ensue but also affect interactions about an issue. Furthermore, both more established and informal types of power (see especially French & Raven, 1959) shape expectations that various parties have for outcomes of conflicts even as they are first engaged with one another.

Attempts at transformation through dialogue must take into account "the playing field" at the beginning of the researcher's involvement. Consider the experience of neighborhood coalitions in the East Side of Austin, Texas, a rapidly growing city with many established and reasonably close-knit neighborhoods, carrying a legacy of restructuring by race in the early 20th century and now being transformed by gentrification as well as some forms of integration (Smithson, 2009). Part of this geographic, economic, and cultural landscape is differential power related to the siting of environmental hazardous activities or waste materials. Given a history of battling toxic industrial companies in their community, from the early 1990s and with recent success in the late 2000s, the PODER (or *power* in Spanish) group rallied East Austinites and greater city residents to protest and raise awareness. In this case, a thorough knowledge of history, the parties, community governance, and informal as well as formal interest-group politics is foundational for effective practical research aimed at enlightenment, intervention, or both. This same knowledge is relevant now on the East Side of Austin as new efforts at grassroots community economic development are being pursued, largely outside the auspices of local governments and necessarily dealing with geographic and social divisions within that part of the city and between that part of the city and the metropolitan area as a whole.

The stakeholder perspective, an important and popular perspective on community conflict, takes into account the idea of broad representation and participation. It follows from the assumption that conflict among competing interests and groups is a given and carries an ethical stance that everyone who has a "stake" in an issue ought to be brought to the table (Deetz, 1995). However, the stakeholder perspective does not always presume that all interests are explicitly identified or articulated. Some interests may not even be nascent or strongly felt by consistently oppressed or underprivileged parts of a community (e.g., as may be seen in recent efforts to evoke class-based identities in the Occupy movement and associated conflicts). Thus, some versions of a stakeholder perspective involve an ethical-practical stance that argues for including even those groups who may not be fully aware of their stake in a problem. In this way, researchers who adopt a strong stakeholder perspective can try to take an interventionist stance up front, whereby they are, to some extent, admitting their roles as potential change agents by bringing together an array of groups where some may not yet be engaged.

In the environmental arena, for instance, what is called *the multi-stakeholder framework for dialogue* has emerged strongly and been applied to cases where the formal institutions and channels (e.g., environmental impact hearings) do not offer opportunities for what many would regard as authentic dialogue, as well as to cases where breakthroughs in integrative or nonzero-sum forms of bargaining are seen as desirable and possible (see, e.g., Callister, 2012; Peterson & Horton, 1995; Walker, 2004). Stakeholder perspectives, as developed in fields ranging from philosophy to management, tend to take seriously both an ethic of "ownership" in a problem or an

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issue and commitment to widening and deepening participation beyond what may have been already functioning or assumed (within communication, see especially Deetz, 1995). Stakeholder perspectives on participation have been linked closely with dialogic perspectives on communication in projects related to race and ethnicity, class, health, the environment, and community economic development. For example, universities and colleges dealing with systemic binge drinking cultures are confronting not only the individual who abuses alcohol and the others that he or she harms. But they are also confronting subcultures that enable excessive drinking, administrators who are not doing enough to handle the problem, an overall university culture that encourages "letting loose" after a hard week of studying, and years during which the problem goes underground and seemingly "disappears."

Just as the origin and history of conflict within the community may have importance (e.g., to understanding the context), so too may the *entry point* of the research, service, or intervention, as well as the type of relationship between the investigator and the community (group, constituency, stakeholder, and party). Ultimately, then, *we must consider both preexisting conflicts as a subject of investigation and conflicts, which may arise as a result of the investigations themselves*. The latter is not the type of conflict to which most researchers want to admit or about which they ordinarily wish to comment; however, it is part of the reality of complex, sensitive, and perhaps even volatile community engagements.

Community ethnographic researchers have grappled with this issue in the form of *consequential presence*, an embracing version of the concept referring to the seen and unseen effects of the researcher's presence on participants and the community. Higher degrees of involvement, through assessment, intervention or actual participation, warrant extensive preparation and debriefing regarding potentially significant and lasting effects of the research on the community. Thus, community partners should be involved at some level in how problems are framed at the outset, and in some cases, even having input on methodological choices. Researchers should carry these initial conversations with them as they continue formulating the research.

The Punctuation and Trajectories of Conflict as Bearing on Community Engagement

Rarely does a researcher step into a community, get to know all the participants, learn about groups with their competing interests, and then watch a conflict completely unfold before her or his eyes. More often, researchers step into communities and their issues midstream and have to account for how members view their experiences in that community, including their takes on relevant conflicts. Almost inevitably, competing narratives of the conflict will surface, with differing views of origins, substance, protagonists, and antagonists as well as goals. The punctuation of the conflict by each participant and party will be important for the researcher to understand.

Still, Nagda and Zuniga (2003) note that critical for effective intergroup dialogue is "the potential of building alliances across differences, whereby old patterns of competition, oppression, and division are challenged in favor of new ties that engender possibilities, of joining together to promote social justice" (p. 114). Indeed, the current social movement literature features the theme of coalition building, including across community issues and accustomed differences; this applies to levels from local community mobilization to global action (Chavez, 2011; Mix, 2011; Van Dyke & McCammon, 2010). Keeping a focus on present interactions and possibilities, while the past is sufficiently honored in discussion, can allow community groups to move into a fully

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dialogic mode, which orients to some degree toward listening, understanding, and grappling with the views of the Other.

Forecasting group relationships and conflicts with other groups is an important part of developing a planned approach to intergroup dialogue. Often success within a particular community is based on building alliances and enlisting other "voices." For example, efforts against school bullying and harassment would have limited success without clear commitment from faculty and staff (Dessel, 2010), who may, in some cases and ways, serve as enablers (Pellegrini et al., 2010). Finally, conflict trajectories can be better understood by gaining perspective and social awareness. A critical approach to a group's position in terms of a larger historical backdrop can clarify constraining forces, historical progress, and opportunities for growth.

Processes characterized by an integrative *win–win* approach with collaborative problem solving alongside compromise (see, e.g., Folger, Poole, & Stuttman, 2006) suggest greater overall gain for community groups. Their interdependence makes cooperation and collaboration a more beneficial strategy than competition given the mutual interest of remaining community members. Therefore, full awareness of intergroup conflict within the larger community, as well as the potentials for both conflict and collaboration between the researchers and the community groups/partners, is crucial.

Engaged Community Conflict Scholarship

Given the interactive and transformative nature of the experience of community conflict, important lessons can be learned from previous research. *Intergroup* conflict research is especially relevant, given classical studies by Tajfel and colleagues (e.g., Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and more recent work (see, e.g., Harwood & Giles, 2005) as well as related research under the heading of intercultural communication and conflict. The revival of intergroup communication research (and, indeed, intergroup studies in psychology and sociology) and its linkage to broader social, political, and economic contexts is especially important as we consider engaged scholarship with respect to community-based conflicts (see, e.g., Nagda & Gurin, 2007). Communication and conflict management styles are thus not merely individual matters but to a great extent will reflect the broader interactional contexts/cultures in which they are expressed.

For groups seeking to initiate or maintain intergroup dialogue as a primary goal, conflict management strategies of avoidance, at one end of the continuum of intervention, and forcing, at the other, generally are regarded by practitioners as the least productive. By avoiding an issue, a group may give in to the goals or desires of another without attending to its own needs or wants. Avoidance can be seen very commonly in the high school experience of the bullied students, who might, at all costs, alter their daily routines to circumvent the path of an aggressor and hence avoid confrontation or abusive behavior. Denial of a problem may also occur in such situations, often until the sheer weight of reports or complaints compels sustained institutional attention. Avoidance and denial strategies pose challenges to researchers: Getting people to talk about something that they are passively or actively finding ways to stay away from is difficult, especially when no relationship exists between the researcher and community members. On the other end of the continuum, coercive or quasi-coercive strategies can be associated with negative outcomes. Of course, the identification and labeling of coercion or manipulation itself is usually not clear-cut and is tied closely to an individual's perspective on a conflict.

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Community groups in power (e.g., neighborhood associations in elite parts of a city, expert associations in their interactions with lay publics) should realize that resolving conflict by coercion (i.e., restraining or dominating via force) tends to encourage retaliation, circumvention, or escape. Thus, observations of workplaces featuring autocratic or tyrannical leadership could predict bullying in the workplace based on knowledge of the wider culture and typical interaction patterns (Hoel, Glaso, Hetland, Cooper, & Einarsen, 2009).

The researcher's own strategic approaches may include accommodation, compromise, or integration (Wilmot & Hocker, 2010). Accommodation is an attractive but often only temporary solution. For example, faced with racial or class conflicts, some communication researchers have determined that accommodation is preferable to overt and perhaps sustained conflict between groups. Or group leadership may acknowledge that acceptance of a group's current intergroup relations may be necessary when the group is in early stages of maturity or strategy development. Still, alliances may be made through cooperating in short-term goals, with the interest of building rapport and social capital for future interests.

Collaborative or integrative styles of conflict management, whether between individuals or groups, generally are consistently supported in the scholarly and practitioner-oriented literatures. However, no consensus exists on a single approach or strategy, particularly when cultural differences are taken into account (e.g., Ting-Toomey, 1988). In addition, the celebration of integrative solutions toward conflict should be tempered by the situation and a recognition that phases may occur in any particular conflict, especially over an extended time. That is, some periods in an extended or intermittent conflict may call for different styles (e.g., when emotions are running high; see Jehn, 1994). Thus, *integrative, problem-solving* strategies may emerge as groups mature and develop a sense of the best combination of resources and intergroup connections required to achieve their goals (Krayer & Fiechtner, 1984).

Groups within larger community structures have important factors to consider when deciding how to engage other community groups. In addition to the interpersonal abilities of a group's membership, the selected strategy may be constrained by situational and historical contexts. Central to a group's decision making are the origin of the conflict, the history and status of the relationships between the group and others, any past experience with conflict resolution, comparative assessment of perceived options, and the ultimate motivation for future resolution. In other words, we find that conflict styles are doubly relevant in the context of this review—in both the community itself and with respect to the engagement of scholars with those community conflicts.

Exploring Dimensions of Community Engagement Where Conflict Is Found or Where Conflict Arises

The Interfaces of Community Groups and Segments

Pursuing community engagement may reveal specific dimensions of conflict that otherwise may remain invisible. As mentioned above, two questions with respect to research on or intervention in community conflict are (a) Does the conflict *predate* the researchers' engagement? and (b) Is the conflict an *explicit* focus of the research? We repeat these questions because all engaged scholars need to be aware of changes in the groups and communities we are investigating and with whom we are partnering. For example, a project may be focused initially on intergroup relations with respect to the engagement of young people in local public life but

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can, over its course, reveal sharp class and racial divides. In this instance, the researcher(s) need to at least attend to such aspects of conflict even if they are not the primary focus.

In the course of community life, groups develop a vested interest in maintaining relationships with other groups, whether their aims are social, political, or economic. In this sense, groups must manage multiple levels and sites of conflict between themselves and other entities, such that disagreements and disentanglements are handled effectively and with minimal damage (Beyer-Hermsen, 2001). The commitment that these groups have to each other and to their overall membership as part of the community presents unique challenges and limitations as to how such conflicts may be resolved. With respect to communication researchers' involvement in communities, a wide range of domains may feature or lead to conflict. These include city planning and urban development, public education, local political life, immigration, crisis response and mitigation, health-related campaigns and advocacy, toxic exposure and environmental cleanup, combating homelessness, neighborhood gardening, and cross-neighborhood relations. Importantly, all of these social issues and problems now have engaged research associated with them (see, e.g., Diener & Liese, 2009; Welch & Billig, 2004).

Some community issues necessarily involve the management of complex intergroup relations (see Harwood & Giles, 2005). The scope and scale of such issues can make for meaningful, effective solutions initiated by parties acting alone. But in many cases, resolution seems to be a remote possibility without some sort of third-party intervention, even if largely nondirective and invitational in nature. The complexity of intergroup dynamics and the role for outside intervention are revealed in two issues: promoting healthy racial and ethnic intergroup relations and pursuing environmental protection and advocacy.

The desire to have one's voice be heard and taken seriously is important in most community contexts. Sometimes, opportunities for discussion and collaboration are so few that community group members need to innovate to establish place for dialogue. For example, the search by members of African American communities for a place to discuss critical "Black issues," resulted in the creation of forums through online social media (Byrne, 2007). The disproportionate lack of attention given to Black issues and voices in mainstream media outlets (i.e., television, radio) also represents a favored attention to White issues and voices. Limited opportunity to communicate the needs or issues of a community can amplify feelings of alienation and feed outsiders' caricatures and stereotypes of that community's issues. Community engagement scholars have noted increased involvement and diversity in the workplace through facilitation of intergroup dialogues (Nagda & Zuniga, 2003).

Cities and regions face a variety of challenges, from resource management, to social service access, to cross-community conflict. As certain metropolitan areas continue to grow and search for agreeable ways to manage such growth, land becomes a focal point of decision and struggle. Changing and expanding residential zones create conflict over land preserved or affected by growth. For example, the "Save Our Springs Alliance," based in Austin, Texas, has successfully lobbied city legislatures and community groups to raise awareness on the potentially harmful effects of approving commercial and residential zoning on the overall ecology of Austin's traditionally preserved natural resources. Ultimately, the conflict focused on city groups with an interest in preservation of natural beauty and healthy resources. Building on these successful efforts, the "SOS Alliance" also successfully fought a major development proposal for the Barton Creek watershed. Debates regarding the preservation of natural

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resources in municipalities are hardly peculiar to the United States, especially as major community conflicts have erupted across the globe over oil, water, gold, and diamonds (Krolikowska et al., 2007).

Stances Toward Academic Engagement

A cluster of strategies called "community engagement" represents an ongoing desire by researchers to forge respectful, open-ended, and mutually beneficial relationships with communities they are investigating. In this manner, researchers, community leaders, and community members can collaborate in the framing, analysis, and development of solutions to problems. Regardless of the particular issue (e.g., school bullying), an important by-product of engaged research can be greater community member participation. Illustrating the potential for lasting effect, engaged research into intergroup relations in high schools (particularly involving bullying or unfair treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students) has fostered a legacy of heightened awareness and participation among faculty and staff involved in related assessment research (Dessel, 2010).

Scholars have posed many new ideas regarding how to approach engaged scholarship (Cheney, 2008; Cheney, Wilhelmsson, & Zorn, 2002; Cherwitz & Hartelius, 2007; Harter, Gerbensky-Kerber, & Patterson, 2011; Weis, Nozaki, Granfield, & Olsen, 2007). Recent ideas regarding engagement have challenged traditional, dialectical ideas regarded as serving *either* basic *or* practical purposes. These new perspectives offer a multitude of strategies to researchers and communities based on community context, resources, goals, and so on. We are pleased to observe how the theory–practice divide in communication research has been bridged and is no longer an issue.

In fact, the types of research partnerships likely to develop with communities are especially amenable to multiple research strategies and methods, given the likelihood that such projects will be multistage. Initial interviews or surveys may well call for more in-depth conversations, focus groups, and participant observation. This was true, for example, with the University of Utah's establishment of the University/Neighborhood Partners Center on Salt Lake City's west side in 2002. Recognizing the latent conflict between the university ("on the hill") and the larger community ("in the valley"), and the class and racial divides between the two sides of State Street running through the Valley, the University pursued a deliberate, engaged, and multi-phasic strategy, which began with informal conversations and then widened to include a survey, focus groups, presentations, and Q&A sessions at neighborhood and ethnic association meetings. In this case, conflict was part of the background for a major venture. Although not the primary focus of the work, nor the most salient aspect of the situation, conflict demanded attention.

Another important example of engaged research can be found in intergroup dialogue centers on campuses of major U.S. colleges and universities. In addition to offering greater visibility and voice for underrepresented community members, these centers can serve as a launching point for programs that transcend social as well as geographic barriers. For example, the University of Washington School of Social Work initiated the Intergroup Dialogue, Education, and Action (IDEA) effort in November 1996 (Nagda et al., 2001). Founded on engagement as a means to educate and to encourage interaction between people with different cultural backgrounds, the IDEA effort developed opportunities for training students in cultivating intergroup dialogue as a way to communicate across differences within communities where they work.

A few formalized intergroup dialogue projects in the United States stand out as

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examples. These projects' specific approaches range from facilitation of intergroup meetings (e.g., the Intergroup Relations Center: Voices of Discovery Program, Arizona State University) to more formal education (e.g., the Program on Intergroup Relations, Conflict, and Community, University of Michigan). A very successful program is Arizona State University's Voices of Discovery (Treviño, 2001). In a program created to encourage greater understanding between different ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, sexual identity, and within-group dialogues, experienced facilitators conduct seminars to train others in facilitation skills. Researchers and practitioners engage the university community by taking a proactive role in fostering dialogue between campus community members. This involvement conveys information, shares reactions to events, and expresses concerns about ethical behavior.

Stances for Engaged Research Methodology

Numerous and diverse methodological approaches are available to researchers for conducting engaged work in communities. Although method selection may be driven by researchers' experience and outlook, it also should be shaped by the relationship with the community. Sustained treatment of the contexts and factors involved is beyond the scope of and space for this chapter; we have chosen to highlight ethnographic and empirical approaches.

Ethnography, as a collection of methodological orientations and techniques, along with an underlying set of philosophical and theoretical positions, permits researchers the opportunity to observe the community on an intimate and in-depth level. Depending on access granted by community leaders and members, researcher(s) may have opportunities to observe (and sometimes record) community meetings, gatherings and activities, and member interactions and rituals. Whether a particular research team adopts an explicitly ethnographic perspective or not, in-depth exploration of community life may be fundamental to the project.

An example of researchers engaged in community ethnography is within the YRG CARE (Y. R. Gaitonde Centre for AIDS Research and Education) program, which conducts HIV/AIDS (human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) community assistance and interventions based in Chennai, India. Established in 1993, the YRG CARE mission is "to respond to the needs of people who are not receiving care and support for HIV or related education/information." A distinctive facet of this program is community training in understanding, critiquing, and comparing survey and other methods. Engaged scholarship using an ethnographic approach can provide richly textured treatments of the issue and community; however, if part of the epistemological position of the researchers is to assess rather than represent a sensitive or tense situation surrounding an issue, then maintaining such a position can be difficult.

Empirically oriented research attempts to gain knowledge through observation and measurement. In intergroup and community engagement literature, this methodological approach has been manifested in numerous ways. A common approach attempts to create conditions under which a proposed *treatment* or condition might positively (or negatively) affect outcomes for various community membership groups. Experimental community-based research often is the by-product of the practical approach of determining whether training (i.e., sensitivity, cross-cultural) might improve relationships between subcultures within a community. Such work can also contribute directly to policy development, because of its established credibility in the eyes of administrators and policymakers (Dessel, 2010; Nagda & Zuniga, 2003; Schoem, 2003).

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Many programs for intergroup dialogue in communities have originated in or have been supported by academic institutions. Dessel (2010) explored the effects of an engagement-training program in a public high school by examining the strained relations between members of the school's Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual (LGB) community, their high school classmates, and the faculty and staff. Public schools have long been places of struggle for adolescents dealing with emerging identities. Although those attempting to accept and find acceptance for their sexual identity may band together for assistance and support, in many cases, lack of reliable faculty or administrative support often leaves such groups vulnerable.

Dessel's (2010) study focuses on the context of prejudice in public school settings against LGB students and their parents. The study's premise is that engaging teachers and students in intergroup dialogue about stressors and harassments LGB students encounter will foster improved public school teacher attitudes and behaviors toward LGB students and their parents. Dessel used an experimental mixed-methods field design to test the intervention. Results concluded that participating in dialogues with LGB students and other faculty members facilitated teachers' positive changes in feelings, attitudes, and enacted behaviors to support LGB student interests. This is one of many such studies employing a mixed-methods approach, which we find appropriate in most community research contexts.

Articulating and Confronting Ethical Challenges Within the Projects and Processes of Community Engagement

This section of our review draws on recent writings on applied/practical ethics, both within and beyond communication, to accomplish two things: first, to suggest a few ethical guidelines—formulated as dialectics—that must be confronted in engaged community-based and conflict-oriented projects, and second, to ask the reader-investigator to stand back and reflect on the entire enterprise at the meta-level, ensuring that conscious treatment of ethics is woven into relevant projects. At the outset, we observe the distinction between "explicit" attention to ethics, as in studies of communication that draw directly on ethical theories and principles, and "implicit" discussions of ethics, as with much of the work under the heading of "social justice." Very recently, scholars attempted to bridge these academic communities (see, e.g., Cheney et al., 2011). Beyond this distinction, we emphasize a broader ethics of intervention that is of particular importance for engaged scholarship: acute awareness of the need to avoid harm and implications of this overriding principle for research conceptualization, methodology, and conduct, sometimes including attention to related quasi-legal and legal implications in addition to ethical concerns.

An implicit ethical commitment, and often a statement of values (e.g., process-oriented neutrality with respect to key parties and their positions), has always existed in community (mediation) work. However, what we now see is a maturation and expansion of work on applied ethics in communication, where standards and theories (e.g., those of Aristotle, Kant, Mill, Buber, Rawls, Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Nussbaum) are applied and modified per empirical contexts (i.e., in the process of casuistic reasoning). This part of the chapter exemplifies that matured tradition. The principle of neutrality in alternative dispute resolution is central to this discussion and can be placed in conversation with explicit ethical positions, especially as they bear on various postures toward—and processes with—participants/partners/clients. In this regard, it is important to trace the implications of an ethics of duty, ethics of rights/contract, ethics of outcomes,

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and ethics of virtue—all in contemporary, communication-sensitive ways.

Neutrality

Neutrality is an established and revered principle in the practical world of mediation for several reasons. These include the need for the mediator to enjoy the confidence of two or more parties, the desire to maintain critical-analytical distance, and the need to establish a solid foundation for implementation.

Neutrality can play a practical role in mediating conversations between community members and those who violate rules and expectations. For example, reintegrative or restorative justice (RJ) programs present an opportunity to engage community members in the co-creation of solutions to crime, violations of community rules, or delinquent behaviors in proactive ways (González, 2011; Neves, 2009; Proietti-Scifoni & Daly, 2011). Rather than letting the penal system deal with the individuals in an isolated way, community members are invited to engage in meaningful dialogue with the individual(s) about the repercussions and lasting effects of the behaviors in question. The goals are to reintegrate the individuals such that they feel less like outsiders and more a part of the solution.

RJ programs challenge long-understood and practiced approaches to justice in the United States and in many other countries. However, RJ programs can complement established institutions; for example, in finding ways to avoid having minor offenders feeling excluded from the community or stigmatized provides an opportunity for healing that may not otherwise have ever been present. The principles behind RJ suggest that involving the community in meaningful dialogue helps manage lasting negative effects and creates a greater community healing. Sentencing circles in Canada's First Nation communities offer one well-established and effective example of this approach.

Dialectics

Above all, the ethical rubber hits the road with tensions or dialectics when we confront tough choices. This is perhaps the single most important meta-message of contemporary applied ethics, as brought into sharp relief by both historical-theoretical formulations (e.g., Nussbaum, 2001) and recent practical investigations (see, e.g., Cheney et al., 2011). Within the context of conflict and community engagement, we consider these dialectics as relevant to "our" roles and those of "the engaged": (a) openness versus protection (for self and other), (b) privilege versus equality (including potentials for and pitfalls of co-optation), (c) distance versus empathy (with respect to analysis and vis-à-vis various stakeholders involved), (d) listening versus advising (including determining moments for judgment), and (e) maintenance versus rupture (with respect to the meta-stance on conflict) (see, e.g., Cheney, 2008). Each of these dialectics and related parameters for principled action are discussed in turn.

The first dialectic, *openness versus protection*, strikes to the heart of ethical concerns regarding interpersonal communication for the individual in society and, indeed, within the academic context. Self-disclosure issues are particularly relevant (Greene, Derlega, & Mathews, 2006). But the dialectic also invokes the potential practice of containing one's interactions within "safe" groups, networks, or communities as opposed to reaching beyond them. This is a call for privileged researchers to be self-reflexive about the manner of engagement with community groups and parties to a conflict; this dialectic also reminds the researcher to be open to the possibility of being changed significantly by the engagement in the community.

The second dialectic, *privilege versus equality*, is framed in terms of Billig et al.'s (1988) ideological dilemmas about what counts as expertise. This dialectic harkens

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back to the Durkheimian (Durkheim, 1933) sociological tradition of the analysis of professions and their roles in larger communities, particularly with respect to constituencies or communities who do not have equitable access to resources of information and power. The ongoing debate over the "digital divide" is an example.

The growing attention to *practical theory* (see Craig, 1989) in communication is evidence of a constructive breakdown of a false dichotomy that has persisted in the discipline for many years. This matter is central in terms of how "town-gown" relationships are initiated, established, and maintained. Greater attention to peer-to-peer relationships—in the academy, in many social movements, and in community-based projects—should be taken as one way to transcend the dialectic, at least insofar as resources are shared. The fostering of these relatively equal relationships can be a significant goal of engaged research.

The third dialectic, *distance versus empathy*, speaks to epistemological orientation and also concerns the ongoing nature of the relationship between investigators and communities of research participants or partners. This relationship is variously characterized and positioned in different epistemological traditions. Here, our concern is both more overarching and more fundamental. Put in the form of a question, the dialectic asks, regardless of the type of research being conducted, *what ought to be the basis for working together with community members and constituencies?* The metaphor of *partnership* has clearly emerged as the dominant frame in community-based research (see, e.g., Wallerstein et al., 2008), but this still begs the question of how to manage the expertise–equality tension.

The fourth dialectic, *listening versus advising*, metaphorically parallels different approaches to psychotherapy in terms of the types of responses made to the community conflicts under investigation or being engaged. Here, communication studies offer a useful standpoint from which to consider the very process by which research will be conducted and, even more important, how it will be aimed. The long-standing, though dormant, tradition of listening research in communication focuses attention on the "Other" in interaction. This orientation is mirrored in Rogerian (Rogers, 1951, 1959) and related approaches to psychotherapy. At the same time, the ideas of advice giving, counseling, and policy prescription suggest a guidance role on the part of academic researchers. Reflecting on the nature and extent of intervention is especially important in a longitudinal research program, considering how different phases of the research may well call for different stances vis-à-vis research partners and other community parties.

The fifth and final dialectic, *maintenance versus rupture*, concerns both the conflicts themselves and researchers' relationship to them post-investigation. Insofar as the research deals with community conflict, researchers must be cognizant of additional uncertainties surrounding the continuance of the work. Outcomes of investigations, of course, are contingent; but here, we are concerned with conflict itself, including any effects researchers' work may have on communities. Thus, the dialectic described here relates to both specific questions such as feedback loops and to broader ones about how to "manage" (in multiple senses) the dissolution of an organization, project, or set of relationships. Literature on relationship decline and termination offers us some insights (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2007), but curiously, engaged community scholarship has been almost silent on this question.

These five dialectics are especially relevant when engaged scholarship encounters or even causes conflict. Ethical responsibilities become intensified in these contexts. Having explained some of the key factors of conflict, engagement, and ethics that bear on the shape

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and execution of research in the community, we now turn to a sustained example that illustrates how these three areas are interrelated and especially how understandings of them by the researcher necessarily evolve in a wide-ranging longitudinal investigation.

Profile of an Integrative Case Study

The Libby, Montana, Amphibole Asbestos Case

In 2005, Cline and associates planned the first phase of what became a broad-ranging and ongoing research program in Libby, Montana. Libby is the site of what the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has called the "the most horrific environmental disaster in U.S. history" (Sullivan, 2007). The initial focus group investigation was designed to explore the psychosocial consequences of a slow-motion technological disaster (SMTD).[1] Background information shaped the principal investigator's understanding of the sensitive legal and political nature of the situation and instilled a determination that the research should "first do no harm" in a community where much harm already had occurred. This case of community-based research represents a real-life example of research at the confluence of conflict, community engagement, and applied ethics.

Background and Context

Little prior research had focused on SMTDs: slow-onset disasters of lengthy indeterminate duration that invoke human culpability (Cline et al., 2010). Unlike natural disasters, where causes are outside of human control and effects are clearly and commonly understood, SMTDs are characterized by uncertainty about nearly every aspect of the disaster, including *whether a disaster is actually occurring*. At base, then, the definition of "the problem" is contested. Cline et al. (2010) hypothesized that the stressors of such a disaster may differ from those of natural disasters and the resulting psychosocial processes and outcomes might vary by type of disaster.

Libby, a town in rural northwest Montana, has a population of about 10,000 within a 4-mile (1 mile = 1.61 kilometers) radius (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Vermiculite had been mined in the area since the early 20th century. From 1963 until its closing 1990, the mine was operated by W. R. Grace Company. The vermiculite was contaminated with a highly toxic amphibole asbestos. *The entire town*, not just company employees, was exposed to the amphibole asbestos. Exposure occurred from employees bringing home dusty clothes, by virtue of an expansion plant just across the river (during peak production, the expansion process put more than 5,000 pounds of amphibole asbestos into the air each day), from residents putting vermiculite given to them by an apparently paternalistic company into their attics, yards, driveways, the running tracks at the middle school and high school, and children's "sand" boxes. Due to the latency period for diagnosing asbestos-related disease (ARD; from 10 to 40 years or longer; Whitehouse, 2004), this disaster continues to unfold and its magnitude continues to grow. In Libby, more than 400 people have died from and more than 2,000 have been diagnosed with ARD.

In 1999, Andrew Schneider, a reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, was making his way home from a cross-country trip during which he was investigating various mine sites (Schneider & McCumber, 2004). Along the way, someone suggested that he should stop in Libby. His unplanned stop led to an investigative series that began with "A Town Left to Die." In the 13 years since, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) conducted medical screening on thousands of area residents; the area was designated a Superfund site; company executives

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were indicted and tried for knowing endangerment, conspiracy, and other criminal counts and found not guilty; and in 2009, Libby became the first *public health emergency* declared by the EPA.

Twenty-year old records uncovered by the EPA, in 2000, document a pattern of agencies turning their heads the other way (i.e., MSHA, EPA, NIOSH, and OSHA). Meanwhile, lawsuits against the company grew. But many people in the community "did not know" about the problem prior to the 1999 news coverage. Within days of the initial news coverage, the EPA arrived to find a community reeling from uncertainty and enveloped in a climate of distrust. Cline et al.'s (2008) subsequent research showed that people felt uncertain about who to believe; every source's credibility was challenged, especially the advocates. Distrust also had grown around the health care system—some questioning the company's influence on the hospital and area doctors, others questioning the credibility of the doctors at the Center for Asbestos Related Disease (CARD). Advocates were demonized as publicity seekers who sought an "easy buck" through lawsuits. A significant portion of the community found both politicians and the business community—and responding agencies and the clinic dedicated to the treatment of ARD (i.e., CARD)—suspect. Even researchers' veracity was questioned.

All of this turmoil evolved in a small rural town where people "love their community"; bumper stickers reading "I ♥ Libby" are common. In this context, Cline and associates, as outsiders, began to plan community-based research on the psychosocial consequences of an SMTD, such as social support, anxiety, and depression.

Engaging the Community

A few days after first learning of the Libby situation, Cline contacted the clinical social worker at CARD, who also functions as the behavioral researcher coordinator. Over the past 10 years, CARD has developed an array of research partners across the country addressing science as diverse as cellular biology, genomics, autoimmune disorders, mineralology, and pulmonology. Cline told Hernandez of her interest in conducting research in Libby. Thus began a partnership with community "insiders" collaborating to conduct community-based research.

A few months later, Cline first visited Libby in order to become less of an outsider in a town with strong inside/outside boundaries. The external investigators met with various representatives of asbestos-issue interest groups, beginning with Hernandez and CARD (clinic staff, Board of Directors). The team held meetings with the EPA and EPA-community liaison groups formed at Superfund sites (Community Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group). They met with numerous health professionals and organizations. Meetings were held with key political and public figures (e.g., advocates, the mayor, county commissioners, and a local newspaper reporter). Hernandez also provided a tour of key asbestos sites so that the investigators could visualize locations and their significance when subsequently conducting focus groups and interviews.

This was only the beginning of an engaging, cyclical, and iterative research process. Two months after the initial visit, Cline's team conducted focus groups and interviews in Libby. One year after data collection, Cline returned to Libby for a week in order to give preliminary reports on the focus group investigation to various stakeholders and constituencies. About 1 year after the reporting visit, the research team conducted a population-based survey of residents in the Libby area zip code in order to develop quantitative data regarding themes and trends found in the focus group analyses. Since then, in 2010 and 2011, the researchers returned to Libby to participate in research reporting meetings,

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including a 2011 formal research symposium. The symposium brought together two-dozen researchers from nearly as many disciplines to interact with each other and the community about research results and plans for future research. Cline's presentation focused on community dynamics, beginning with the palpable dimensions of conflict revealed in Libby (Cline & Orom, 2011; Orom et al., 2012).

Community and Family Conflict

SMTDs are woven with numerous threads of uncertainty. For example, the disaster emerges over a long period of time; the health consequences emerge slowly and follow a lengthy latency period; and as a result of long latency from exposure to diagnosis, disease causes may not be obvious. Less commonly recognized and rarer forms of emergent disease raise additional uncertainties about diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis. Slow and subtle onset creates ambiguity and permits denial about whether, indeed, a disaster is occurring. Uneven health effects across the population contribute to additional uncertainty as the population's health is affected on different timelines. These uncertainties promote conflict as interest groups seek to avoid imminent resource losses. Agencies and experts are slow to document that a disaster is ongoing. Not only can residents argue over the very existence of a disaster, they also can argue over who is to blame (i.e., punctuation of the conflict).

The Pervasiveness of Conflict. As people noticed the high rates of respiratory disease in Libby and became aware of its toll in terms of mortality, advocates emerged who attempted to draw agencies' attention to what later became recognizable as a community-wide disaster. W. R. Grace became the target of numerous lawsuits, most of which were settled with nondisclosure agreements. The uncertainties inherent in the disaster were further enhanced by (a) multiple interest groups benefitting from maintaining such uncertainties in order to deny the existence and/or seriousness of the disaster (e.g., the company, local businesses, and politicians), at the same time that (b) other interest groups, such as health care professionals focusing on ARD, the EPA, and ATSDR, claimed that a horrible disaster cost hundreds of lives and made potentially thousands of others sick. *This left a community questioning nearly every aspect of the disaster*. Regardless of the issue, where some saw certainty, others cast doubt. The emergent disaster was ripe for conflict.

Every conversation, across the stakeholder focus groups and interviews, invoked the concept of conflict. One of few areas of consensus among research participants was that the community response to the disaster was characterized by conflict. Language reflecting conflict included terms such as "us and them," references to "sides" of conflict, "polarization," "tension within the community," "controversy," "split," "very divided," "a real separation between factions," "divisiveness to the community," and "contentious" (Cline et al., 2010). This language points to conflict characterized in bipolar terms rather than as a continuum of points of view. As one ARD participant said, "There's no middle gray matter." These conflicts emerged as the disaster became increasingly visible; clearly the conflict predated the research. Although they had been warned of community conflict, the researchers were not prepared for the omnipresence and palpability of that conflict and its degree of relational toxicity.

By the time the research began, community advocates had long since emerged and been stereotyped. Not simply substantive conflict, demonizing stereotypes fueled stigmatization of the advocates and people with ARD akin to stigmatization of people with AIDS early in the AIDS epidemic. In fact, several research

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participants drew parallels between responses to people with AIDS and community responses to people with ARD. Discussions implicitly invoking stigma were rampant. Clearly, conflict had gone beyond substance to divide the community into "us" versus "them." In light of these dynamics, it is perhaps not surprising that people with ARD commonly reported failed relationships with family, friends, and church members over asbestos-related issues (see Orom et al., 2012).

The Value of—and Necessity for—Multiple Levels of Analysis. Entering Libby, the investigators were generally aware of conflict but were naive about its pervasiveness, palpability, and toxicity. Engaging the community as a "being" and analyzing data at a community level allowed the investigators to see the relationships among critical community social dynamics. These included understanding the cultural values of the community (e.g., honesty, caring, hard work, and self-sufficiency) and how these values themselves became disaster victims. Analyzing data at the community level revealed conflict that resulted in stigmatizing advocates and, ultimately, people with ARD, and thereby resulting in failed social support in a community that values "taking care of its own." At a community level, the results revealed competing social constructions of the disaster (Cline, 2009). In essence, "everyone" has been hurt by "the disaster." But whether the disaster is framed in overarching themes of physical health and challenges of disease management and health care or as an economic crisis, due to damaged community image and unemployment because companies left town, differs and thereby accounts for many of the contested issues in the community.

Analyses at the stakeholder level (people with ARD, family of those with ARD, and non-ARD people) cast light on the specific conflicts raging in the community and why those conflicts were avoided in everyday interaction. No one denied the existence of conflict, but the toxic social environment that emerged around the disaster led most people to avoid addressing these issues openly. Due to that avoidance, what constituted a safe environment in which to voice opinions was not readily recognizable. Clearly, many people—regardless of their stakeholder position—did not know who had ARD. ARD participants were surprised to find people they knew in the focus group room who also had ARD. Discussions uncovered social connections whereby participants informed each other of others they knew had ARD or had died from ARD. The effect of the stigmatization on the style of response to conflict was obvious: Avoidance is protective. One family participant said of another, "She is my neighbor and I had no idea what she was dealing with" (everyday challenges of a spouse's ARD).

Analyses at the individual level shed light on the personal challenges of living with this ongoing disaster. These analyses identified who is stigmatized and by whom, what overarching disaster theme is held by whom, and personal coping strategies and psychosocial adjustment issues. Personal accounts confirmed the overall strategy of conflict avoidance. Open interpersonal conflict appeared to have occurred rarely and often only "by accident" (e.g., when a person with ARD was confronted, by someone who did not know the first person's disease status about the "bogus" nature of the disease, and chose to argue openly, "No, you're wrong"). Fortunately, because of known sensitive legal and political contexts, the research plan was designed with an eye to applied ethics.

Applied Ethics

The complex and nuanced contexts around the Libby disaster called for careful consideration of ethical implications in conducting this

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research. Avoiding doing harm called on the researchers to manage numerous ethical tensions, many of which were not clearly delineated at the outset of the investigation.

Multiple Senses of First Do No Harm. The first and primary lesson in applied ethics in the Libby research case comes directly from medical ethics: First do no harm. Researchers often assume that research is driven by lofty ideals and thus is an inherently ethical enterprise because knowledge gained outweighs risks. Although that assumption has long been challenged in the social sciences (e.g., in part because of the Milgram studies, 1974), it remains common today. For example, many professionals who conduct health education and communication campaigns assume that "any intervention is better than no intervention" (see, as an exception, Guttman, 2011, who considers the inadvertent adverse effects of public health communication interventions). The recognition that the research process itself can be harmful, that intervention research can make things worse rather than better, guided the Cline research team's approach in Libby. Because their engagement with the community enlightened them on the complex dynamics—political and economic fallout, lawsuits, and conflict—they understood that it was possible to do harm not only to individual research participants but also to the community at large. Moreover, protecting their research partner was critical. CARD represented the singular community health care asset devoted to ARD and a "safe place" for people whose health had been jeopardized by the disaster.

Protecting the Community. The recognition of the ease with which the research team could unwittingly do harm was one reason for the weeklong visit to Libby prior to data collection. Understanding the complexities of the community and the challenges it faced was critical not only to better and more validly interpret the data but also to ensure that the research project did no harm. The planning process was sometimes painstakingly detailed to live up to the commitment the team made to CARD to "getting it right."

Listening carefully in every situation is important. For the Libby study, this included the pre-research visit, listening to research participants carefully and compassionately regardless of their point of view, and, as the researchers discovered, listening to the community at all times and places while in Libby. These conversations shed light on a bruised community's wariness around the disaster (e.g., a restaurant server who asked if the project was a "good" one: "is it *good* for *us*"). They clarified the nature of Libby residents that was characterized by one focus group member as "everybody's just looking you right in the eyes, standin' tall and speaking and talking" (e.g., at a craft fair, when researchers, paying with out-of-state checks, asked vendors if they wanted to see a driver's license, the prototypic response was "Why would I want to do *that*?"). In short, the researchers experienced how easily individuals and the community at large could be taken advantage of due to their characteristic honesty and trust in the honesty of others.

Protecting Research Participants. Research planning included numerous efforts to protect the identities and welfare of research participants. The need for concerted protection efforts came not from the potential for people with ARD being stigmatized (the research team did not know about that dynamic in advance), but from the fact that numerous people with ARD and their family members had consulted lawyers, and some were in the process of taking legal action against the company. Because the W. R. Grace company lawyers were in town, and staying at the same motel where the team was lodged and where data collection

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occurred, additional care was taken to protect the data collection process. Special care also was taken to encourage group participants to maintain the confidentiality of the discussions (including an Oath of Confidentiality).

In addition to protecting participants' identities and comments, the research team actively sought to protect them psychosocially during the focus group and interview processes by employing a skilled clinical social worker to moderate the groups, structuring discussions to end on a positive note, and providing participants with contact information for the CARD social worker in the event that they later became emotionally distraught due to the discussion.

Participants' identities also needed to be protected during researchers' subsequent visits to Libby. On a later visit, Cline instructed an accompanying team member not to approach or acknowledge any research participants in public settings, unless the participants initiated social contact. Based on data analyses, Cline understood the stigmatizing responses to people with ARD and their potential for social and psychological damage. Simply having a conversation in a public place with a participant could disclose that person's research participation and possibly the individual's disease status. (The concern turned out to be well founded as the team encountered a participant in a local coffee shop during their first meeting.) A few research participants also attended public meetings during which initial results were reported. In those, Cline routinely explained to audiences that the researchers did not approach participants who they might encounter in order to protect the participants' privacy.

Protecting the Research Partner. Although CARD itself was at the center of some conflict, it was viewed as a safe haven for people with ARD. The clinic was under siege by W. R. Grace as preparation for a criminal trial was occurring. During the first week of data collection, attorneys for W. R. Grace were in town, staying in the same motel, eating at the same restaurants, and were present in the clinic's conference room—due to a court order that allowed W. R. Grace's attorneys to review medical records of people diagnosed with ARD. Cline viewed that an important part of "first do no harm" was to protect the community research partner. CARD's primary mission is health care; research is secondary. It was important for the researchers to be aware of their actions not only for their own professional reputations in the community but also for the partner's reputation. Part of respecting and protecting the research partner was also the commitment to "getting it right" (i.e., ensuring the validity and credibility of results).

Several steps were taken to protect the integrity and credibility of the investigation's results. Cline determined that the data collection process and the credibility of the data needed to be able to endure skeptical scrutiny (e.g., the type that might occur if results became part of a legal process). For example, the design of the study sought to gain the full range of stakeholder positions in the community. Moreover, the discussion guide was designed to elicit the full range of responses to the disaster. Care was taken to avoid asking leading and loaded questions. In addition, the moderator was provided only skeletal background information about the disaster so that she was not in the position to be able to "lead" participants to particular conclusions.

Dialectics of Engaged Research

The Libby research program illustrates several ethical tensions that arise when engaging a community in conflict in research. For example, initial meetings with interest groups (e.g., county commissioners, EPA) during the background visit to Libby involved contained interactions within "safe" relatively homogeneous groups. That is, interest group members

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were able to express particular points of view (e.g., one county commissioner thought too much action was occurring around the disaster) and facilitated the researchers' ability to focus on listening nonjudgmentally. Thus, these conversations were both open and protected. The same was true of the homogeneous focus groups of stakeholders.

Important dialectics were evident in the external researchers' relationship with the community research partner, especially the behavioral research coordinator/social worker. Both sets of partners bring expertise to the table. The CARD partner brings expertise about the community, its history, and the many and nuanced contexts for understanding and interpreting data. The CARD partner provides oversight to interpretations to ensure the fidelity of context and nuance. The external researchers have been committed to active inclusion of the CARD research partners in planning, implementing, and reporting research. Hernandez reviews research plans and grant applications, and actively participates in research presentations at professional meetings and as an author on manuscripts. Thus, both partners bring independent and overlapping expertise to the research endeavor.

With regard to the community as a whole, the dialectic of listening rather than advising has dominated the initial descriptive projects. The researchers explicitly sought to "give voice" to the community by "listening" via focus group and survey data. In fact, the focus group presentations to interest groups in the community and to the public were titled "In Your Own Words," and the population-based survey project—and the survey itself—was titled "The Voices of Libby," with promotional posters encouraging community members to "make your voice heard."

In closing, this case not only brings together the three main threads of our chapter—conflict, engagement, and ethics—but also offers profound lessons for researchers. They must be sensitive not only to presented tensions in a community but also to the fact that those very tensions and one's understanding of them are part of a developing relationship in which the researcher, regardless of epistemological standpoint, necessarily assumes responsibility along with involvement. Although not all research projects of this nature will be as complex, important, or sustained as this one, the cautions as well as the model for doing good work are a source of information and inspiration.

Conclusion

We have reviewed three seemingly disparate areas—conflict, community engagement, and applied ethics—with attention to their integrative potential at this point in the development of communication studies. We maintain that the communication discipline is particularly well poised to do this theory- and practice-building work. We say this in recognition of both the history and contemporary possibilities in communication studies. Witness, for example, how communication-oriented or -sponsored centers for community deliberation (e.g., the Center for Public Deliberation at Colorado State University) are de facto, if not always explicitly, operating at the intersection we describe.

Attention to *explicitly* ethical as well as *implicitly* ethical perspectives on communication within the context of conflict and community connects to the heart of contemporary conceptions of communication process, sometimes in ways that contrast with traditional rhetorical and persuasive notions of communication (see, e.g., Cheney, Lair, Ritz, & Kendall, 2010). Two principal progressions are evident in recent thinking on rhetorical and communication theory: first, the more direct engagement of power in terms of inequalities of parties to various communication transactions (e.g., Makau & Arnett, 1997); and second, a

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stress on mutuality and equality, often treated under the rubric of "dialogue" (see Barge & Andreas, this volume; cf. Arnett, 1986). The dialogue metaphor and associated models have become central as the field has embraced diversity and difference in multiple senses (see, e.g., Foss & Griffin, 1995; Makau & Marty, 2001). Finally, dialogue has become perhaps the central term in communication research oriented toward community practice and problem solving (see, e.g., the collection in Shepherd & Rothenbuhler, 2001). Not only from an epistemological standpoint but also in terms of the orientation to practice, mutual understanding and insight are the prevailing objectives of interaction within the context of community engagement with sensitivity to, illumination of, and sometimes direct engagement of conflict.

We note as well that multiple *levels of analysis* are relevant. The conflict literature is now quite articulated in this area, including in the wider academic arena where peace and conflict studies have been joined. Through that union, bridges across micro- and macro-perspectives have been built (notably, in the creation of the Peace and Justice Studies Association in the United States in 2001 as well as in the diversification of membership and topical concerns within the International Peace Research Association).

Community engagement involves aspects of conflict that will be interpersonal as well as group-based and may well exhibit characteristics derived from both structural features of the situation (e.g., economy and culture, broadly conceived) and collective experience (e.g., a history of oppression, prejudice, or stigma). The processing of historical trauma in communities, aiming toward deep reconciliation borne of mutual understanding, is one example where all levels of analysis may be pertinent. For example, Derezotes (in press), considering Native American perspectives on the punctuation of U.S. history, called for extraordinary awareness and special tools of the researchers/partners/facilitators. Other such examples can be found in interrelated and multilevel examinations of apology (Lazare, 2005), forgiveness (Fitness & Peterson, 2007), and reconciliation (Doxtader & Salazar, 2007; Ndura-Ouédraogo & Makoba, 2008).

In sum, we find this to be an opportune time in the development of our discipline for further investigation of all major topics represented in this chapter. Issues of community conflict, engaged research, and applied ethics not only span traditional areas of our field but also direct us toward the full potential for theoretically informed but practically oriented research on pressing social problems.

Note

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Environmental Conflict Communication

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Worldwide human population expansion, coupled with increased awareness of drastic disparities in the standard of living experienced by people in different places, has brought environmental conflict to the attention of international institutions ranging from the United Nations to Amnesty International. Human and natural systems are linked in complex ways that result in interdependency, and humans have irreversibly altered ecological systems on a global scale. In addition, the temporal and spatial scales at which environmental changes occur are rarely synchronized with institutional structures and political cycles (T. R. Peterson, Peterson, & Grant, 2004). Conflicts rage over the relative risks and benefits associated with industrial processes, with exposure to toxins taking center stage. The increasing human population also puts pressure on wildlife (both plant and animal) and its habitats. Even access to natural resources required to sustain human life (e.g., relatively clean air and water) is insecure. Environmental conflict is among the greatest challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. Although these conflicts are sometimes simple problems of distribution, they also implicate communication (Cox, 2012; T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006).

In many nations, legal requirements to include the public in environmental decision making render environmental conflict increasingly difficult to ignore. Yet, even when public participation is mandated, technical experts continue to leave stakeholders out of the decision-making loop. This causes environmental conflicts to escalate. Because communication in environmental conflict is tied closely to public participation, we use the concept of public participation as a central organizing construct in this chapter. We first overview the mandate for public participation in environmental issues. Second, we review critical research on two models of public participation that have gained significant public currency. Here we summarize critiques of the public hearing, which is the most commonly used method of public participation. We also

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provide a summary of research critiquing consensus-based processes. Finally, we discuss especially promising research directions, including suggestions for how they might affect practice. We found that most research on communication and environmental conflict emphasized industrialized, nominally democratic nations. Within this framework, we also attempt to highlight research that explores global cross-cultural and domestic diversity issues.

Mandate for Public Participation

Numerous nations have laws requiring stakeholder identification and invitation for involvement in planning that addresses significant environmental issues. Most of these laws, however, do not specify how to structure public participation nor do they mandate how information gathered from the public should be incorporated into management decisions. As society has become increasingly aware of environmental issues and has expressed a desire to participate in the regulatory process, the problems of structuring appropriate public participation opportunities, identifying appropriate stakeholders, and constructively incorporating public interests has become a central concern for many natural resource agencies, industries, interest groups, and individual members of the public (for a more complete summary and examples, see T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006).

The U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 probably is the most historically significant national law currently mandating public participation. Although legal jurisdiction is limited to the United States, "NEPA's influence has been far-reaching, with its progeny in the statute books of 19 states and over 130 of the world's nations" (Salzman & Thompson, 2010, p. 275). In the United States, NEPA was preceded by the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) of 1946, which required agencies to allow public comment on draft rules and allowed citizens access to the courts to request judicial review of actions taken by federal agencies. NEPA was signed into law on January 1, 1970. NEPA dictates that "every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" must prepare detailed statements regarding the "environmental impacts of proposed action" (42 U.S.C. § 4332c). While the earlier APA had required that citizens take the initiative to become involved in public participation, NEPA requires that agencies actively solicit input from the public on any federal decisions that might significantly affect the environment.

The Aarhus Convention (formally UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters), which entered into force in 2001, moves beyond NEPA to mandate that governments will incorporate public participation into *all* decisions regarding environmental matters in more than 40 European and Central Asian countries, the European Union, and the European Community (Mason, 2008). Although most public participation research has been conducted in postindustrial Western democracies, scholars are beginning to examine participation in other nations. For example, China has instituted requirements for public hearings regarding water tariffs as part of a move toward more transparent, decentralized, and participative governance (Zhong & Mol, 2008).

Though these laws require solicitation and response to public comment, they have failed to satisfy public demands for a variety of reasons. Members of the public complain that the documents are too technical, that agencies have frequently determined the outcome of the situation before the public is allowed

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access to the process, and that agencies do not make sufficient effort to identify and involve affected stakeholders. Both NEPA and Aarhus Convention processes lack specification regarding how much weight public comment should be given in the decision-making process. Essentially, public involvement still spans a broad gulf ranging from the right to know what information was used to arrive at a decision to direct participation in the decision-making process itself.

Regulatory agencies in the United States, Canada, the European Union, and many other political jurisdictions are now required to identify and then invite impacted stakeholders and other members of the interested public to provide comment on significant actions that are likely to modify the environment. How these public participation processes should be structured and how the information gathered from the public should be incorporated into management decisions has been at the center of environmental controversies since long before public participation was mandated.

Arnstein (1969) posited that public participation is essentially a redistribution of power from government to citizen. Supporters of broad public participation posit that the public can best judge and represent its own interests and that participation will further enhance the public's ability to participate in the democratic system of government, reduce public feelings of powerlessness and alienation, and increase the legitimacy of the governing body. Public participation and deliberation can benefit society by creating public policy that is reflective of public values and opinions and that nurtures social, psychological, and political empowerment.

Given the regulatory context for environmental conflicts and the expectation for civic participation, government agencies are tasked with gathering data from diverse groups and individuals and incorporating these data into policy decisions. Data are often internally conflicting, with competing claims of validity dependent on multiple goals for participating in the process, as well as multiple ideologies for resource management. Dustin, Schneider, McAvoy, and Frakt (2002) used the controversy between rock climbers and American Indians at Devils Tower National Monument in Wyoming (the United States) to point out that conflict over something so apparently mundane as outdoor recreation pits people with fundamentally different worldviews against each other. A special section of *American Indian Quarterly* (Martin & Piper, 2001) provides an extended description of environmental conflicts between American Indians and other land users and also argues that public participation processes must improve opportunities for self-representation among American Indians. Given the multiple publics involved in environmental decisions, it is nearly impossible for agencies' decisions to align with the interests of all stakeholders.

The public expects government decision makers to represent the public interest and to protect the public good when addressing environmental resource issues. When the public perceives that this has not occurred, dissatisfaction arises. The impetus for increased public participation in environmental conflict is identified with (a) lack of public trust in government and its management of resources, (b) increased public demand for improved environmental quality, (c) increased public interest in environmental issues, (d) regulatory requirements to provide environmental information to the public, (e) failure of governmental organizations to demonstrate consideration of stakeholder values, and (f) increased commitment by governmental agencies to include publics in their environmental management decisions.

Public expectations for participation in environmental policy deliberations, then, suggest that it should provide an opportunity to examine scientific and technical information

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and result in well-informed governmental decisions that are accepted by most stakeholders. The existence of scarce, and sometimes fragile, nonrenewable resources and the distributive negotiation structure of most public participation processes, however, means that environmental disputes frequently focus on distributive allocation of a finite set of resources rather than the pursuit of mutually beneficial and satisfactory decisions. Communication researchers and practitioners, then, are challenged to develop processes that enhance collaborative potential without ignoring material realities such as correlations between childhood asthma and air pollution, the rates of human population increase and species extinction, and low-income neighborhoods and toxic waste facilities.

Various methods have emerged to engage stakeholders in the public participation process—the most common being written public comment periods, public hearings, listening sessions, workshops, negotiated rule making, and consensus-based decision making (for more details, see T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006; see also Table 19.1). The degree of involvement may range from providing a spontaneous reaction to specific questions, such as a telephone survey, to engaging in extended consideration and study of an issue, with direct influence over the final decision. Daniels and Walker (2001) argued that, at best, all of these approaches are based on joint learning and fact finding, exploring underlying value differences, encouraging constructive dialogue, and direct communication among stakeholders to address issues, concerns, and interests openly. In the next section, we explore the relationship between these processes and political legitimacy.

Several researchers have used legitimacy as a unifying construct for evaluating public participation. Mascarenhas and Scarce (2004) drew on the concept of legitimacy, as articulated in alternative dispute resolution (ADR) theory, to study natural resource planning in British Columbia and found that successful public processes must have fair representation, appropriate government resources, and be consensus driven. They stated that the most fundamental criterion for a successful public process was legitimacy. Webler, Tuler, and Krueger (2001) found that a public participation process was deemed legitimate if it (a) was popular, (b) facilitated an ideological discussion across interest groups, (c) highlighted the reality of power struggle, or (d) provided strong leadership heading toward compromise. Drawing from decades of process work in environmental conflicts throughout the state of New York, Senecah (2004) argued that a legitimate conflict management process must provide all stakeholders with access, standing, and influence, requiring that conflict resolution practitioners have a broad expertise in ADR principles. Arnstein (1969) developed a model of citizen participation based on the analogy of a ladder. As citizens climb the ladder, the process gains increased legitimacy as it empowers them to determine the outcome of policy deliberation.

No term associated with environmental conflict has enjoyed more widespread public legitimacy than *sustainable development*. *Our Common Future* (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), which linked sustainability to development and intergenerational and international equity, suggested sustainable development as a concept that could resolve environmental conflict (M. N. Peterson, Peterson, & Peterson, 2005). Its potential to bridge differences makes sustainable development especially attractive to ADR professionals. The failure of sustainable development to meet the expectations of conflicting interest groups, however, has generated at least as much conflict as it promised to resolve (M. N. Peterson, Peterson, & Peterson 2005). Laessoe (2007) found, for example, that emphasis on sustainable development in Denmark has dampened

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opportunities for needed political change and has limited public participation to approaches that shortchange community values.

As these frameworks illustrate, various approaches to public participation provide diverse combinations of opportunities to voice opinions, participate in dialogue with decision makers, and influence the outcome of environmental dilemmas. Moreover, multiple communication processes can be present in a single public participation venue. For example, a public workshop may involve soliciting and gathering information, consulting with stakeholders, and direct negotiation leading to a final decision.

Critiques of Public Participation Processes

The most commonly used approaches to public involvement in disputes over environmental policy are public hearings and consensus-based processes. Despite their low outcome acceptance

Table 19.1 Most Frequently Used Venues for Environmental Public Participation

Venue	*Relations Between Technical Experts and Laypersons*	*Communication Characteristics*	*Dimensions of Involvement*	*Purpose*
Written public comment period	Experts share facts and information; public shares opinions and values	Citizen stakeholders write comments and submit individually; comments aggregated by decision makers	Access, standing	Document citizen access to information about proposed action
Public hearings	Experts share facts and information; public shares opinions and values	Decision makers and citizens attend formal meeting and orally present formal statements	Access, standing	Document citizen access to information about proposed action
Negotiated rule making	Experts and public share facts, information, opinions, and values	Structured setting where facts and information from all participants become part of final decision	Access, standing, influence	Determine minimal acceptable standards for policy
Consensus based	Experts and public share facts, information, opinions, and values	Structured setting where all participants engage in free and open dialogue regarding proposed action	Access, standing, influence	Agreement among all participants

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and process satisfaction ratings, public hearings remain the most frequently used approach to public involvement in environmental policy formation (McComas, Trumbo, & Besley, 2007). We use the terms *public hearing* and *public meeting* interchangeably in this chapter to describe a formal gathering of regulatory agency officials and members of the public to address an environmental policy concern. Consensus-based processes have emerged in response to negative reactions to public hearings. While not so ubiquitous as public hearings, consensus-based processes are enjoying a wave of popularity among both natural resource management agencies and ADR practitioners. In this section, we review critiques of public hearings and consensus processes from the perspectives of communication functions, conflict dynamics, and (social and ecological) effectiveness.

Public Hearings

Ideally, public hearings should provide opportunities for people to work together to solve problems. In practice, however, they rarely achieve this ideal. Ahteensuu and Sippi (2009) found that public consultation on the deliberate release and marketing of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) in the European Union, for example, did not serve democracy, increase consensus, enable better decisions, or establish trust.

The typical public meeting involves a technical presentation by agency officials, limited opportunity for the members of the public to ask questions for clarification, and then a formal comment period. During the formal comment period, members of the public are given a certain amount of time to present their comments and concerns. Their comments and concerns are recorded so that agency officials may formally respond. A fundamental problem with the use of public hearings is that agency officials and citizen stakeholders often bring conflicting goals to the meetings and use different forms of discourse to present their ideas and concerns—thus often exacerbating rather than ameliorating conflicts.

Broad goals shared by most stakeholders include improvement of government, sharing power among relevant stakeholders, enhanced public policy, and incorporation of multiple perspectives into environmental policy decisions. Community-based goals include empowering the citizenry to take action and have a voice in public policy, strengthening community relationships, and fostering local leadership in environmental issues. Stakeholders also may attempt to persuade decision makers to adopt their perspective toward issues. Government decision makers enter this process with mandated goals to improve the decision-making processes, share information with stakeholders, reach diverse communities, respond to public concerns, and lobby for public acceptance of their decisions. The success of public hearings typically is defined by whether participant goals are achieved.

Researchers have suggested multiple democratic principles as the best criteria for evaluating public participation processes (T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006). Even when a public meeting appears to have been conducted fairly, many stakeholders remain dissatisfied with public meetings if the outcome (or final decision) fails to protect their individual interests or is incompatible with personal values. McComas et al. (2007) found that, while people were not enthusiastic about participating in public hearings, having a voice in the process, being treated fairly, and facing equal risk of loss favorably influenced satisfaction, community connectedness, willingness to accept meeting outcomes, willingness to attend future meetings, and concern about the potential health risk. Dispute resolution professionals are challenged to find a process that will create a sense of legitimacy for the process

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and the outcome—so that a broad range of outcomes will be acceptable—even when the decision fails to satisfy all interests.

Given the research indicating that public hearings rarely accomplish their public involvement goals, and often create further conflict, it is puzzling that they remain the most widely used method of public participation in environmental decision making. T. R. Peterson, Peterson, Peterson, Allison, and Gore (2006) suggested that this occurs because public meetings satisfy the minimum legal requirements for public participation, without focusing on the process or outcomes of that participation. Public meetings often are sites for persuasive communication designed to influence the public to support the plan recommended by the agency and industries that stand to benefit from the preferred alternative. M. N. Peterson, Peterson, and Peterson (2006) cautioned that "the social preference for agreement and moderation enables powerful sectors within society to co-opt public participation for further consolidation of their influence" (p. 577). In such cases, agency officials use the hearing to demonstrate their concern with the needs of the public without endangering previously determined plans. Though the agency decision may not be influenced by public comments, allowing the public to voice their concerns in a formal setting minimizes the likelihood of lawsuits based on lack of public participation. By allowing the public to have its say, those in power minimize the legal potential for claims of injustice and, thus, maintain the power imbalance between agency officials and members of the public.

Though public hearings may be referenced as opportunities for dialogue between agency officials and members of the public, empirical research indicates that they typically inhibit dialogue and reinforce existing positions and competition among stakeholders. Citizens perceive a significant power imbalance between agency personnel and expert consultants, on the one hand, and members of the public, on the other. This is evidenced by the scientific language and other jargon used by agency personnel and their expert consultants, agency control over the agenda—including definition of relevant issues, and the retention by the convening agency of sole determination of the final decision or outcome.

Scientific Knowledge and Language. In the case of public meetings, two forms of discourse typically occur: (1) technical/scientific discourse and (2) emotional/personal rights discourse. Agency officials and expert consultants open the meeting with a formal presentation about the environmental issue couched in a barrage of technical language, including scientific facts, chemical names, and statistics, that can overwhelm the public. Members of the public often speak a discourse of rights, emotions, concerns, and personal interests. Because the language of scientific discourse does not leave room for the language of emotions, members of the public are unable to express themselves fully in public hearings, resulting in frustration and anger.

In environmental conflicts, science is often portrayed as the neutral authority within the political fray. Because of the authority given to the scientific method, scientific results are typically characterized as having been discovered in a manner free from bias (M. N. Peterson, Peterson, & Peterson, 2007). This leads to the presumption that decision makers are able to step out of the political milieu and render value-free judgments. Because Western culture tends to accept scientific fact as immutable, the fact that science also is used as a tool of persuasion to support and attack positions is masked. The use of complex, technical, and scientific language by convening agencies and their consultants effectively discourages participants from asking apparently naive questions.

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Agenda Setting and Definitional Hegemony. Public meetings reinforce power imbalances between agency officials and members of the public in that the public has minimal influence over the agenda or structure of participation. Participants in public meetings are often required to register their request to comment prior to the beginning of the meeting and are given a preset amount of time (e.g., 3 minutes) for comments. Often, agency officials retain the right to change the structure of the meeting or the agenda at any point. In addition to structural control, agency officials control the scope of pertinent issues for discussion and how those issues are defined. Agency officials limit the scope of discussion in public meetings so that nontechnical topics, including social issues and concerns, are outside the scope of discussion and, therefore, do not warrant response from agency officials. Agencies seem to operate from the notion that to avoid conflict, they must avoid discussing controversial issues with the public. Suppressing environmental conflict through avoidance strategies, however, tends to produce deeper intractability (M. N. Peterson, Peterson, Peterson, Lopez, & Silvy, 2002). When agencies use a public meeting to avoid responding to public concerns and worries, they often find themselves faced with bitter opposition.

Final Determination. Regardless of the opinions expressed by the public in a hearing, the agency retains the right and responsibility to make the final decision. Numerous cases exist where natural resource management agencies appear to have ignored public preferences, simply continuing with the plans they had in place prior to public comment. Ignoring public opinion that has been clearly expressed in hearings perpetuates the notion that public participation is futile and that agencies conduct public hearings simply to avoid lawsuits, to gauge public support for predetermined projects, or to legitimate previously made decisions (M. N. Peterson et al., 2006; T. R. Peterson et al., 2006). The perception of fair process is severely compromised if the outcome of the public participation process appears to ignore the public interest.

Summary. These characteristics of public hearings (emphasis on scientific jargon, agency control of the agenda and scope of issues, and agency authority to determine outcomes without attending to public opinion) all combine to discourage effective dialogue. Littlejohn and Domenici (2001) laid out the requirements for creating dialogue as constructive conversation. They asserted that dialogue does not occur without "treating people like people" (p. 33) or taking their concerns seriously. Even though agency officials may treat members of the public with formalized respect, failing to address their concerns, ignoring their opinions, and bombarding them with technical jargon do not constitute treating them "like people" (p. 33). Instead, this behavior objectifies the public and reinforces conflict. The question-and-answer format of the public meeting, rigid scheduling of the public comment period, and control over the scope of the issues to be discussed all work against meaningful opportunities for dialogue to occur within the traditional public hearing format.

Public meetings generally treat communication as a mere conduit through which discrete packets of preexisting information flow—technical information from experts to members of the public and opinions from members of the public to the experts. Public hearings occur within a system that combines severe power imbalances among parties, a constrained environment for dialogue, and a strong likelihood that interdependence among parties will be ignored. All these factors combine to yield a public participation process that fails to realize significant

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dialogic potential. Still, public hearings remain a common means for managing environmental conflict.

Consensus Processes

Rationale for Consensus Building. Consensus-based processes have emerged as an alternative to the acrimonious exchanges constructed with zero-sum outcomes that have led increasingly to gridlock and citizen outrage. Consensus processes emphasize facilitation of diverse sets of individuals to establish mutually agreed on goals and seek solutions to complex problems. These approaches promise to enrich the overall quality of democracy by endowing governments and their regulatory agencies with additional legitimacy and providing communication channels for generating agreement on environmental policies.

Consensus building is especially important in today's complex environmental conflicts, which require sharing of information across time, space, and institutional jurisdictions. Appelstrand (2002) argued that the fundamental purpose of public participation is to build consensus, and by engaging in consensus-building processes, agencies responsible for managing natural resources should produce more sustainable environmental policy. Singleton (2002) examined several community-level consensus-building processes and concluded that they led to increased regulatory flexibility, accountability, and opportunities to enhance democratic practice as well as to improve the quality of environmental decision making.

The shift to consensus-based models as a foundation for environmental decision making gained rapid momentum during the late 1980s (M. N. Peterson et al., 2005). Consensus models are usually linked to some type of community building. Although the process often inspires initial conflict involving the diverse interests that make up a community, it can lead to greater support for environmental policies (M. N. Peterson, Allison, Peterson, Peterson, & Lopez, 2004). Greater support within the local community carries benefits, including lower enforcement costs, higher compliance rates, less conflict, and higher community satisfaction. Consensus-based approaches to environmental conflict promise to reduce implementation costs through the creation and use of social capital and more efficient use of natural and human capital (T. R. Peterson et al., 2006). Consensus-based approaches promise to reduce administrative costs by paying for management at least in part with social capital (Ostrom, 1990).

The transition to consensus-based resolution of environmental conflict has been facilitated in the United States by Community-Based Conservation Planning (CBCP) for the purpose of developing Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs). Communities sharing space with endangered species have recognized that community-based HCPs can benefit the entire community by pooling resources, including money, land, scientific information, and time. As a result, CBCP has become increasingly popular (M. N. Peterson et al., 2004). Although CBCP often encounters initial resistance, it increases the chances that the final management decision will be accepted by those involved in the process and the rest of the community because programs that develop local consensus gain broad support and, therefore, result in more effective conservation plans. The possible creation of economic and social capital by CBCP "engaged the attention of administrators and managers—extending to U.S. presidents—who sought less costly alternatives to traditional privatization, command and control, and subsidy-based approaches to" environmental conflicts (M. N. Peterson et al., 2004, p. 744).

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Gwartney, Fessenden, and Landt (2002) found that the positive relationships developed through a consensus-building process used to resolve a dispute over human population growth and sustainable development in an Oregon community disseminated beyond actual participants and remained in existence over time. They concluded that the enhanced working relationships among previous adversaries were largely the result of the consensus-building process. Laessoe (2007) noted that consensus-based citizen participation is crucial to successful environmental management in Denmark. In Peru, which became a medium-range gas exporting country in 2000, energy policy now relies on consensus processes that ensure increased horizontal and decentralized decision making. Fontaine (2010) found that this shift contributed to environmental and economic sustainability, as well as to positive working relationships between the state, energy companies, NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), and indigenous communities.

Consensus-building approaches to environmental conservation also have become more common in developing countries known for their biodiversity and unique landscapes. Case studies suggest that community-based attempts to build consensus have led to relatively more effective environmental conservation policies than those dictated by either national or international bodies. Fabricius, Koch, and Magome (2001) found that the increase in locally based environmental decision making was especially pronounced in southern Africa following a wave of democracy in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Working relationships between national governments, industry, and local communities improved; participants identified common goals; and conflict management tactics became less violent.

As is typical for fashionable notions experiencing a collective surge, consensus models are loosely defined. They generally purport to engender win–win outcomes, educate participants, and foster a sense of community. They also have a variety of labels, including community-based conservation, comanagement, collaborative resource management, and community-based initiatives. Although each consensus model defines success somewhat differently, all share varying degrees of commitment to mutual agreement as an end goal (for more details, see T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006).

Challenges to Consensus Building. Ironically, about the time consensus was gaining momentum among environmental practitioners, its theoretical weaknesses were being thoroughly deconstructed by social theorists (M. N. Peterson et al., 2005). The theoretical debate over consensus theory and its philosophical antecedents is by no means over, but its implications are decidedly unfavorable for environmental conservation. Communication theorists have argued that communication is most productive when it enables humans to respect others without reducing them to ourselves and that political conflict is vital to strong democracy. Analyses of political rhetoric have demonstrated how the absence of argument allows elites to control deliberative processes, leading to Ivie's (2002) claim that the existence of vociferous debate is a sign of a healthy, pluralistic democracy, rather than a "sign of hostility, alienation, misbehavior, inefficiency, or even impending chaos and ruin" (p. 278). This theoretical framework suggests that environmental conflict should celebrate the diversity of participants, languages, types of reasoning, and evidence involved in public debate, and is particularly relevant to those seeking to change, rather than perpetuate, existing patterns of development (Enck-Wanzer, 2006; Low, 2008).

Toker (2004) argued that the pursuit of a public sphere grounded in consensus has encouraged naive acceptance of models that promise open and free public deliberation under conditions of equality. In these forums,

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stakeholders from all walks of life theoretically come together and engage in open and free deliberation. Critics of consensus-based processes claim that management by consensus is dangerous because the attempt to placate everyone risks the attenuation of any impetus for change and reifies the status quo (M. N. Peterson et al., 2005, 2006). Furthermore, although many consensus conveners and facilitators affirmatively attempt to expand the diversity of people involved in public processes and create an atmosphere that promotes egalitarian participation, such processes necessarily occur within existing political structures where political elites have the advantage in shaping group consensus (Ivie, 2004; Robbins, 2010). The emphasis on civility and reason in consensus-based models is problematic in part because the illusion of objectivity and universal reason requires bracketing deep conflicts and treating as truth that which could just as easily be understood as hegemony.

Singleton (2002) argued that consensus-building processes fail to confront core conflicts over equity, distribution, and valuation of nature. This difficulty is further exacerbated because natural resources such as air, land, and water do not start and stop at political boundaries, whether those boundaries surround a private residence or a nation. Because environmental disputes rarely sort out according to political boundaries, it is difficult to procure sufficient institutional support to stabilize consensus-based environmental agreements.

A failed natural resource management program in California illustrates political techniques used by powerful interest groups to contain, capture, and derail consensus processes (P. A. Walker & Hurley, 2004). In that case, powerful social groups subverted the consensus process to achieve previously determined political goals, demonstrating that the political environment exerts strong influence over both process and outcomes. Kallis, Kiparsky, and Norgaars (2009) found that, while a strong consensus process enhances mutual understandings and can be a source of innovation, it appears ill suited to resolve the distributive dilemmas at the core of many complex environmental conflicts. Toker (2004) documented a consensus process that held members of the public hostage while powerful institutions used legal and legislative channels with little disruption. She argued that environmental conflict would be better managed through an exploration of rhetorical strategies that disenfranchised groups can use to redefine situations, disassociate dysfunctional relationships, and introduce new perspectives.

Gregory, McDaniels, and Fields (2001) argued that the focus on consensus building impedes critical thinking and leads to the development of inferior policy. Poncelet (2001), who studied environmental consensus processes in Europe and the United States, found that all were characterized by conflict avoidance and diffusion of difference. His analysis indicated that this proclivity grew out of a prominent cultural model that conceptualizes the partnership process as fundamentally consensual. He concluded that consensus-based environmental partnerships inadvertently engender a retreat from radical thinking and innovative environmental solutions.

When scientific information regarding an environmental issue has high predictive power, and infrastructure needed for implementation is well developed and thoroughly integrated into the community, consensus-based approaches may be appropriate. These conditions rarely exist in environmental conflicts, however, and acting as though they do increases apathy and cynicism among the public. Stakeholders who enter a public participation process believing that consensus will emerge generally come away disenchanted by the inexplicably contrary behavior of those

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with opposing views. This leads to increased cynicism regarding participation in efforts designed to improve the quality of environmental decisions and further minimizes possibilities for progressive environmental policy (M. N. Peterson et al., 2005, 2006). Within democratic political contexts, approaches to conservation planning that encourage vigorous debate are more likely to produce sustainable environmental policy than are consensus-building approaches.

Fabricius et al. (2001) cautioned that consensus-based processes are not a panacea for environmental conflict in developing nations. Political instability in these locations means it is difficult to predict changes in political regimes, which can spawn new power struggles, many of which threaten the stability of environmental agreements reached through consensus. They noted that citizens who had participated in these consensus-building processes in southern African nations during the early 1990s became deeply invested in the resulting environmental policies and felt betrayed by political changes. The expectation that consensus-based approaches will yield significant community benefits is a further cause for concern. The conventional wisdom that devolution of power to the smallest local group will inevitably result in good governance and sustainable resource management is flawed. To be effective, devolution of power must be accompanied by appropriate strategies such as mediation services at the local level, the creation of locally developed and enforced rules, and training in monitoring environmental outcomes.

Summary. Environmental managers and dispute resolution professionals have embraced consensus in an attempt to facilitate the potentially incompatible goals of environmental protection and economic growth. Although such approaches may produce positive results in immediate spatial and temporal contexts and under some forms of governance, consensus often is purchased at the cost of legitimizing current power hegemonies rooted in unsustainable social constructions of reality. Despite increased awareness of the direct link between human society and nature, environmental policymakers appear curiously unaware of the uneasy political atmosphere within which their decisions are accepted or rejected, implemented or ignored. A model for managing environmental conflict rooted in debate rather than consensus may facilitate both positive working relationships and progressive environmental policy by placing the environmental agenda on firmer epistemological ground and legitimizing challenges to current power hegemonies.

Overreliance on consensus processes jeopardizes both democracy and conservation by legitimizing existing hegemonic configurations of power and precluding resistance against dominant elites. It artificially reduces power relationships to conflicts of interest, presumably reconcilable through mutual goodwill. Public cynicism increases when expectations created through consensus-building processes are not met. Precipitous reliance on consensus naturalizes existing hierarchies as uncontested reality, closing off consideration of their implications for political and environmental sustainability.

Promising Links Between Research and Practice

G. B. Walker and Daniels (2004) and Senecah (2004) noted that environmental conflicts are necessarily multidimensional, with numerous interconnections between multiple parties and across multiple jurisdictions. Both researchers and practitioners have heeded the call for attention to environmental conflict. We highlight here three especially promising research directions that seem likely to enhance

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our understanding of how environmental conflicts are delineated, who has a stake in that process, and how conflict interveners can improve the situation.

Frame Analysis

Frame theory contends that parties or negotiators bring experiences that shape their respective frames for conflict (for additional details, see T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006). These experiences include, but are not limited to, previous negotiations, past interactions, and attitudes toward the issue under negotiation. Since past experience helps determine what is important and shapes future expectations, participants are likely predisposed to consider certain elements of the conflict as more important than others. By analyzing communication interactions of dispute participants, third-party interveners can discover the operative frames parties bring to a negotiation and can use that knowledge to encourage more productive relations among stakeholders (B. Gray, 2003).

Riemer (2004) demonstrated how frame analysis can help make sense of intercultural conflict. Reimer interviewed 55 participants in a conflict over Chippewa spearfishing in northern Wisconsin to discover the primary frames used by disputants and offered suggestions for how to begin the reframing process. Much of the conflict centered on the increasing scarcity of the walleye (a fish sought by sports fishers). Nonnative people framed spearfishing as a fundamentally selfish activity that causes depletion of a natural resource (walleye). They argued that by continuing this practice, the Chippewa are failing to fulfill stewardship responsibilities that should be a condition of receiving the privilege of spearfishing. The Chippewa, on the other hand, framed spearfishing as a sacred activity that should continue whether or not there are any walleye. From their frame, walleye depletion is an angler problem. Without significant reframing, this conflict remains intractable. Reimer noted that legitimization of multiple possibilities for framing the situation is a basic component of any reframing strategy.

Lewicki, Gray, and Elliot (2003) and Brummans et al. (2008) offered framing as an especially promising approach to apparently intractable environmental conflict. Their rationale is that, since frame analysis enables more complete understanding of a conflict's interaction dynamics, it introduces tractability by paving the way for frame shifts. Third-party interveners can then provide disputants with opportunities to reframe conflicts in more productive ways and provide space for the design of intervention techniques especially formulated for each situation. Fischer and Marshall's (2010) analysis of landscape frames in Scottish moorlands and Fletcher's (2009) analysis of language used to frame climate change in the United States identify similar opportunities. Fischer and Marshall (2010) discovered generative ideas for a wide variety of management options for the moorlands in identity frames that enabled people to maintain important differences, while also recognizing commonalities across difference. Fletcher (2009) identified three contrasting frames for climate change used under the presidency of George W. Bush (2001–2008) in the United States. She noted that the frame of scientific skepticism was used to justify inaction, while the frame of security threat challenged the validity of inaction. She argued that the emergent frame of economic opportunity offered a way out of the stalemate, largely due to its strong positive link to technological optimism that assumes the continued emergence of new technology that will enable industrial transformation to undo past mistakes.

Dewulf, Francois, Paul-Wostl, and Taillieu (2007) used a large research collaborative centered on conflict over water management to demonstrate how frame analysis can form

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the basis for more productive interdisciplinary collaborations, which they argue are necessary for improved management of environmental conflicts. Because environmental conflicts require understanding of both human and natural systems, as well as their dynamic connections, their management is especially challenging. Appropriate management of these conflicts requires ensembles of expertise drawn from both social and natural sciences and across multiple sectors of society.

Practical Application. Frame analysis suggests that conflict interveners should devote relatively more resources to assisting parties to conceptualize alternative frames and relatively less resources to developing other dispute resolution strategies and techniques. Putnam, Burgess, and Royer (2003) pointed out that intractable conflicts require reframing. They suggest that environmental practitioners can encourage reframing by helping disputants develop more realistic expectations, identify potential shifts within the conflict, and identify potential shifts outside of, yet related to, the conflict. As they learn to interpret their situations differently, disputants become more open to possibilities for resolution. T. R. Peterson (2003) added that practitioners need to develop a deep understanding of conflict participants' social control frames before they suggest possibilities for improving the situation. For example, it is counterproductive to extol a conflict management approach that relies primarily on federal regulation to people whose social control frame indicates a strong preference for low interdependence among members of society and requires strong opportunities for individual voice. Conflict participants who prefer high social interdependence, and do not require strong opportunities for individual voice, however, may find such an approach appealing. Dewulf et al. (2007) developed a template that enables researchers from different backgrounds to engage in joint sense-making activities. The activities they suggest then provide the basis for conflict researchers and practitioners representing a wide range of professional and personal backgrounds to engage in joint learning and knowledge construction, with the goal of improved water management. The five "optimal steps" they identified summarize much of the potential for frame analysis of environmental conflict. They concluded that it enabled disputants to (1) directly confront others' knowledge and perspectives; (2) attend to differences, rather than glossing over them; (3) learn how to translate frames of others into one's own terms; (4) engage in mutual exploration of differences with those whose frames appear incompatible; and (5) construct new frames that are mutually understandable.

Critical Performance Studies

One of the most innovative approaches to environmental conflict is performance studies, which provides a rich basis for examining questions about the sources and social dynamics of reflexivity with which we might transform environmental conflict (for additional details, see T. R. Peterson & Franks, 2006). Performance approaches to environmental conflict are grounded in critical/cultural research and offer new possibilities by shifting the attention from external texts to the human body as text.

Hamilton (2003) analyzed the rhetorical strategies participants in the Fernald (Ohio) radium debate used to articulate tensions between technical and cultural understandings of risk. Hamilton's analysis revealed that technical and cultural rationalities acted as competing sources of rhetorical invention. As such, they influenced participants' interpretation of the situation, the strategies they used to develop persuasive messages, and their receptivity toward messages developed

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by other participants. She argued that, prior to attempting facilitation of public participation processes designed to resolve environmental conflicts, interveners should critically examine the rationalities in play, as well as fundamental process assumptions of all participants. Similarly, M. N. Peterson et al. (2002) used critical ethnography to explore how moral culture (see Littlejohn & Cole, this volume) applies to environmental conflict. They found that temporary solutions to superficial problems that were maladapted to the moralized nature of the conflict exacerbated it. Moore (2004) analyzed political controversy in the United States, demonstrating how discourse, culture, and political power can combine to ignite a previously simmering conflict. Rather than argue that effective public processes enable people to replace personal preferences with community goals, Prelli (2004) suggested using rhetorical strategy to enhance participants' abilities to transcend personal preferences through collaborative action. Prelli found three discursive moves—(1) appeal to a foundational standard, (2) bifurcation, and (3) interdependence—that the New Hampshire Forest Sustainability Standards Work Team used to generate possibilities for conflict management. These analyses highlight the danger of precipitously attempting to reach consensus and suggest the utility of cultural analysis of environmental conflicts prior to designing management strategies.

Schwarze's (2006) essay on environmental melodrama makes potentially useful links between critical and performative research. He argued that melodramatic performance may transform environmental conflicts in ways that bring new inventional resources to public controversy. Critical analyses such as these remind us that participation in the environmental policy context is intensely political and always linked to power relationships and deeply felt values. Although they highlight how participation venues privilege some interests over others, they rarely suggest ways to respond to this challenge. Performance provides spaces where disputants may speak the unspeakable about power imbalances, experiment with alternative identities, and imagine others' values.

By foregrounding embodiment, performance approaches enable radical reframing of environmental conflict (Carolan, 2009). For example, Hobson (2006) argued that activists in Singapore expanded the sphere of possibility by bringing a performative rather than analytically oriented rights-based approach to conflicts over environmental justice. Perreault and Valdivia (2010) found that struggles over hydrocarbon governance in Ecuador and Bolivia both relied on and contributed to evolving meanings for human development and national identity. Although more traditional constructs such as competition for scarce resources remained important, popular movement performances opened new possibilities by encouraging people to reimagine the nation-state and its geographies. By reimagining a Dutch public participation process regarding nature management decisions as performative space that constituted citizenship, Turnhout, van Bommel, and Aarts (2010) invented opportunities for reconstituting the situation in ways that took advantage of both intended and unintended forms of citizen involvement. Material interaction with a seed bank enhanced deliberative potential by giving disputants a common tactile experience around which more analytical discussion could occur (Carolan, 2006); environmental justice advocates co-opted tourism performances by offering "toxic tours" as a powerful means of resisting normalization of material harms that marked their bodies (Pezzullo, 2007); and Nepali women renegotiated their political position and promoted radical social change through embodied performance of community forestry (Giri & Darnhofer, 2010).

McGill (2006) illustrated the potential of performative practice by describing her

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"discovery" of the Gerbode Valley (California). She noted that performance enables people to recognize environments as "multidimensional intersection[s] of time and space" (p. 400). Her experience framed environments as improvisations and disputants as players within a "living theater" (p. 401). J. Gray (2010a, 2010b) extended McGill's insights regarding the shifting boundaries between humans and nature to explore related boundaries between humans and to prompt reconsideration of how those boundaries "may prompt the emergence of new possibilities for previously intractable conflicts. In "Trail Mix," J. Gray (2010b) hikes through a forest and provides opportunities for his audience to try playing the roles of a diverse gallery of human and extrahuman performers. Temporary engagement with scenes, such as those created by Gray, encourages disputants to explore experiential dimensions of conflict that other approaches tend to bury.

Practical Application. Given that management of natural resources increasingly depends on securing cooperation of culturally diverse groups of people, it is essential to develop cultural understanding. Toward this end, environmental conflict practitioners can use performance to help design responses to the conflicts that emerge out of concern for how to prevent, minimize, dramatize, or focus the risks and hazards to human bodies that are systematically produced as part of modernization. Conflict management practitioners should not look to this approach for formal algorithms, so much as for guiding principles. Performative dimensions of conflict challenges disputants to experiment with options within complex situations. By attending to the individual person and event as part of a cultural milieu, performance responds to the practical necessity of minimizing polarization and establishing a collaborative pursuit of acceptable (and necessarily) temporary resolutions to environmental disputes.

Systemic Approaches

Systems analysis offers a promising approach to environmental conflict that is grounded in an integration of biophysical processes and social practices that converge in environmental conflict (T. R. Peterson et al., 2004). Despite increasing awareness of the complexity inherent to environmental conflict, environmental policy is often compartmentalized and fragmented into economic versus environmental versus social and cultural spheres. The bigger, integrated picture gets lost, and potential trade-offs are difficult to discover.

Responses to these challenges include the development of public participation processes that incorporate integrated assessment, ecosystem management, and adaptive environmental management (van den Belt, 2004). Policy is viewed as a hypothesis-driven experiment that is informed by learning. One of the most important assumptions of the approach is that understanding system-level behavior is essential for designing better policy. The stress on taking a systemwide perspective leads to consideration of ecological, social, economic, and cultural factors early in environmental decision making and the management process. By way of illustration, we now explain two distinct yet closely related approaches to managing environmental conflict through systems analysis.

Mediated modeling, which is based on dynamic systems thinking, has grown out of an increasing awareness that humans are a part of the ecosystem and are capable of irreversibly damaging it (Costanza & Jorgenson, 2002; van den Belt, 2004). van den Belt (2004) described mediated modeling as a tool for overcoming problems inherent in linear thinking and compartmentalized, nonparticipatory decision making. It provides a structured process for including the most important aspects of a problem in a coherent system simulation model. This structure enhances

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management of complex environmental conflicts by integrating culture, ecology, economics, politics, and other relevant dimensions. It enables participants to envision the system as multidimensional, dynamic, and interactive. Rather than experts' dispensing answers or a discussion about the perceptions of a group of stakeholders, mediated modeling aims for a collaborative team learning experience to raise the shared level of understanding in a group as well as fostering a robust consensus. Dynamic systems thinking and supporting software is used to construct computer-based simulation models at a scoping level. The model construction process is used to structure the discussion and the thinking of stakeholder groups and foster team learning. This structure enables participants to avoid some of the pitfalls associated with consensus-building processes.

Yearley, Cinderby, Forrester, Bailey, and Rosen's (2003) empirical analysis of public processes in three cities in the United Kingdom demonstrates how mediated modeling can be used as an effective means of obtaining and interpreting this information. Participation in mediated modeling enabled local residents to evaluate their individual perspectives against those of their neighbors and led to an integrated assessment of the problem. In all three cities, the modeling activity provided a structure within which high-quality public contributions to local governance of air quality were produced. Maguire's (2003) evaluation of stakeholder interactions with water quality models and modelers in the Neuse River total maximum daily load (TMDL) process clarified the limitations of the TMDL process, identified which limitations were most problematic, and suggested structural improvements that could enable a facilitator to respond more effectively to stakeholder interests.

van den Belt (2004) found that mediated modeling enhances public involvement in controversial and complex environmental policy issues. No environmental topic generates more policy conflict than climate change. The Tyndall decarbonization scenarios project (Mander et al., 2008) responded to these conflicts by asking U.K. citizens to generate and evaluate credible and consistent scenarios for decarbonizing the U.K. energy system. Thompson, Forster, Werner, and Peterson (2010) designed, facilitated, and analyzed results of a series of workshops where scientists, decision makers, and other interested stakeholders living within an urban airshed constructed a model of urban ecosystem processes. They demonstrated that participation in systems modeling enabled stakeholders to gain a greater understanding of the system dynamics related to their airshed. Building and manipulating a simulation model enabled stakeholders to (a) perceive interconnections across sectors; (b) connect their own past, present, and future actions; and (c) respond systemically to the intrinsic complexity of environmental management. Participants reframed their understanding of controversies and developed multiple options that promised benefits to all stakeholders.

Systemic approaches to environmental conflict are not limited to quantitative modeling. As articulated by Daniels and Walker (2001), *soft systems* approaches to environmental conflict refer to combining multiple ideas, without reducing them to a single disciplinary perspective, to enable a public process with the emergent properties required for effective management of most environmental conflicts. They synthesized theory from systems thinking, adult learning, and ADR to derive principles and strategies for creating a social climate that enables participants to learn from each other and cooperate across divergent perspectives. Their emphasis on debate among diverse viewpoints responds directly to critiques of consensus approaches. Through case studies drawn from several locations in the United States, they demonstrated that collaborative learning enables stakeholders

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to achieve measurable improvements in both biological processes and social practices involved in natural resource management. Brogden and Greenberg (2003) argued that apparently intractable environmental conflicts might actually be emergent properties of complex systems. They analyzed conflicts between grazing and urban growth in Arizona to illustrate this claim. Their analysis suggests that conflict management professionals should develop conflict resolution processes that systemically incorporate integrated assessment into existing decision-making structures. To be successful, such processes should foster collaboration and knowledge sharing between disputing stakeholders.

Researchers used narrative scenarios as a tool for engaging diverse stakeholders in planning for the National Elk Refuge in the United States (Neff, 2007). They found that story lines provided negotiable terms that helped residents build a common understanding of the system dynamics most central to management goals for their ecosystem. Fernandez-Gimenez, Ballard, and Sturtevant (2008) found that social learning was basic to community-based monitoring teams in U.S. forests. They found that systemic approaches were important for strengthening the link between social and ecological systems. Two agency-based planning efforts that used soft systems to bolster public engagement in environmental planning were organized as collaborative learning projects (G. B. Walker, Senecah, & Daniels, 2006). Researchers found that stakeholders prefer active engagement, access to information and events, and clearly defined decision space.

Practical Applications. Whether using formal modeling or soft systems approaches, systemic approaches to environmental conflict provide conflict professionals with opportunities to clarify linkages between decision making, environmental impacts, and planning. They enable diverse groups of stakeholders to explore options for integrating biological, cultural, ecological, and economic aspects of environmental conflicts. Habron (2003) suggested the systemic use of adaptive management for addressing entrenched tensions within both community- and watershed-level approaches to natural resource management. He maintained that agencies could encourage public cooperation by understanding and working within landowners' preferred cultural systems. For example, by conceptualizing watershed policy within the constructs supported by landowners, agencies could capitalize on landowners' belief in environmental resilience and acceptance of experimentation. They could then construct a framework for environmental policy that simultaneously honors landowners' independence and fear of government intrusion, acknowledges the benefits of community cooperation through watershed councils, and enables ecological assessment of landowner-preferred practices.

Conclusions

People involved in environmental conflicts invariably face difficult problems concerning the complex interactions between human systems and ecosystems (G. B. Walker & Daniels, 2004). Environmental managers, dispute resolution professionals, industry leaders, and concerned citizens regularly deal with existing or anticipated conflicts over alternative uses for natural resources, their economic implications, and the distribution of social impacts. Although many people's preferred visions of the future include sustainability of both natural and social systems, these visions often conflict. Successful approaches to environmental conflict facilitate integration of these diverse preferences into a holistic vision. Neither a single, simple answer nor a single discipline is capable of adequately addressing these complex problems. However unwillingly,

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those who study biophysical processes both influence and are influenced by environmental conflict, just as those who study environmental conflict both influence and are influenced by biophysical processes.

Traditional organizational command-and-control strategies are not necessarily well suited for the interdependence within environmental conflicts. Interdependence implies that the parties in conflict need each other in some way, they have interlocking goals and everyone's actions affect everyone else. The public needs natural resource agencies to protect its interests. This need is interlocked with agency goals to manage natural resources effectively. Agencies need the public to provide input on projects to satisfy their legal requirements. Beyond this minimal level of interdependence, an agency's ability to manage natural resources depends on public cooperation and support. The public can create such intense opposition to a regulation or even an entire program that an agency may be forced, at immense cost, to change its plans.

The widespread requirement for public participation in environmental decision making has developed out of an expanded awareness that environmental policy cannot achieve legitimacy (or success) without broad public involvement. Awareness of the need to involve the public in decision making does not necessarily translate into successful process, however. Public hearings, the most common method for involving the public in environmental issues, have not proven successful. Faced with open hostility, environmental managers have turned to consensus-building processes, often facilitated by conflict resolution professionals. Research pointing out potential pitfalls associated with overuse of consensus-building processes has led some to differentiate collaborative from consensus-building approaches. Promising approaches to environmental conflict have come from a variety of research and practice traditions. Frame analysis, critical performance studies, and systemic approaches offer innovative ideas for the practice of environmental conflict resolution.

Environmental conflict is woven into human society. These disputes have the potential to tear communities apart and draw them together. The three research trajectories identified in the last section of this chapter all indicate how concepts drawn from ADR can be used to enhance our ability to manage conflict more effectively. This juxtaposition offers numerous untapped opportunities for assisting in the creation of a more just society. We are not suggesting that communication can resolve all environmental conflicts. Unfortunately, unsustainable development practices and severe inequities are deeply ingrained in human society (Amnesty International & The Sierra Club, 2000). M. N. Peterson, Birckhead, Leong, Peterson, and Peterson (2010) argue that attending to how environmental conflict is articulated through communication encourages us to critically reimagine how our human practices and political institutions might facilitate coexistence among humans, as well as between humans and the larger environment.

By their very nature, environmental conflicts pit people against strangers—the Northern versus the Southern Hemisphere, east against west, urban against rural. Within this milieu, researchers and practitioners in environmental conflict communication would do well to recall Peters's (1999) recommendation that "instead of being terrorized by the quest for communication with aliens, we should recognize its ordinariness"; indeed, "there is no other kind of communication" (p. 257). Littlejohn and Domenici (2001) listed three requirements for developing healthy dialogue among people united only by their diversity: (1) taking time to explore experiences, ideas, concerns, and doubts; (2) listening for both differences and commonalities in the experiences and stories, as well as

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values expressed by all parties; and (3) asking open, nonjudgmental, and curious questions to learn more about the other. If management of environmental conflict is to contribute to an increasingly sustainable and just world, it must be transformed into a joint venture wherein the knowledge of citizen stakeholders and experts is integrated into the development, implementation, and continued monitoring of environmental policy.

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20

Trust in Community–Academic Research Partnerships

Increasing the Consciousness of Conflict and Trust Development

Julie E. Lucero and Nina B. Wallerstein

Consider the following scenario: An academic research team was invited by a tribal community's public health program to collaborate on a project. This project was in response to an outbreak related to a sexually transmitted infection (STI). It was suggested by a federal public health analyst that the outbreak was largely attributed to a segment of the population who were infected and cycled in and out of jail. The community public health program hypothesized that education to this jailed population would increase knowledge of STIs, increase screening and treatment, and decrease the spread of infection.

The academic research team was charged with identifying an evidence-based education curriculum for the jail population, training health educators, and working with jail personnel to implement the program. Interorganizational (IO) teams were already in place to manage the adjudicated population. The teams were composed of corrections officials, nurses, social workers, and health educators. The corrections officers were responsible for admitting the client and safety assurances, nurses tended to physical needs like intravenous therapy and dressing of wounds and some health screening, the social workers identified treatment referrals or other social service needs, and the health educators provided health information and, along with the nurses, handed out condoms. From the researchers' perspective, the teams were collaborative and managed their responsibilities.

Since this project was a directive from the tribal government, the academic research team assumed that project implementation would be smooth and resistance free. A curriculum was identified, and a 2-day training was scheduled. The IO teams willingly attended the evidence-based STI training provided by the Centers for Disease Control and

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Prevention (CDC). A few days after the training, the curriculum was dismissed because of the time needed for curriculum delivery and the lack of cultural appropriateness. In short, the IO teams firmly believed that curriculum would not work. The research team did not understand. From their perspective, this was the best solution—the entire curriculum was evidence based. Eventually, the academic team took a step back and reassessed their approach, began dialogue with the teams, and requested recommendations to adapt the curriculum. When the IO teams felt respected, they began providing local knowledge that was instrumental to the project's progression. During discussions, the academic team learned about significant challenges to project implementation: staff "burnout," time available for presentation, content of presentation, safety concerns, and STI screening follow-up. The IO teams were understaffed and overstretched and suffered from job burnout. They had a *maximum* of 10 minutes to deliver any STI presentation, and the presentation had to include mostly pictures because some clients, especially those detoxifying, would have cognitive limitations. The original evidence-based curriculum spanned 45 minutes. It contained some pictures but was mostly discussion based. Initially, the research team and tribal government were expecting that each person receiving the health information via curriculum would be individually tested for STIs. However, each IO team had only two corrections staff members, and due to security concerns, they felt it was difficult for one officer to take one client to be tested while leaving the other officer responsible for the rest of the jailed clients. Similarly, not all clients could be tested together because of confidentiality and safety concerns, nor would the nurse enter the cells for testing. Finally, nurses and health educators were concerned about follow-up. They could screen clients but who would follow up with the diagnosis and treatment? Did clients have insurance or qualify for public assistance? The academic team failed to conduct formative research to learn about the current system, workload and context of the jail management teams, and cultural views related to the health concerns. Because of this failure to learn, listen, and negotiate, the jail IO teams pushed back as hard as the academic team pushed forward, but through participation and dialogue, the teams came to negotiate difference and build a working relationship based on trust.

The frame for this chapter is focused on community–academic relationships in the context of health research projects. In the scenario presented above, the shift from tense and unyielding group dynamics to the development of a cooperative partnership occurred when all partners had a role and capacity to listen to and negotiate with each other. The issue of trust has frequently been identified as a mediator to cooperation. Trust facilitates open communication, information sharing, and conflict management (Madhok, 2006).

This chapter explores trust and conflict within community–academic partnerships by evaluating principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR) and applying these principles to Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) model of trust development and decline. We first define characteristics of community–academic partnerships, conflict, and trust, and then explore three models of trust development and apply them to CBPR partnerships, a unique type of community–academic partnerships, specifically aligning trust development models with CBPR guiding principles. We make recommendations to future community–academic partnerships on how to improve reflection on and consciousness of trust development as a way to reduce conflict, and finally, we present directions for future research.

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Central Concepts Defined

Community–Academic Partnerships

Community–academic partnerships are relationships often formed to resolve an issue requiring academic, technical, and theoretical knowledge as well as community indigenous and experiential knowledge. MacQueen and colleagues (2001) identified community as "a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations or settings" (p. 1936). Academics have partnered with communities within the context of health research for decades relying on cooperation, iterative interaction, and equality for success (World Health Organization, 1997). Academics are "individuals who are generally located in academic, health, or related institutions and whose job descriptions usually include conducting research" (Mercer et al., 2008, p. 410).

From a bird's-eye view, community–academic partnerships resemble small groups in four ways: (1) three or more people yet small enough so that each member can be easily identified as being present or absent from meetings; (2) regular and ongoing interaction such as meetings and/or electronic correspondence; (3) having a shared purpose (in intervention-oriented community–academic partnerships, the purpose is research with project goals such as policy and/or behavior change); and (4) some form of interdependence (Gastil & Sprain, 2011). Interdependence refers to the extent to which one member's interactional outcomes are based on another member's actions. Boon and Holmes (1991) suggest that the degree of interdependence is directly proportional to the relevance of trust—the greater amount of interdependence means the greater need for trust. For example, if a community member wants to read a recent journal article but does not own a subscription, the academic member may locate and share the article since the university library does subscribe to the journal.

In addition to being small groups, these partnerships are IO, meaning that representatives from two or more organizations/agencies work collaboratively to achieve a common goal. The benefit of establishing IO partnerships is to incorporate different perspectives of an issue while exploring solutions, especially where innovation is needed (Newell & Swan, 2000). Innovation is necessary in community–academic collaborations to advance and disseminate knowledge while engaging communities.

A wide range of community engagement research models and community–academic collaborations exist. Community engagement (CE) spans a spectrum from simply providing information to consultation to active participation and community-driven research (Arnstein, 1969; Clinical and Translational Science Awards Consortium, 2011; Queensland Government, 2005). Information sharing is a one-way relationship devoid of public participation. Relevant information is determined by academics or government and then disseminated to community members through a range of media, including telephone, publications, and websites, as well as education and awareness activities. Consultation is a relationship in which community/consumer views on programs or services are actively sought out. Effective consultation occurs when there is a shared understanding of how community input will be used and timely feedback to participants about the final outcome is provided. In a model of active participation, community members are sought out as full participants, recognizing the role that community has in shaping programs and services. Active participation enables communities to raise their own issues and contribute to solutions. The type

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of community–academic partnership further influences the range of CE models.

It would be unrealistic to suggest that a typical community–academic partnership exists, although from the authors' experience, these partnerships do share characteristics of diversity, virtual work environments, funding sources, and motivation for participation. First, members come from communities as unpaid volunteers, paid consultants, or staff; organizations range from service providing institutions (clinics) to advocacy agencies; and finally, academic partners often represent different disciplines. For example, both authors currently belong to a research team that comprises scholars from public health, health and intercultural communication, anthropology, sociology, and psychology. In general, these partnerships often operate as virtual organizations and occupy no shared physical space, with each member having an office space supported by his or her home organization or if volunteering the member works from home or public location with computer access. The members rely on funding from federal or foundation agencies, or in-kind support (person time and supplies) from partnership organizations. Finally, the members converge for a variety of reasons, such as the possibility of grant funding, thereby increasing the existing resources, the mission of their home organization, personal interest about the issue under investigation, or personal desire for capacity building ranging from increasing income to learning new skills. The range of CE research models and community–academic collaborations has made the research field vulnerable to enacting IO structures that can cause or sustain conditions of risk and mistrust—specifically, structures of governance and management.

Relationships lacking a clear decision-making or approval process are vulnerable to being guided by two or more governance or management structures. In other words, community governance guides community members, and organizational/university members are guided by the rules and regulations of their respective institutions. Ring (1997) alerts us to this problem, and conflicts may arise due to lack of traditional hierarchical relationships and governance related to IO networks. Weiner, Alexander, and Shortell (2002) investigated governance and management capabilities in coalitions—a type of community–academic partnership. They found that perceived clarity and consistency in decision making, as well as collaboration in conflict resolution, resulted in greater involvement and partnership longevity. Similarly, Owens, Andrew, Collins, Griffeth, and Mahoney (2011) found that membership entities had different operating policies and incentive structures, which made it difficult to advance their project. As a remedy, they suggest creating an information packet with key policies that prioritize decision making. Without clear understanding or agreements between members and organizations about governance, conflict within partnerships will arise during the research process, stalling the project and potential action. The next section discusses conflict at both the micro- and macrolevels.

Conflict in Community–Academic Partnerships

Disruptive yet valuable to community–academic partnerships, conflict generates change and growth—it can result in a better understanding of self and other (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). Conflict is "the perceived and/or actual incompatibility of values, expectations, processes, or outcomes between two or more parties over substantive and/or relational issues" (Ting-Toomey, 1994, p. 360). Pondy (1992) suggested that conflict is necessary for organizations to survive and evolve. Furthermore, he suggested that conflict in organizations is inevitable due to inherent

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differences in perceptions, culture, and goals of individual organization members. Similarly, researchers have suggested that coalitions have better outcomes when membership treats conflict as inherent rather than a deviation from business as usual (Weiner et al., 2002). Although potentially beneficial, conflict can also disrupt partnerships by fostering member turnover, stalling progress, or ultimately ending partnerships. There are a number of conflict sources that can be catalogued into micro- and macrolevels. In this context, microsources of conflict are those that occur within the partnership, between community partners and academic partners; whereas larger macrosocietal sources affect the partnership from the outside.

Microsources. In community–academic partnerships, issues of conflict can arise from partner biases, differing values or priorities, and differences in personalities, cultures, and communication styles. Partnership cooperation is susceptible to conflict generated by partner biases of both community and academic partners. For example, researchers may project a view that community members' knowledge and expertise is less important or valuable. In the opening scenario, the academics' knowledge of research methods and value placed on an evidence-based curriculum outweighed community knowledge and "on-the-job" expertise at the beginning of the partnership. Community members, on the other hand, unaccustomed to research processes may become frustrated by the long process and come to believe that academics are not committed to action and are fueled by their own self-interests (Owens et al., 2011).

A major challenge for maintaining successful community–academic partnerships is gaining convergence of values and priorities. Individuals from different organizations have different perspectives on time, risk, and decision making (Weiner, Alexander, & Zuckerman, 2000), as well as different views on the way research should be conducted. The traditional model of research where the principal investigator is the sole proprietor of knowledge does not provide a place for other forms of leadership or knowledge that are critical to meeting needs and establishing a successful community–academic partnership (Freeman, Brugge, Bennett-Bradley, Levy, & Carrasco, 2006). Creating space for alternative leadership promotes collaboration and can foster a diverse team of members with varied expertise, strengths, and assets. Chené et al. (2005) recommended a departure from conformity and question normative models when working in collaboration with community. Freeman and colleagues (2006) align with this recommendation stating, "Researchers should include communities in formulating research agendas, questions, and priorities and should take their findings back to the communities for critical appraisal and practical applications." Input from all partnership members is necessary to create shared values; however, priorities may still conflict.

Community partners often have specific interests related to how the outcome of research will benefit community. For example, project data are essential for framing policy issues and raising policymakers' awareness to change unhealthy conditions or demand necessary services in health care, education, and economic opportunities (Minkler, 2004, 2010; Patel & Hampton, 2011). However, it takes time to develop reports for public consumption. Although academics may understand the need to educate policymakers about project outcomes and have ethical obligations toward community, their interests may be counterbalanced by the desire to first contribute to science through peer-reviewed publication and career advancement (Hull, 1988).

In addition to lack of congruence in priorities, differences in culture and communication styles are prominent conflict triggers. In

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academia, communication patterns are based on a culture of competition and critique (Goodall, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c), and associated behaviors such as interrupting and contradicting are often difficult for nonacademics within partnerships. Pondy (1967) asserted that conflict relationships are instigated by a sequence of interlocking conflict episodes. To illustrate Pondy's assertion, imagine a partnership meeting where an academic partner continuously interrupts or talks over other partnership members. Initially, the interrupted partner will excuse this behavior as a rare event, but as the behavior continues, one of two things may happen: (1) Either the partner withdraws and does not participate in the meeting or (2) The partner becomes assertive, talks louder, and begins interrupting the academic. Both scenarios are examples of interlocking conflict episodes and show that culture and communication styles contribute to conflict. These are a few examples, not a comprehensive list, of microsources of conflict. These microlevel sources can usher in larger social issues. In the next section, we discuss macrolevel conflict influences.

Macrosources. Three larger social issues that can contribute to conflict within partnerships are (1) issues of power, (2) resource allocation, and (3) traditional research methods. Power, as Collins (2000) articulates, "defies simple explanation" (p. 274). Power, she continues, "is the intangible entity that circulates within a particular matrix of domination and to which individuals stand in varying relationships" (p. 274). Foucault (1980) differentiated between power that represses and power that produces. Repressive power structures operate by directly controlling opportunities, such as restricting access to education, employment, or living situations, among others. Mainstream institutions, such as research and funding institutions, exercise productive power, to create and reproduce symbols, academic discourse, and hierarchies of structural power that exclude others and allow repressive power to continue. Our society locates power in knowledge—in particular, knowledge of science. In community–academic partnerships, academics have research knowledge and the power of privilege that comes with their academic position. Community members often do not have advanced degrees or professor positions. Therefore, by societal rules and norms, within these partnerships, academics have more power than community, and it is exerted in the control of the research process and project direction. Academics and other professionals also exert power through their use of language, both in terms of English versus a non-English or indigenous language and also in terms of academic jargon (i.e., "evidence based," "*p* value," "social and health disparities," and use of acronyms NIH instead of National Institutes of Health, etc.). However, as Foucault (1980) has noted, power is not monolithic and is expressed in a web of changing relations, enabling communities to locate their own power by questioning the skills and expertise of academics (Wallerstein, 1999). Scott (1990) suggested that people with less power express their resistance in hidden and public discourse to reclaim their power. In the opening scenario, academics asserted power by controlling the project's direction, identifying the curriculum and training, as well as establishing the education protocol. By insisting on an "evidence-based" curriculum, power was asserted through academic jargon and scientific expertise. The IO teams, however, located their power in resisting the implementation of the curriculum and, ultimately, forced a reexamination of the research plan.

Inequities in resources are related to power dynamics. As previously mentioned, community–academic partnerships rely on outside funding. These resources are often grant awards from federal, state, or nonprofit foundations.

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Although community-based organizations (CBOs) are eligible to apply for funding from these entities, an effective grant writer is someone who has scientific knowledge and has the ability to use scientific jargon. Anecdotally, and from experience, the academic partner most often is the grant writer, with the university being the entity applying for the funds and the community partner(s) written into the application as a subaward. Therefore, the academics have the control and power to distribute resources that may provoke conflict in their distribution and sharing with communities. Research is an economic opportunity for communities—it creates or sustains jobs. Often, community members are allocated the responsibility of participant recruitment and data collection, two of the most time-intensive aspects of the research process. It is expected, therefore, that the overall budget is shared appropriately; however, the funding agency may see equitable sharing as a weakness in the application. Resource sharing is a delicate matter that requires extensive discourse about the culture of funding agencies and its relationship to power and knowledge.

Similarly, disagreements between community and academic partners may also occur when choosing the methods used to answer research questions. Community partners may be interested in using methods that maximize community benefits, but these methods may compromise the science (Resnik & Kennedy, 2010). For example, Freeman and colleagues (2006) experienced conflict when proposing an experimental design using a control group. Their research partners were concerned that this design would deprive the control families of research benefits. Through negotiation, in the end, the research design was changed to a longitudinal study with a single intervention and dense data collection at several time points to maintain research integrity. The academics had to maintain research integrity not only to get grant funding but also to legitimize their research to peers in publications. These macrosources are interrelated and difficult to negotiate because of participant diversity. In the reality of difference, participatory processes in research are an approach to conflict mitigation by fostering open communication and trust among and between partners.

Trust in Community–Academic Partnerships

Trust has been recognized as crucial to patient/provider, business, and romantic relationships where interpersonal determinants of trust have been investigated (Anderson & Dedrick, 1990; Hall et al., 2002; Kao, Green, Zaslavsky, Koplan, & Cleary, 1998; Parsons, 1951; Zheng, Hall, Dugan, Kidd, & Levine, 2002). In organizational research, trust has been found to promote better team process and produce positive effects on attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, and performance outcomes (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). This topic has been understudied in community–academic partnerships; however, research from other disciplines will be referenced for definitions and trust types.

Trust Definitions and Definition Components. There are several definitions of trust in the social science literature, including intuitive confidence, a sense of comfort, and expectations that moral social order will persist (Barber, 1983); calculated decisions to cooperate (Gambetta, 1998); and a set of expectations resulting in reliable interpersonal (Rotter, 1980), collaborative (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Zucker, 1986), and professional (Johns, 1996; Mechanic & Schlesinger, 1996) performance with the best interest of the other in mind. Ring and Van de Ven (1994) saw trust as satisfaction with fairness. These definitions focus on expectations (reliability, moral order, and fairness, best interest, comfort, and cooperation) of the

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person who is trusting. Barber (1983) defines expectations as "the meanings actors attribute to themselves and others as they make choices about which actions and reactions are rationally effective and emotionally and morally appropriate" (p. 9). In other words, expectation itself is an individual choice of action and reaction with a moral outcome, where morality is "the effort to guide one's conduct by reason, while giving equal weight to the interests of each individual who will be affected by one's conduct" (Rachels, 1986, p. 11). Thus, expectations, and therefore trust, concerns more than the person who is trusting. Yet trust has been investigated in various contexts for more than 50 years and the one-dimensional definitions remain as the dominant paradigm (Webber, 2008).

A more dynamic definition of trust comes from Boon and Holmes (1991). They claim that trust is "a state involving confident positive expectations about another's motives with respect to oneself in situations entailing risk" (p. 194). This suggests trust as multidimensional, highlighting interdependence and interplay between the expectations of the person who is trusting, as well as his or her disposition or propensity to trust, the motives of the individual being trusted, and the situational parameters, including risk. Barber (1983) posited that trust is not generalizable—it is subject to the situational context. It is also important to understand that "state" of trust is not static but dynamic, changing and adapting to new information. To date, trust research has been limited to measurement at one point in time, despite the knowledge that trust is situational and time dependent (Webber, 2008).

In community–academic partnerships, the notion and measurement of trust as multidimensional can quickly become overwhelming, as multiple diverse partners are involved. Each partner has his or her own disposition, expectations of the partnership, and perceptions of risk and vulnerability. Risk and vulnerability are sources of conflict, and attention to these issues is critical to understanding barriers to trust development. When achieved, trust minimizes fears of exploitation and feelings of vulnerability, but developing trust takes time.

Trust is a dialogic activity developed through iteration, yet at the same time, dialogue is a tensional practice, requiring participants to negotiate attitudes and actions during communication (Stewart & Zediker, 2000). Deutsch (1958) argued, "Risk-taking and trusting behavior are . . . really different sides of the same coin" (p. 266). Granovetter (1985) agreed by advocating that the very nature of trust creates an opportunity for doing wrong to the person who is trusting. Therefore, an individual must determine whether the outcome is worth the risk; the decision to trust involves a voluntary acceptance of risk involved (G. F. Thomas, Zolin, & Hartman, 2009). The decision to accept risk and trust becomes more complicated when applied to population groups and to collaborative research, because risk and vulnerability are tied to the larger social and historical context of the particular community that is involved.

In community–academic research partnerships, risk exists for both community and academics. For communities, a major concern is a risk of history repeating itself. Many communities of color or other disenfranchised groups have faced histories of discrimination, from attempts at assimilation or even genocide to less severe, often inadvertent, but still harmful discriminatory treatment, which produces poor educational or health outcomes (Jones, 2001; Krieger, 2005; Marmot & Wilkinson, 2006). These have been played out through federal policies and interaction with dominant society institutions, including interactions with the institution of research. Examples of unethical and negligent research are abundant within the history of communities of color and underrepresented populations (Bommersbach, 2008; Burhansstipanov, Bemis,

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& Petereit, 2008; Christopher, 2005; S. B. Thomas & Quinn, 2000; Walters, Beltran, Huh, & Evans-Campbell, 2011; among others). The span of unethical and negligent research include outside researchers entering communities, collecting data, and leaving without direct benefit to communities. Community-engaged researchers refer to this as "helicopter" or "drive-by" research (Greene-Moton, Palermo, Flicker, & Travers, 2006). It has also been the case where data have been returned to the community without explanation of the findings or how to use the information. In some cases, intervention data were interpreted and reported in such a way that resulted in community stigma and opposed cultural understanding. For example, two peer-reviewed journal articles written on data collected during the Medical Genetics Project at Havasupai (Bommersbach, 2008) (1) reported a high degree of inbreeding, claiming an explanation of higher susceptibility of disease (Markow & Martin, 1993) and (2) suggested tribal ancestry via the frozen Bering Sea (Karafet et al., 1997), which contradicts traditional origination stories. Other examples include using samples for unauthorized investigations (Bommersbach, 2008), artificial inoculation, sterilization, and serology testing (Cook & Jackson, 2012).

Less severe risks to community participants include disruption to reputation and accountability of the community at large. When a community member vouches for an outsider, for example, the member puts his or her reputation at risk, and if the outsider does not perform as expected, then the community member is held accountable. Also, the research time frame must account for and be respectful of community processes like community research approvals (e.g., tribal research review boards), as well as internal community organization grant approvals and signatures. Postponements and interruptions to these processes create tension and stress for both the community and academic parties. In other words, community organizations have time frames for approval processes just like universities (even if these are not formal institutional review boards). If these processes are not adhered to, then the organization becomes stressed, causing tensions within the organization and between community–academic partnerships. These tension-causing situations from the community perspective are underrepresented in the literature.

Similarly, academic partners face specific risks when initiating a research partnership. Some of the risks are the "flip side" of community risks. Huberman (1990) characterized this as a "two-community" problem, with academic and community partners each having different norms, values, and rewards. A major risk to academics is lost time. For academics, promotion within university ranks, such as tenure, and local and national reputation ride on the ability to publish or disseminate research outcomes (Seifer, 2008). Delays within community approval processes can become a risk in the process of dissemination and academic participation in community-engaged research (Minkler, 2004). As an example, the authors have experienced submitting manuscripts for community approval and not receiving a decision for 4 to 6 months. However, is this really different from submitting to a peer-reviewed journal and not receiving a decision for 4 months or longer? Time is also required to drive to communities, attend meetings, develop roles and responsibilities, write grants, and work through conflicts (Stoecker, 1999, 2008). Time invested is a risk, but a substantial amount of time is required to develop genuine collaborative relationships.

Furthermore, academics risk not being accepted by community partners, yet the very nature of community–academic relationships implies boundaries—"us" and "them." Tensions may arise if the attempt to create inclusion or acceptance within a partnership

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is made. For instance, the IO teams in the opening scenario were members of an indigenous community with a preferred language other than English. At times, the conversation would change from English into the preferred language. Inquiry from the academic team members about what was said was an inclusion attempt and a source of conflict. When facing this risk, it is important to keep the relationship parameters in mind. Relationship parameters are the frame of the relationship. Trust and conflict within community–academic partnerships is bounded to the situational or relationship parameters in which the partnership was brought together. Focusing on the goal or objective of the relationship may keep what is important in perspective.

Types of Trust. Situations contain context-specific variables and conditions that can foster collaboration and the opportunity to trust. At this moment, if you as the reader of this chapter were asked if you trusted the authors, we expect that you would answer, "It depends," and you are right—it depends on the situation. Hardin (1993) exemplified the necessity of accounting for the situation when he stated, "Only a small child, a lover, Abraham speaking to God, or a rabid follower of a charismatic leader might be able to say 'I trust you' without implicit modifier" (pp. 506–507). In community–academic research partnerships, context-specific variables include the severity or stigmatizing nature of the health issue, history, and relationship parameters.

The health issue may be severe in its prevalence, but it can also be severe based on its stigma, for example, mental health diagnoses, drug use, or domestic violence. In addition, the historical context of research within a community will shape the amount of participation, trust, and resistance a community puts forth. Boon and Holmes (1991) argued that the history of previous relationships is fundamental to behavioral expectations of the other party. Therefore, if a community has had less favorable experience with researchers or with research methods previously used, the less likely the community will engage in a research partnership or the more time it will take to begin the relationship.

Several types of trust have been suggested in the literature. Although not explicit, these are situational or relationship parameters. A few are directly applicable to community–academic relationships. Swift trust is a type of trust that needs to form very quickly for progress to be made (Meyerson, Weick, & Kramer, 1996). Swift trust is time, task, and goal dependent and is driven more by contextual cues than by personalities or interpersonal relations. Similarly, technically competent trust (Barber, 1983) or presumptive/role-based trust (Webb, 1996) is based on the expectation of competent role performance. Competent performance involves expert knowledge and/or technical capacity. To illustrate, imagine a CBO responding to a funding announcement. The grant announcement requires an evaluation plan to be submitted but the CBO does not have the experience, so they contact an academic to develop the plan. A relationship between the academic and the CBO did not previously exist. Trust, based on task completion and competence among partners, must develop quickly for progress to be made and deadlines met. However, this does not mean that the relationship will continue. Trust based on role and task performance can be quite fragile and produce failures in cooperation and coordination.

Co-alliance trust is the result when organizations make equal contributions of resources, competencies, and knowledge for specific projects and time frames (Panteli & Sockalingam, 2005). This type of trust suggests equal commitment by all parties. As previously mentioned the issue of governance, decision making, and resource allocation in

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community–academic relationships is a cause of conflict and not readily addressed. However, examples of equal contributions in terms of knowledge and competencies are plentiful. Therefore, trust based on equal resources is plausible. S. P. Shapiro (1987) and Sitkin and Roth (1993) among others conceptualized a type of trust based on formal organizational and institutional arrangements, such as legal agreements, formal rules, and memoranda of understanding. Formal agreements are thought to augment or remedy mistrust by articulating written roles and responsibilities, expectations of partner organizations, decision-making processes as well as project governance. Co-alliance trust and those based on formal agreements together could form a more sustainable partnership. Situations requiring quick decisions about trust without the ability to weigh the risks might be more prone to conflict than relationships that grow together and evolve shared goals and values.

Relational trust is one such trust type. Developed by Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998), relational trust develops over time and through repeated interactions. Repeated interactions provide evidence of reliability and dependability of partners and gives rise to positive expectations. Interdependence between the parties increases over time as new opportunities and initiatives are pursued. As its name implies, personal affective relationships begin to form between partners. As with any trust type, a dynamic is the potential for growth or deterioration. In relational trust, there is more to lose compared with swift, role-based, agreement-based, or equal resources–based relationships. This generates the question: What does trust look like before or after these trust types: swift trust, role-based trust, agreement-based trust, equal resources–based trust, or relational trust? Can swift trust develop into agreement or relational trust?

This section has identified definitions and types of trust as a way to think about potential conflict and conflict resolution in community–academic partnerships. Conflict is inherent within community–academic partnerships; therefore, knowing conflict sources and how to manage conflict will help develop trust. Even situations where there is no apparent conflict or where there seems to be neutral trust, an awareness of the context, both current and historical, can lead to better understanding of conflict sources and to heightened readiness for managing the inevitable conflicts that will arise. Negotiation of trust involves negotiation of risk and by necessity that involves conflict, but how is trust developed? In an attempt to shed light on trust development, the following section will review interpersonal and organizational relationship trust development models identifying similarities between them as well as their applicability to understanding trust development in community–academic relationships.

Trust Development Models

This section reviews trust development models to illustrate components needed for trust growth and decline. There are three models most salient in the literature: (1) trust development in romantic relationships, (2) trust development in interpersonal business relationships, and (3) the three-stage trust development model for organizations. This section discusses the models and their similarities.

Boon and Holmes (1991) identified three phases of trust in romantic relationships: (1) romantic love stage, (2) evaluation stage, and (3) accommodation stage. They described the romantic stage as early in the relationship and characterized by emotion that idealizes the flood of positive feeling for another person. As interdependence grows, the evaluative stage begins and true colors begin to emerge.

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Less charming behaviors are evaluated, yet, because of interdependence, the risk of dissolving the relationship has increased, as was seen in the relational trust type. The final stage, accommodation stage, creates a "need for further compromise and adjustment" (p. 203). This stage identifies a necessity to actively "fit" into a partner's needs and preferences. This model uniquely offers an evaluative component of trust development that is absent from other models.

To understand development and interpersonal functioning among managers and professionals within organizations, McAllister (1995) proposed two types of trust: (1) competency-based trust (cognitive) and (2) an emotion-based trust (affective). Although cognitive trust and affective trust are distinct types, McAllister posits that affective trust can be an advancement of cognitive trust. In other words, competency-based trust over time can develop into affective trust, making it a model of development. Cognitive trust is grounded in individual beliefs and subsequent observation about the reliability, dependability, and consistency of personal actions and behavior. Some baseline amount of cognitive trust is necessary for affect-based trust to develop. When a baseline is not available, a person may defer to role-based performance trust as a reference. Affective trust is grounded in reciprocated interpersonal care and emotional bonds, similar to the first stage in Boon and Holmes's (1991) model that is characterized by emotion and caring. In fact McAllister's model could be viewed as the reverse reciprocal to the Boon and Holmes model, less the evaluative stage.

To advance the understanding of how trust develops in organizations, Lewicki and Bunker (1995) developed a three-stage model for organizations based on the work of D. L. Shapiro, Sheppard, and Cheraskin (1992). These stages, called calculus-based trust (CBT), knowledge-based trust (KBT), and identification-based trust (IBT), are useful when looking at academic–community collaborations because, for each stage, the authors articulate clear conditions and factors necessary for creating and sustaining trust. The conditions are situational, relational, and risk related.

CBT develops when potential loss of business outweighs the profit potential that results from distrustful behavior. Translating this to community–academic relationships, consider research as an economic opportunity. A researcher secures a grant, completes the aims and scope of work, but does not build trust with community partners. There is a risk that the community will not want to partner in the future, and the researcher is back to finding another community partner (loss of business), rather than continuing the research trajectory by building on past accomplishments (profit potential). CBT also functions when each party understands the repercussions if harm is done, including that the trustor (person who is trusting) would withdraw benefits and introduce potential harms, including gossip and "bad mouthing," if his or her trust is betrayed. From this angle, McAllister's (1995) competency-based trust is incorporated because all parties must be competent about the repercussions as well as the benefits. Three forms of interactions contribute to CBT: (1) repeated interactions, (2) having many points of contact, and (3) the threat of reputation loss. Simply put, CBT functions on the fear that consequences will outweigh rewards, where consequences are real and possible. Trust is fragile at this stage and can dissolve quickly.

KBT is based on the belief that partner's dispositions are known enough for behavior to be predicted. Two additional factors help gain predictability: (1) regular communication and (2) being attentive so as to assess "interpersonal fit" (D. L. Shapiro et al., 1992, p. 370). Fit was also found in Boon and Holmes's (1991) model for romantic relationships. They made the point that fit is an active adjustment and compromise. For example, in community–academic partnerships, under-

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standing partners' core values would determine whether a fit exists. In the opening scenario of this chapter, the community partners were concerned with actions that fit their current work situation as well as cultural appropriateness, whereas academics were concerned with fitting existing evidence-based curriculum into the work context. Adapting the curriculum that met the needs of both the community and academic team fit better with the partnership. Trust is harder at this stage and is directly proportional to the level of communication. Communication creates understanding of the other parties' needs and aligning of actions necessary for continued partnering.

IBT is where each party understands and agrees with the other's values often because of a relationship history. This level of trust is achieved by creation of joint products and goals, shared values, proximity, and shared identity. Shared identity can be created during the partnership, but it can also exist independent of the partnership, for example, partners who share particular views, share particular histories, and/or provide similar types of service (Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001). One could argue that this stage includes elements of McAllister's (1995) affective trust—grounded in reciprocated interpersonal care and interdependence. IBT is the highest stage in this model, assuming partnerships develop over a longer period of time than either of the other two stages.

This section attempted to illustrate similarities between interpersonal and organizational trust developmental models. Rotter (1967) brought forth the notion of trust as a key element in social organizations by stating,

> One of the most salient factors in the effectiveness of our present complex social organization is the willingness of one or more individuals in a social unit to trust others. The efficiency, adjustment, and even survival of any social group depends on the presence or absence of such trust. (p. 651)

As outlined in previous sections, there are many sources of conflict and risk present in community–academic relationships; therefore, the willingness to trust requires conscious negotiation of several factors: governance, decision making, risk and vulnerability, historical relationship with research, and relationship parameters.

A promising trust-building and negotiation approach is CBPR, a specific strand of community–academic partnerships. Because Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) model of trust development (CBT, KBT, and IBT) remains the most comprehensive explanation of trust development to date, the next section provides an overview of CBPR's guiding principles and aligns them with the stages of this trust model to determine the model's applicability to understanding trust development in community–academic research partnerships.

Building Trust Through CBPR Principles

CBPR has arisen in the past several decades as a democratic approach to research that embraces and incorporates concepts from Kurt Lewin's action research to Paulo Freire's popular education. It is a collaborative, interactive, and inclusive approach to community research that equitably involves all partners in the research process. CBPR encourages local participation by those who are grounded in the community to generate knowledge that is transformed into action for the benefit of the public applying community ownership to the research process, so health equity is increased. The definition by the Kellogg Foundation states that CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community and combines knowledge with action to achieve social change to improve community issues through social action (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008).

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The CBPR approach deeply involves processes of communication; therefore, attention to the dialogic environment is essential. Freire (1993) stated that the act of creating true dialogue is based on love, humility, faith in people, hope, and critical thinking. True dialogue is difficult to create, though the reward is trust. "Trust is contingent on the evidence which one party provides the others of his true, concrete intentions; it cannot exist if the party's words do not coincide with their actions" (p. 91). Given the inherent nature of conflict, conscious intention and action are necessary to keep the partnership moving forward.

Individuals enter research partnerships with previous experiences, are capable of contributing to spheres of knowledge, and have to learn to balance power in relationships. Concentrated efforts, therefore, on the communication process are needed to create shared visions and meaning. Scholars (Gaya Wicks & Reason, 2009; Kemmis, 2008) have proposed incorporating Habermas's (1987) theory of communicative action to open communicative space, "that delicate place where the lifeworld meets the system, a liminal, in-between space where two opposing qualities meet" (Gaya Wicks & Reason, 2009, p. 258). The lifeworld is the interpersonal and social life of people and groups that converge in shared meaning: a community. The social system, by comparison, is composed of institutional structures and functions that affect lifeworlds: academics, universities, government agencies, and policies. The "boundary crisis" is the space where the two worlds encounter each other, the communicative space where community and academics meet. This space is a breeding ground for conflict. It is the space where governance, decision making, trust development, and micro-/macroissues of conflict are negotiated.

CBPR has the potential to construct a trusting communicative and dialogic space through its intentionality to redress power imbalances within partnerships, facilitate mutual benefit for community and academic partners, as well as promote reciprocal knowledge creation by incorporating indigenous theories and lived experience into the research process. As a corollary, CBPR is seen as an important strategy to address the mistrust and inherent conflict that characterizes community position about research and to help promote community participation in improving health. CBPR principles can thus promote the development of culturally centered health interventions, supporting both community research infrastructure and capacity to engage communities (Burdine, McLeroy, Blakley, Wendel, & Felix, 2010; Dutta, 2007). Israel and colleagues (Israel et al., 2008; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998) proposed a set of CBPR principles that showcase the potential for addressing conflict and building trust and that serve as a guide for conducting CBPR in community–academic partnerships. Presented here is how each CBPR principle intersects with the different stages of trust development: KBT, CBT, and IBT (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995).

1. Recognize community as the unit of identity. This principle aligns with the concepts of multiple contacts in CBT and "fit" within KBT in that academic partners need to be aware of community culture and history. It is necessary to the notion of fit that academic members educate themselves on the history of the community they are working with: its collective memory, its cultural characteristics, its health inequities, its history with research, and researchers who led former research projects. Being educated about these aspects promotes the culture-centered approach, which is concerned with the ways "subalternity is created, reiterated, and sustained by health promotion efforts, and seeks to interrupt the dominant paradigm of health promotion" (Dutta, 2007,

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p. 306). Dutta (2007) referred to subalternity as "being under," being absent, and being silent to the dominant articulations. Both CBPR and the culture-centered approach strive to uncover, invite, ask, and listen to create pragmatic community articulations of their own health and their solutions.

In addition, the community and research team members must understand the university or other academic community. Although many academics, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, subtly separate themselves from the institution as a form of gentle protest against patriarchy and other forms of institutional oppression, community members may not distinguish this separation. From the community perspective, at least initially, an academic researcher is a member of the academic institution and, thus, is bound by the rules and regulations of that institution. Therefore, it is necessary that all research team members understand the rules, regulations, and limitations, so as not only to overestimate their power and thus steer clear of conflict but also to use the power they may have within the institution to benefit their community partners. Those with power have the responsibility to use it to better the lives of those with less power.

2. Build on strengths and resources within the community. "Resources may include skills and assets of individuals; networks of relationships characterized by trust, cooperation, and mutual commitment; and mediating structures such as organizations where community members come together" (Israel et al., 2008, p. 50). Strengths, like skills and experience, and resources, like professional networks and individual and organizational commitment, must be assessed to understand what it is that can be built on. Otherwise partners may feel that they are not being allowed to contribute or not being used to their full capacity, which may lead to (1) goal incompatibility, (2) lack of commitment, or (3) insufficient involvement—three sources of conflict (Rosenberg & Stern, 1971). Therefore, this principle aligns with fit in KBT and shared products and goals in IBT. Establishing a community advisory committee or community research team is another opportunity to build on community strengths by opening up discursive space to create a context in which experience is shared. This context is a chance for authentic humanism as well as education that recognizes the concrete, existential, and present situation of real people (Freire, 1993). Advisory committees and community research teams assist with and ensure that developed goals and planned outcomes are relevant to their real community health situations. Working together, sharing strengths and resources, shifts the responsibility for conflict management and trust building to the entire partnership.

3. Facilitate collaborative, equitable partnerships in all phases of the research. This principle overlaps with the previous one to create partnership synergy. Creating collaborative and equitable partnerships requires that participants feel comfortable and respected while voicing their thoughts, opinions, and perspectives. The combination of perspectives, resources, and skills in a partnership is called partnership synergy (Lasker et al., 2001). Partnership synergy can be difficult to achieve in hierarchical partnerships where researchers have more power related to scientific knowledge than community partners. However, community partners have street knowledge necessary for research project momentum. Street knowledge is commonly considered lay knowledge and is not as highly regarded as formal education.

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Freire (1993) encouraged the meeting of these two minds. He suggested that both ways of knowing can contribute to a greater outcome than any one alone. The one challenge rests on the side of the educated, Freire said that experts come to the table with information they know about a topic but they must be open to relearning. This brings in Lewin's spiral of reflexivity, which proposed that knowledge is learned, relearned, and reflected on (Kemmis, 2008). As a central tenet of CBPR, street knowledge is sought and encouraged for action as it is thought that the people who live the issue also have its solution. Therefore, a necessary exercise for research teams is to practice cultural humility, which is a "lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique to redress power imbalances" (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998, p. 123). The first step to adopting cultural humility is to explore our own cultural lens and operating values and belief systems, where they come from, and how they interact when working with culturally diverse communities. Exploring these assumptions within the research team can create an open and safe environment, while consciously aligning intentions to action. This context can only be achieved through open communicative space that requires repeated interaction and iterative communication. This principle aligns with repeated interactions in CBT, regular communication and fit in KBT, and shared values in IBT that are expressed in people's behaviors with and toward each other. As a result of repeated interactions and open communication, affective relational trust is being developed.

4. Promote colearning and capacity building among all partners. Fundamental to this principle, and colearning in particular, is the recognition that every member of the partnership has knowledge and expertise to share. Capacity building is a "by-product" of the partnership process (Viswanathan et al., 2004) and a significant community benefit (Jagosh et al., 2012), where research skills are learned or developed by being engaged in the research process. Here, we use research skills to be inclusive of facilitation, budget development and reconciliation, report generation, and data analysis skills, as well as better understanding that research questions and projects should be driven by community needs and priorities. Colearning and capacity building results from a cooperative process of interpretation in which participants simultaneously work out situational definitions related to the lifeworld and/or boundary crisis (Habermas, 1987). In the opening scenario, the cooperative process of interpretation allowed the partnership to define the situational problems (knowledge, time, power). Through a discursive process, solutions (revising the curriculum and addressing jargon use as well as acknowledging the importance of street knowledge) were determined through participation. Interpretation and creating situational definitions entails open discussion throughout the research process, from research question development to dissemination with stakeholders to achieve concrete improvements for the community. This principle aligns with repeated interactions and multiple contacts in CBT, regular communication and fit in KBT, and shared values, goals, and products creating interdependence within IBT. Although several principles contribute to building interdependence, this appears to be the most salient. Recall that trust is directly proportional to the degree of interdependence. This principle builds relationships and reduces vulnerabilities because partners are learning and teaching together.

5. Integrate and achieve a balance between research and action for the mutual benefit of all partners. This approach incorporates

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a commitment to the translation and integration of research results with community priorities and values. It is important at the onset of the project that skills and knowledge of the research team and overall partnership are assessed to deliver what is promised. The research team must also be pragmatic in what they say they can deliver. Many times, researchers will say what they think the community wants to hear when in reality it is not reasonable. It is also important to recognize that partners may have different ideas of "benefit"; thus, it is important to begin conversations about what research is, expected outcomes of the research, and priorities and values of both community and academics at the beginning and throughout the life of the project. Academics must be forthcoming about their need to disseminate information about the research process and its outcomes. This principle aligns with repeated interactions and multiple contacts in CBT, regular communication and "fit" in KBT, and shared values, goals, and products within IBT. Complete congruence of values, goals, and products is not necessary as long as partners can accept each other's agenda.

6. Emphasize local relevance of health problems and ecological perspectives that recognize and attend to the multiple determinants of health and disease. Health is a complex phenomenon that encompasses the totality of one's environment, including individual behaviors and attitudes as well as those influences from family, social networks, community, and society. This is known as the ecological perspective (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988). This perspective challenges mainstream heath disparities research that concentrates on one factor at a time instead of investigating complex interactions within multiple levels of the system. The focus on one cause of illness or disease ignores ecologic complexity and loses the ability to identify parts and functions of the whole system. Because health depends on interconnected determinants, the issue that community members find important to investigate may differ from that of academics.

   The ecological perspective is similar to Habermas's (1987) conceptualization of the "horizon of the situation" (p. 123). He stated that situations always have a "horizon" that shifts according to people's position; therefore, importance of a health issue will vary depending on whose opinion is being given. The horizon of the situation is the segment of the lifeworld relevant to the situation for which mutual understanding is required in view of the options for action that have been determined. In CBPR partnerships, the action is the intervention or policy initiative, and the options are the methods used to collect data. Taken as a whole, action and options are otherwise referred to as the action situation. It is through the action situation that the complexity of the issue is understood. It almost suggests a research paradox—that a partnership will not completely understand the ecology of the problem until the investigation has begun. This ties back to colearning found in Principle Four. Therefore, this principle aligns with multiple contacts in CBT to understand what is important to community partners, regular communication and fit in KBT, and shared product, goals, and values in IBT. Again, local relevance of a health problem will not be actualized without communicative space and multiple community members voicing their concerns.

7. Involve systems development through a cyclical and iterative process. As previously mentioned, it is imperative for successful community–academic partnerships to negotiate governance, decision making, and priorities and values among partners. Yet the partnership may change over time, requiring that the negotiated terms be

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revisited. Development of a cyclical and iterative process creates the opportunity to revise decisions and ensures that the research project and its evaluation are on the right track. In terms of conflict management, it is necessary to know whether adjustments should or need to be made in order to maintain alignment with community needs. Development of this system depends on the partnership parameters and dynamics, such as partnership function and length of time. This principle aligns with repeated and multiple interaction in CBT, regular communication and "fit" in KBT, and shared products and goals in IBT. Inherent in this principle is the need to regularly revisit Principles One to Seven. This constant revisiting will begin to create a "context of relevance" (Habermas, 1987, p. 124), which are connected situational elements that find their way into the lifeworld. Consequently, interdependence grows, conflict is reduced, and trust is becoming relational.

8. Disseminate findings and knowledge gained to all partners and involve all partners in the dissemination process. A function of ownership and production of shared products is dissemination of project outcomes. Community members and academics decide what, how, and where to copresent project outcomes. Recall that dissemination is a risk for community partners, accordingly what to share and how to represent it require negotiation and time. Regarding issues of governance, if agreements were made so that the community owns the data, all dissemination reports, manuscripts, and presentations require approval from the owner of the data. As previously mentioned, this is another source of conflict and the reason why project governance should be clearly defined in the beginning. However, within the community, data are often shared between departments, so that other community programs are informed of findings and have the opportunity to use data for other projects or future research endeavors. This means that the academic may be approached to consult about the meaning and potential use of the data. As expected, this principle requires repeated interactions and multiple contacts that align with CBT as well as regular communication and fit in KBT and shared products and goals in IBT.

9. Long-term process and commitment. The CBPR research process seeks to maintain long-term commitments to communities. This time frame has the potential to go beyond the length of any grant period but provides the opportunity to build genuine relational trust over the long term. Even if a partnership decides to dissolve itself, personal relationships have the potential to be maintained from CBPR practices and new partnership based on previous relationships may grow. Commitment as demonstrated as opposed to stated is a major factor in trust development. This principle requires repeated interactions in CBT, regular communication and fit in KBT, shared product and goals and shared values in IBT. In addition, because of the long-term partnership, these principles are cycled through ensuring that governance, goals, action, and outcomes are meeting the needs of the overall partnership and its individual members. Table 20.1 illustrates the links between CBPR principles and the stages of trust development.

When aligning the CBPR principles and stages of trust development model, the salience of CBT is seen in both repeated interactions and multiple contacts, both aligned with six principles each. Given the nature of CBPR, the ability to repeatedly interact with multiple contacts is essential for moving the research

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Table 20.1 CBPR Principles Aligned With the Stages of Trust Development Model

	CBT		*KBT*		*IBT*		
CBPR Principles	*Repeated Interaction*	*Multiple Contacts*	*Regular Communication*	*Fit*	*Shared Products and Goals*	*Proximity*	*Shared Values*
Community as unit of identity		×		×			
Builds on community strengths and resources		×		×	×		
Equitable research partnership	×		×	×			×
Promotes colearning and capacity building	×	×	×	×	×		×
Balance between research and action for mutual benefit	×	×	×	×	×		×
Importance of health problems and ecological perspective		×	×	×	×		
Development through an iterative process	×	×	×	×	×		×
Disseminate outcomes to partners	×	×	×	×	×		
Long-term commitment	×		×	×	×		×

NOTE: CBT = calculus-based trust; KBT = knowledge-based trust; IBT = identification-based trust.

project from inception to completion. KBT was also extremely relevant. Within community–academic relationships, participation among members varies. There may be a small network of individuals who are highly involved, whereas other members are less involved and require ongoing regular communication about project activities and progress.

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Regular communication occurs through meetings, phone calls, and e-mail among other media. Regular communication was found to be very important to the development of a "context of relevance" and, subsequently, trust; it aligned with all but two principles. Overwhelmingly, fit was necessary for all principles, which makes perfect sense, since any action must align with the needs and relevance of all partners. Within IBT, shared product, goals, and values were significant for trust building in community–academic partnerships. Shared products and goals aligned with seven or nine principles, and shared values aligned with five principles. Proximity, as defined by D. L. Shapiro et al. (1992), is concerned with teams that are separated by distance. Physical distance causes difficulty for team functioning. Technological development of other forms of communication like e-mail, Skype, and tele- and videoconferencing have reduced the need for physical proximity; therefore, this variable did not align with any principles.

By aligning the principles of CBPR and Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) model of trust development and decline shows that CBPR has true potential to be a trust-building approach in the span of community–academic partnerships. CBPR offers added value beyond "traditional" research, and perhaps beyond other academic–community collaborations, to reduce risk, negotiate conflict, increase fit with community needs and values, increase interdependence by building capacity, accounting for mutual benefit of all parties, while respecting relationship parameters.

Future Directions and Conclusion

This chapter has articulated a discussion of trust and inherent conflicts within community–academic partnerships by identifying the societal and research context of these relationships, as well as their relational and communication characteristics. We have provided the definitions of trust, types of trust, and three trust development models, identifying Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) model of trust development and decline to best theorize the development of trust within partnerships. We then presented CBPR as a strategy for facilitating trust development and ability to manage and negotiate conflict productively within community–academic partnerships.

Some specific strategies within CBPR were presented as best practices for trust development, such as delineating the expectations of both parties and documenting the terms of agreement in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or similar document. CBPR relationships, based on its principles, also enable the development of contexts that support affective relationships with long-term commitments to each other, which ensure a high level of fit between partners of values and shared goals and products. This project has also illustrated the need to attend to the dialogic environment through repeated interactions, multiple contacts, and regular communication.

Despite this integration of the literature, there are still gaps in our knowledge about trust development and how this facilitates the capacity and effectiveness of partnerships. First, although we theorized about how trust develops in community–academic partnerships, we still do not know how to move from CBT to KBT and IBT.

Trust development models are useful to understanding the broad categories of trust development, but we still need to know what goes into building the categories; these models have remained theoretical. Trust and CBPR researcher need to take this information beyond the theoretical to the practical. However, we must first understand what specifically we are measuring.

Community–academic partnerships lack a definition of trust. In terms of measurement,

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a definition would act like a theoretical frame and help guide researchers to understand what is actually being measured; it is the concepts that help advance the measurement. Without a definition, do we really know what we are measuring? Trust researchers are also stuck in the paradigm of survey research, perhaps trust is best investigated using mixed methods. Given the complexity of trust, as well as the call from CBPR to embrace an ecological perspective, mixed methods seems to be the logical choice for research that is transformative and action oriented.

There are several trust types in the literature, a few that were presented in this chapter, that warrant further investigation. For the most part, trust measurements focus on the characteristics of the person being trusted. Characteristics like reliability, credibility, approachability, and so on, however, as Habermas articulated, are the situational horizons that change depending on who is doing the viewing. Trust types describe the situation and may therefore provide more information on how trust develops.

Finally, conflict in community–academic partnerships is inherent; therefore, it is difficult to engage in trust discourse for fear that it raises suspicion. Trust investigation should have to move in the direction of identifying or understanding the elements that contribute to trust origination beyond the characteristics of the person asking to be trusted. For example, Barber (1983) talked about trust in terms of moral judgments, yet as far as the authors know, there are no measures that look at the contribution of ethics to trust development. Similarly, Lewicki and Bunker (1995) posit that IBT is achieved by creation of joint products and goals, shared values, proximity, and shared identity; however, shared identity in terms of homophile is absent from the literature, yet it seems that being "like" would be foundational. This is an empirical question.

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21

Religion and Conflict

An Emerging Field of Inquiry

Stephen M. Croucher

There has been a great deal of intercultural and cross-cultural research conducted on conflict behavior. The overwhelming majority of this research has focused on comparing East Asian (usually operationalized as collectivist) and U.S. American (usually operationalized as individualist) populations (Cai & Fink, 2002; Chau & Gudykunst, 1987; Kim, Lee, Kim, & Hunter, 2004; Kim & Leung, 2000; Miyahara, Kim, Shin, & Yoon, 1998; Oetzel, Arcos, Mabizela, Weinman, & Zhang, 2006; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001; Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, & Yee-Jung, 2001; Zhang, 2007; for reviews of this line of research see Croucher, 2011a; Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, Hicks, & Oommen, 2011; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2003). This body of research has provided an abundance of findings on how individuals conceptualize conflict, communicate during conflict, and attempt to manage/resolve conflict and how groups differ in various aspects of conflict as a whole. However, little is known about conflict in geographic regions other than those populated by U.S. Americans and East Asians. Moreover, few scholars consider the significance of religion in conflict research (Croucher, 2011a), often failing to gather the religious identification of participants in studies, simply reporting religious identification as a demographic variable, and/or only conducting research among predominantly Caucasian college students in the United States (who are predominantly Christian). Croucher and Cronn-Mills (2011) argue that communication researchers are inherently biased in their sampling methods. Researchers conduct the bulk of their research in the United States among Caucasians, among the middle class, among Christians, and among college students. This is not to criticize research conducted by communication scholars (or other social scientists) but to point out that there are many other populations in the United States, and around the world, neglected by communication scholarship. Many communication traits/behaviors differ in unstudied/understudied populations (Croucher, 2008; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011). Ultimately, less is known about conflict outside a Christian, Caucasian, middle-class, U.S. American, or East Asian student sample.[1] Knowing how individuals

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conceptualize and manage/resolve conflict in different cultures is pivotal to effective intercultural/cross-cultural communication (Oetzel et al., 2006). Furthermore, Croucher (2011b) asserts that to better understand conflict and culture, scholars must expand conflict literature to the examination of religious groups other than Christians. Thus, this chapter explores the relationship between conflict and a vital aspect of culture, religion (Croucher, 2009; Geertz, 1973; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001).

In this chapter, I first explore philosophical/doctrinal traditions and roots of conflict in Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. These religions were included because at the time of the writing of this chapter, the religions were the three largest religious groups in the world (Ahuja, 2008). The second section examines how religion has been studied in relation to various communication traits/behaviors. The third and final section proposes areas for future work linking religion—religious identification/affiliation and religiosity or strength of religious devotion (Alston, 1975)—with conflict research.

Philosophical/Doctrinal Traditions and Roots of Conflict in Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism

An individual's religious background is a pivotal part of his or her socialization. In turn, how we learn to vocalize during conflicts and manage/resolve conflicts is shaped by our socialization in a religious and/or nonreligious environment (Croucher, 2011b; Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, Hicks, & Oommen 2011). Inherently, individuals and societies learn or inherit ethics from a philosophical or religious structure (Mitchell, 1980; Pojman, 2005), and this ethics influences conflict behaviors (French & Albright, 1998). Religious groups conceptualize ethics in different ways; thus, the philosophical/doctrinal traditions and/or roots of conflict vary across religions (Casmir, 1997; Croucher, 2011b; Hall, 1997; Haneef, 1996; Johannesen, 1990; May & Sharratt, 1994). This chapter explores these differences between Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. Table 21.1 provides a comparison of these religions.

Christianity

When all the different Christian denominations are combined, Christianity is the single largest religious faith in the world (Ahuja, 2008). Ideals such as autonomy, preservation of relationships, justice, forgiveness, fairness, and vengeance all prevail in shaping Christian beliefs and ethics, and thus Christian approaches to conflict (Ahuja, 2008; Croucher, 2011b; Johannessen, 1990; May & Sharratt, 1994). When discussing approaches to conflict, I am referring to an individual's conflict style. Blake and Mouton (1964) identified five general styles people tend to adopt when confronted with conflict: (1) *dominating* (high concern for self and low concern for others), (2) *integrating* (high concern for self and others), (3) *compromising* (moderate concern for self and others), (4) *obliging* (low concern for self and high for others), and (5) *avoiding* (low concern for self and others; Croucher, 2011a; Leung & Kim, 2007; Rahim, 1983; Zhang, 2007). Depending on an individual's interpretation of biblical verses and the significance he or she places on the Old and New Testaments, Christians' approach to conflict differ vastly.

Violence and Vengeance. The Old Testament has 39 books, while the New Testament has 27 books. The Old Testament includes numerous books that dictate how one should live one's life (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, etc.). These books often depict a violent and vengeful God, who is not very patient or kind. In Exodus 2:29–30,[2] we see

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Table 21.1 Comparison Between Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam

Religious Group	*No. of Adherents*	*Geography*	*Key Beliefs*	*Texts/Figures*	*Denominations/Sects*
Christianity	2.2 billion	Global, with fewer concentrations in Southeast Asia	Monotheistic religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Some important beliefs include the following: (1) God is Trinitarian, that is, consisting of three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; (2) Jesus is the Son of God (the Messiah sent to save the world by his death on the Cross); (3) Jesus was resurrected from the dead and ascended into Heaven; (4) Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead; (5) individuals can be saved from sin through Jesus's sacrifice; and (6) there is a heaven and a hell.	Texts: Christianity is based on the Bible, which Christians believe is the Word of God. The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament has 39 books, and the New Testament has 27 books. Each book is a lesson on how to live a Christian life. Figures: Jesus Christ, Virgin Mary, Joseph, the 12 Apostles, Martin Luther, various popes	Christianity is divided into various denominations. While these are many, all denominations have in common the worship of Jesus Christ. Some Christian groups are Catholics, Anglicans, Protestants (Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, etc.), Eastern Orthodox Christians, and Unitarians
Hinduism	900 million	Main concentrations in India, Nepal, Mauritius, Guyana, Fiji, Bhutan, Suriname, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh	It embodies a wide range of beliefs and traditions that are very personal and philosophical. While many call it polytheistic (focusing on multiple gods), this is an overgeneralization. Important beliefs include (1) the eternal nature of the soul, (2) the importance of karma, (3) seeking awareness of God, (4) daily rituals to a God, and (5) pilgrimages.	Texts: The Vedas, a collection of four texts from ancient India written in Vedic Sanskrit are the oldest scripture in Hinduism. Hindus claim these texts are not of human origin but from sruti, "what is heard." The texts focus on rituals, teaching, philosophy, and reincarnation.	Academics divide Hinduism into four main groups based on the primary deity worshipped: Vaishnavas (worship Vishnu), Shaivites (worship Shiva), Shaktas (worship Shakti), and Smartas (accept all major deities)

(Continued)

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Table 21.1 (Continued)

Religious Group	*No. of Adherents*	*Geography*	*Key Beliefs*	*Texts/Figures*	*Denominations/Sects*
				Other texts include the epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Each of these texts contains integral teaching from gods and philosophers. Key gods: Brahman (Supreme Universal Spirit), Adi Shakti (Divine Mother), Shiva, Vishnu	
Islam	1.4 billion	Largest concentrations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, Africa, and surrounding the Persian Gulf region; spreading to other regions of the world	It is a monotheistic religion based on the teaching in the Qur'an, which Muslims believe is the Word of God. Beliefs also come from the teaching of Prophet Muhammad. The five pillars of Islam are (1) Shahadah—belief in one God and that Muhammad is his messenger; (2) Salah—prayer five times a day; (3) Sawn—ritual fasting during Ramadhan; (4) Zakat and Sadaqah—giving to the needy voluntarily; and (5) Hajj—a one-time pilgrimage to the city of Mecca.	Texts: The Qur'an, revealed to Prophet Muhammad through Angel Gabriel. The Qur'an contains 114 suras, or chapters. The suras outline right and wrong. Figures: Prophet Muhammad, Alī ibn Abī Tālib	Islam is divided into three main denominations: Sunni (80%–90%), Shi'a (10%–20%), and Sufi (less than 2%)

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the vengeful nature of God as he laid waste to the firstborns of Egypt:

> At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well. Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead.

In Leviticus 20:9, we see a God who recommends death, instead of negotiation/discussion, for disagreeing with or cursing one's parent: "If anyone curses his father or mother, he must be put to death." There are multiple instances in this book particularly that call for punishment by death for disagreement or a difference of some sort, instead of forgiveness or some other kind of negotiation. In Deuteronomy 13:1–5, tolerance for prophets or individuals preaching other faiths is not allowed:

> If a prophet, or one who fortells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. . . . That prophet must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the Lord your God.

What these passages, and many others in the Old Testament, portray is a jealous, violent, and proud God. When it comes to dealing with conflict/disagreement, this God teaches believers to dominate situations to the extreme. The overwhelming majority of Christians quickly point out that modern Christianity has outgrown the Old Testament in many ways and that only extremely devout Christian fundamentalists (strict interpretivists of the Bible) claim that Christians must follow the teachings of the Old Testament (R. D. Putnam & Campbell, 2010). However, what these books in the Old Testament do is lay down rules for conducting day-to-day life for fundamentalist Christians. When considering conflict, these books do not suggest that Christians should compromise, accommodate, and/or avoid conflict. On the contrary, as God dominates in conflicts, some Christians could interpret these books as teaching that people should dominate and enact revenge on those with whom they are in conflict. Most Christians today do not subscribe to this argument; most of them argue that the life experiences and teachings of Christ and his disciples offer the best lessons for Christians (R. D. Putnam & Campbell, 2010). These experiences and teachings are provided in the New Testament.

Forgiveness, Compromise, and Love. The books of the New Testament record the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the experiences and thoughts of his disciples (Matthew, Luke, John, Ephesians, James, etc.). As these books generally tell the story of Christ and his disciples, there is an overall more positive tone compared with the Old Testament. Ideals such as autonomy, preservation of relationships, justice, forgiveness, and fairness are propagated in these books through the Christ stories. The New Testament teaches that the resolution and management of conflict is a key Christian goal. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:3 that "being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit is the bond of peace." Paul also said, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Romans 12:18). Christ taught in Matthew 5:9 that the peacemakers are blessed.

Clearly, the importance of resolving and managing conflict is significant in the New Testament, a major shift from the Old Testament. The books in the New Testament also provide suggestions for conflict negotiation. In Philippians 2:4, Paul

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recommends that we consider the interests of all parties involved in a conflict: "Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." In Galatians 6:1, Paul stressed the significance of accommodating/compromising in conflicts: "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness." A final paramount principle espoused in the New Testament is forgiving individuals with whom one is in conflict. Christ instructed believers to pray to God in this way: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12).

How much weight Christians place on the Old and the New Testament affects their interactions with others and their approaches to conflict. If they are more fundamental in their beliefs and strict interpretivists of the Bible, they are more likely to judge individuals through the principles of the Old and New Testaments but more through the Old Testament. Thus, there would be more rules/obligations one must live by in life and hence harsher consequences for one's actions. Croucher (2011b) asserts that individuals who follow a more fundamentalist approach to Christianity (strict interpretation of the Bible) are more likely to evaluate ethical situations (which can often lead to conflict) as either/or and leave little room for negotiation/compromise. However, individuals who approach Christianity from a nonfundamentalist perspective are more likely to look at ethical situations more openly and leave room for negotiation and compromise. Strictness of interpretation or level of religiosity, often based on an individual's reading of the Old and New Testaments, determines whether a Christian approaches conflict from a rule-based perspective or from a more free-will, forgiving, and just perspective (Croucher, 2011b; Hall, 1997; Johannesen, 1990; Pojman, 2005). Religiosity among Christians significantly influences their approach to conflict (Croucher, 2011a; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011; Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, et al., 2011; Croucher et al., 2010; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001); more religious Christians are more likely to want to control conflicts and less likely to want to collaborate or avoid conflicts. This trend comes from a stricter interpretation of Christian principles and the Bible.

Islam

With more than 1.4 billion adherents, Islam is the second largest religion in the world (Ahuja, 2008; Croucher, 2011a). Like Christianity, the Muslim community, or '*ummah*, is spread throughout the world, with larger concentrations in specific geographic areas but with rapidly growing numbers throughout the world (Ahmed, 1992; Nourallah, 2002; Roy, 2004). Islam is based on the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, which was revealed to Prophet Mohammed (570–632 CE) by Angel Gabriel. The Qur'an is a collection of teachings, revelations, and experiences from and of Prophet Mohammed. Since the Qur'an was revealed and written in Arabic, many Muslims view translations as imperfect (Lewis, 1998). Similar to the Christian Bible, the Qur'an offers stories of the prophets (Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Adam, and Jesus). Islam is a monotheistic religion, worshiping one God like the Christians; it recognizes Christian prophets, but it recognizes Mohammed as *the Prophet* (Kassim, 2005). The majority of the Qur'an is devoted to the afterlife, historical events, commandments, prayer, and moral/civil law.

Pre-Islamic Conflict Behavior. Before and after Muslim culture[3] took a stronghold on the Arabian Peninsula, perspectives on conflict differed vastly (for in-depth reviews of pre-Islamic cultures and conflict perspectives on the pre-Islamic Arabian peninsula, see Abu-Nimer, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2006; von Grunebaum, 1955). Before Islam united the

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tribes, clans, and families of the Arabian Peninsula, conflicts would often result in *hama'il*, or violence and prolonged fighting between the warring families or tribes (Abu-Nimer, 2003). Conflicts would often escalate as individuals/groups would feel threats to face, *karama*, and/or loss of group honor, *sharaf*, due to loss of respect or shame.

Such fears of *hama'il, karama,* and/or *sharaf* led to intricate forms of conflict negotiation. Many traditional Arabs used *musayara* to negotiate conflicts, or self-humiliation to express empathy and reduce the intensity of the conflict (Oetzel et al., 2006). Praising the other party, giving gifts, beating oneself, and offering favors were all examples of *musayara* (Griefat & Katriel, 1989). Tribes and families could also begin efforts at conflict negotiation/resolution with the offending family/tribe, providing funds, or *atwah*, to the victim's family. If the *atwah* was accepted, a truce, *hudnah*, began in lieu of retaliation or revenge. Reconciliation between the two groups then took place, the *sulh*. The *sulh* process ended with a public ceremony where the two parties shared food and declared their peace and harmony with one another. Due to the prolonged and violent nature of conflicts on the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula, it is no surprise that many of the prominent Arabic words for *conflict* have negative connotations: e.g., *fitna* ("chaos"), *ikhtilaf* ("disagreement"), *tanaqudh* ("dispute"), and *niza'un* ("moral and/or intense conflict") (Farah, 2003; Keddie & Beck, 1978; Mernissi, 1975).

Conflict Behavior and Islam. Islam, through the Qur'an,[4] unified the clans and tribes of the Arabian Peninsula into one community and race, forever changing approaches to conflict. The Qur'an exemplifies principles such as mercy, forgiveness, and truth (Croucher, 2008; Irving, 1985; Rahman, 1980). These basic principles shaped approaches to conflict among Muslims, which involved shame, forgiveness, patience, and commanding right and forbidding wrong (Abu-Nimer, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2006).

In any given conflict, one party is likely to disrespect the other party (Brew & Cairnes, 2004); this disrespect can cause shame. As Islam is generally a more collectivistic (see the chapters in Section 4 of this *Handbook* for details) religion (compared with Christianity) (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2008; Croucher, 2011a; Fetzer & Soper, 2005; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001; Wilson & Power, 2004), obligations/duties to and privileges over others are culturally significant. Mutual respect within relationships is of vital importance.[5] When one feels a loss of respect (shame), conflict often escalates. Thus, many Muslims try to alleviate hurts or compromise in conflict to avoid shaming others.

Forgiveness is a fundamental principle in Muslim culture and in the Islamic faith. The Qur'an states that Allah (God) is forgiving and merciful (3: 31). In a conflict, it is more valued for one to forgive the other than to demand justice and/or punishment (Abu-Nimer, 2003). The Qur'an teaches that forgiveness is one of the highest ideals; when one forgives another, that person is indeed great, wise, and merciful (5: 118, and 23: 118). To practice forgiveness, varied public rituals are often used throughout the Muslim world (Abu-Nimer, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2006). The act of forgiveness minimizes the need to dominate in conflict situations, as conflict is regarded as more of a collaborative process or as something to be resolved by one party seeking the forgiveness of the other (Abu-Nimer, 2003; Croucher, 2011b).

The Qur'an urges believers to have patience (*sabr*) (e.g., 2: 153; 16: 127). It is through patience, particularly in tough times (such as conflicts), that one should trust in Allah's plans (3: 200; 40: 77). Instead of rushing to judgment during a conflict, *sabr* implies that one should contemplate the situation; pray for God's help to deal with it; seek guidance

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from others, such as a neutral third party; and/or allow the situation/conflict to settle down before engaging in it (Abu-Nimer, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2006). When individuals have *sabr*, they are more likely to work with others in conflicts, or even avoid conflicts, and less likely to be controlling in conflicts (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011).

A final Islamic principle that influences how Muslims approach conflict is the Qur'anic concept of commanding right and forbidding wrong. Cook (2000) explains how Muslims should correct other Muslims who engage in actions deemed immoral. Thus, if a person has the power to stop a moral wrong, one should do so without committing a moral wrong oneself. The concepts of mercy and forgiveness are key to commanding right and forgiving wrong, as an individual should be careful not to commit a wrong when preventing another moral wrong (7: 165; 19: 76; 49:10). Muslims should guide other Muslims away from immoral behaviors through collaboration (Cook, 2000).

Islamic principles such as shame, forgiveness, patience, and commanding right and wrong influence how Muslims approach conflict. Such Islamic principles, along with the general collectivistic makeup of many Muslims, lead to more collaboration and/or avoidance in conflicts and less control/dominance (Croucher, 2011a; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011; Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, et al., 2011; Croucher et al., 2010; Oetzel et al., 2006; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001; Wilson & Power, 2004).

Hinduism

Hinduism refers to a wide range of religious philosophies/traditions that began in India roughly 5,000 years ago. While Christianity and Islam trace their roots to a founder, Hinduism does not (Walsh, 2007). Hinduism is God centered and was formed by the gods, unlike Christianity and Islam, which were founded by messiahs on earth (Basu, 2002). The almost 900 million Hindus (originally meaning those who lived on the other side of the Indus River) around the world, representing the third largest religious group, receive their religious scripts/laws through a collection of Vedas or *sruti* (revealed knowledge), or sacred texts, which were revealed to sacred individuals known as *Rishis*, and from evolved/remembered knowledge, or *smrti sastra* (Dalal, 2006). Unlike Christianity and Islam, which are based heavily on one book (the Bible or the Qur'an), Hinduism is not based on a book but is a way of living (Hawley, 2001). The basic principle is that man is divine and this divinity is immanent in all creations, inanimate or animate. Realizing this divine nature of man brings everlasting joy. Unlike Christianity and Islam, which are monotheistic (worship of one God), Hinduism is polytheistic (worship of many gods) (for a more in-depth description of Hindu beliefs and practices, see Ahuja, 2008; Basu, 2002; Dogra, 2006; Habib, 2007; Jagannathan, 2005; Mathur, 2004).

Hinduism and the Bhagavad Gita. Although Hinduism is not based on any book, but is rather a way of living, many sacred texts contain revealed knowledge from the gods or from *Rishis*, namely, the Vedas. As the Vedas are vast, many Hindus and scholars consider the Bhagavad Gita (commonly called the Gita) to be an important guide to Hindu teaching and philosophy. The text, possibly written between the fifth and second centuries BCE, as part of the *Mahabharata*, tells the tale of a conversation on a battlefield between Lord Krishna and Prince Arjuna (Hawley, 2001). As Prince Arjuna expressed moral confusion over waging war against his family, Krishna explained that Arjuna's purpose in life (*atma*) was to be a prince and a warrior. Throughout their discussions on the battlefield, Krishna

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explained Yogic (forms of mental discipline) and Vedantic (based on the Vedas) philosophies (Minor, 1986; Vivekananda, 1998). The text includes both *sruti* and *smrti Vedic* elements, which, along with the Yogic and Vedantic elements, leads many Hindus and scholars/historians to claim this text as a concise guide to Hinduism.

Within the Gita, Krishna taught Arjuna how to know the self, the nature of God, how to attain liberation, and how to handle emotions and tough situations. The numerous life and spiritual lessons given to Arjuna are passed down to Hindus today. While Krishna encouraged Arjuna to thoroughly investigate all sides of an issue, he pointed out that he must take planned/intelligent action (3: 4–5). Along this line, Krishna emphasized wise action during interactions with others in situations such as conflicts (4: 18).[6]

The truly wise person (the *jnani*, the yogi, the *Sthithaprajna*, or Illumined One) is the one who recognizes inaction in action, and action in inaction. He or she sees that where there is apparent action taking place at the worldly level, there may be true inaction within the individual; likewise, where there is no apparent worldly action taking place, there may be considerable action occurring on the inner level.

This advice can and is often applied to Hindus in conflict situations. It is typical for many Hindus to analyze the actions and inaction that take place during conflicts in order to ascertain the best course of action (Sen, 2005). The decision of what path to take in a conflict situation is influenced more by what is best for the community (Kapoor, Hughes, Baldwin, & Blue, 2003) and is based more on logic than on emotion compared with other religious groups, such as Christians and, particularly, Jews (Sen, 2005).

Krishna later told Arjuna that to be truly happy, one must not only take action but also avoid emotions such as desire and anger:

> Desire and anger are counterparts, Arjuna. Anger is your response to the frustrations of unfulfilled desires. When you control or transcend desire and anger (which arise in your body, not your *Atma*) you will have found true, lasting happiness. (5: 23)

When individuals take an emotional approach to deal with a conflict, the emotions can affect the conflict management and resolution (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001). Thus, transcending emotions in a conflict will lead to more effective conflict management and resolution (Guerrero & La Valley, 2006). Moreover, Krishna made it clear that conflict is inevitable and not against God: "Although they are indeed brave, nevertheless smite them, for they are already doomed. Fight and you will win. Killing them is not contrary to *dharma* [righteousness]" (11: 34). The assertion that conflict is inevitable runs across cultures and religions and is recognized widely in scholarship (e.g., Blake & Mouton, 1964; Conrad, 1991; Hocker & Wilmot, 1991; L. L. Putnam, 2006; Rahim, 1983).

The Hindu beliefs that conflict is an inevitable action and that conflict should be analyzed for a logical and not an emotional resolution were exemplified in Gandhi's rhetoric of nonviolence and cooperation with others. Gandhi promoted mutual toleration of all viewpoints. This toleration may help explain why Sen (2005) asserted that many Hindus approach arguments and conflicts with what appears to many Westerners (e.g., U.S. Americans) as a logically aggressive and highly argumentative manner. Sen argued that Hindus are perceived as argumentative because they are trying to understand the root of the difference in order to reach a mutual understanding—not to dominate/control the situation—because to do nothing would be inaction.

In summary, this section examined how the three largest religious groups in the world (Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism) conceptualize conflict based on historical teachings and

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texts and how these groups' religious texts and/or beliefs propagate conflict communication behavior. Fundamentalist Christians are more likely to look to the Old Testament for guidance in conflicts. This philosophy for many Christians will lead to more dominating conflict behaviors as decisions and consequences should have an either/or outcome. For nonfundamentalists, who are more likely to regard the New Testament as the foundation of Christianity, life is not as much an either/or dichotomy (right or wrong; Croucher, 2011b; Pojman, 2005). Thus, conflicts are more likely to be handled in a compromising or collaborative manner, as encouraged by Jesus Christ himself. For Muslims, the Qur'an encourages forgiveness, patience, and other similar principles. Thus, it is common to find many Muslims preferring to compromise or even avoid conflict all together (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011). In Hinduism, the four Vedas teach Hindus several ways to live life. In particular, virtues such as action over inaction, logic over emotions, and the realization that conflict is inevitable are key to living life in a proper manner. The Hindu approach to conflict and arguments can be misunderstood, as many Hindus approach such situations with logical vigor to reach a common ground and compromise (Sen, 2005).

How Religion Affects Organizational Dissent, Relational Conflict, and Conflict Styles

The following section summarizes the literature reviewing how conflict and religion have been studied in association with dissent, relational conflict, and conflict styles. This review of the field demonstrates that while the literature linking conflict to these areas of communication scholarship is vast, analyses of the links/relationships between religion, conflict, and these areas of scholarship are sparse. The review that follows in not an entirely comprehensive review of these areas; it, however, provides a glimpse into the inner workings of religion, conflict, and various areas of communication scholarship. These areas have been chosen because research has explored the inner links between each of them and religion. Moreover, each of these areas of scholarship is a potential area for conflict.

Dissent and Religion

Religious denomination and religiosity have some influence on an individual's behavior in an organization (Croucher, Braziunaite, & Oommen, 2012; Croucher et al., 2009; Hoffman, 2007; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Sheep, 2006; Weaver & Agle, 2002). Specifically, religiosity, or "the degree of one's connection or acceptance of their religious institution, participation in church attendance and activities, as well as one's regard for the leaders or the religion and church" (Alston, 1975, p. 166), has been found in studies to alter various behaviors in organizations (e.g., Kennedy & Lawton, 1998; McNichols & Zimmerer, 1985). Research has found religion to influence the expression of one particular organizational behavior, namely, dissent.

Organizational dissent is expressing disagreement or contradictory beliefs/opinions over organizational policies and/or practices (Kassing, 1997, 1998). Dissent often carries a negative connotation and can cause conflict in organizations or is perceived as conflict (Croucher et al., 2009; Kassing, 1997). Sprague and Ruud (1988), however, argue that dissent is a moral obligation and a political right. Kassing (1998) defines three types of dissent, each based on audience selection: (1) articulated (upward within the organization), (2) latent (lateral or to coworkers within the organization), and (3) displaced (to external audiences, e.g., family). The propensity to dissent has been linked to various factors,

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such as organizational culture, organizational climate, perceived organizational justice, previous responses to dissent, dissenter tenure in the organization, and other demographic factors of the dissenter (Garner, 2009; Kassing, 1997, 1998, 2006, 2008). Communication scholars have illustrated how organizational dissent relates to numerous communication traits/behaviors, such as organizational justice (Goodboy, Chory, & Dunleavy, 2008), aggressive communication (Kassing & Avtgis, 2001), and argumentativeness (Kassing & Avtgis, 1999).

Recently, scholars have explored religion to determine whether an individual's religious background or religious surroundings influence dissent (Garner & Wargo, 2009). In an analysis of dissent in churches, church leaders reported that congregation members were generally unwilling to approach leaders directly with problems (negative feedback or issues). Instead, according to them, members preferred "to vent" to other members. Members, on the other hand, reported that they openly discussed their negative feedback with church leaders. The results revealed a disconnect between the leadership and the congregation (Garner & Wargo, 2009). In this case, the religious context of the church set up a conflict between the two groups. Unlike in a secular organization, agency was extremely important in this setting, where neither group wanted to remove agency from the other. This study added a new element to the dissent and organizational conflict literature by showing how dissent functions in a religious setting.

In another study exploring the relationship between organizational dissent and religion, Croucher et al. (2012) found that Hindus and Muslims with high religiosity in India are less likely to dissent than those with low religiosity and that highly religious Christians in the United States are more likely to dissent than Christians with low religiosity. The authors attribute the findings in the United States to ethnic group vitality (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977). In the United States, more devout Christians are more likely to feel comfortable expressing their views, as Christians are the dominant cultural group in the United States. In India, the expression of opposing views is considered taboo, as India is more of a collectivistic society and such expression could cause great conflict in an organization (Croucher et al., 2009; Croucher et al., 2012). This line of research, as well as the Garner and Wargo (2009) piece, showed how an individual's religious identity and religiosity influence the expression of dissent.

Relational Conflict

Research on interpersonal conflict has a long history. Research areas range from emotion and conflict (Guerrero, 1994; Jones, 2000), jealousy (Guerrero & Afifi, 1999), conflict frames (Pinkley, 1990), conflict tactics (Canary, Cunningham, & Cody, 1988), and message production (Sillars, Canary, & Tafoya, 2004), to mediation (Donahue, 1991; Moore, 1996). An area of interpersonal conflict that has received tremendous attention is conflict in dating and marriages (for reviews, see Caughlin & Vangelisti, 1999, 2006; Gottman & Levenson, 2000; Gottman, Markman, & Notarius, 1977; Heavey, Christensen, & Malamuth, 1995; Kluwer, Heesink, & Van De Vliert, 1997; Vangelisti, 1994). This body of research has analyzed how the environment, the individuals involved, and the relational processes all influence conflict in romantic relationships. Along with examining how men and women differ in relational conflicts, scholars are exploring how factors such as ethnicity (Oggins, Veroff, & Leber, 1993; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2001) and sexual orientation (Patterson, 2000; Peplau & Beals, 2004) potentially influence such conflicts.

Caughlin and Vangelisti (2006) maintain that little research has addressed the role of

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culture in conflicts between romantic partners. Increasingly, however, scholars have shown interest in the role of religion in relational conflicts. Hughes (2004) demonstrates correlations between religiousness/religiosity and interfaith partners' conflict tactics. In the study, an intrinsic religious orientation (or religiosity) was positively correlated with mutual constructive communication and negatively with demand–withdrawal communication. Furthermore, interfaith partners who were proreligious (high intrinsic and extrinsic religiousness) were found to have more productive conflicts and happier marriages. People with high intrinsic religiousness are strongly committed to their faith, as it shapes their identity. Individuals with high extrinsic religiousness see religion as a means to an end. For these individuals, religion builds social relationships, comfort, and security. Individuals with extrinsic religiousness are less likely to attend religious services regularly (Allport & Ross, 1967).

In a similar study, Lambert and Dollahite (2006) assert that religiosity affects marital conflict, as couples believe that religion helps them prevent conflict escalation, resolve conflicts, and reconcile relationships. The authors created a conceptual model based on these results. Before a conflict, the couples stated that they had a shared purpose and relational virtues steeped in religion. During the conflict, their religious practices, based on their shared purpose and virtues, guided the conflict resolution. After the conflict, the willingness to forgive and commitment to permanence (key religious principles) made it easier for them to reconcile their differences. Respondents also commented on the power of prayer in conflict resolution.

Prayer as a tool to minimize relational conflict has received little attention, but its effects can be profound (Butler, Gardner, & Bird, 1998; Butler, Stout, & Gardner, 2002; Richards & Bergin, 1997). Couples who pray together during a conflict generally report softening, healing, increased partner perspective (understanding), and perception of a change in responsibility (Butler et al., 2002). The results of these studies are partially attributed to prayer bringing religious couples together and increasing the quantity and quality of communication. Furthermore, the authors assert, prayer leads couples to have more empathy for each other and to be more willing to claim and share responsibility in conflicts.

Religion and Conflict Styles

Grounded in intercultural and international communication, the study of intercultural conflict typically focuses on conflicts between individuals from two or more nations. Intercultural conflict research has included topics such as conflict styles (Cai & Fink, 2002; Kim et al., 2004; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001), intergroup conflict/dialogue (Abu-Nimer, 1999; Ellis & Maoz, 2002; Klocek, Novoa, & Moghaddam, 2010; Knox & Hughes, 1996; Maoz & Ellis, 2001), intercultural/cross-cultural conflict resolution (Paige, 2004; Raider, 1987; Ting-Toomey, 1994), and media portrayals of conflict (Gilboa, 2002; Said, 1978). It would seem that religion would be a key aspect of these studies in intercultural conflict, particularly since scholars assert that religion is a fundamental part of culture (Geertz, 1973; Oetzel et al., 2006; Said, 1978); however, most researchers relatively ignore religion.

Scholars consider religion as a variable when looking at intergroup conflict in various contexts (see Broome & Jakobsson Hatay, 2006) and styles (see Croucher, 2011a; Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, et al., 2011; Polkinghorne & Byrne, 2001; Wilson & Power, 2004). For the purposes of this chapter, I will review how religion has been studied with regard to conflict styles, as conflict styles cross between various dimensions of communication (interpersonal, intercultural, and organizational).

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Oetzel (1998) defines conflict styles as "the general pattern or behavioral orientation an individual takes toward conflict" (p. 133). Scholars generally identify five conflict styles (as previously defined in this chapter): avoiding, compromising, dominating, integrating, and obliging (Cai & Fink, 2002; Conrad, 1991; Kim & Leung, 2000; L. L. Putnam, 1988; Rahim, 1983). When studying conflict styles and religion, results have found differences between religious groups; particularly, results have shown differences between Christians and Muslims and that religiosity influences conflict style preference.

In a study of areas of prolonged conflict, Polkinghorn and Byrne (2001) found differences between religious groups in South Africa, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Northern Ireland. The results reveal that most religious groups preferred to avoid conflict. Bosnian Muslims, however, preferred a controlling/dominating conflict style, while Protestants in Northern Ireland preferred the accommodating style. In another study comparing Muslims and Christians, this time in Australia, Wilson and Power (2004) added the dimension of religiosity. Both Christians and Muslims with low religiosity preferred to collaborate/integrate in conflicts. However, Muslims with high religiosity preferred to compromise. Croucher (2011a) also found that Muslims and Christians differed significantly in conflict style preference. In an analysis of the two groups in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, Muslims were found to significantly prefer the compromising and obliging styles and Christians, the dominating style. In each setting, the results indicate a preference for socially desirable behaviors among Muslims (Croucher, 2011a) and that conflict has become a win-at-all-costs form of communication for many Christians (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011).

All in all, religious denomination and religiosity affect conflict styles, but not in consistent ways. Using predominantly quantitative methods (cross-sectional survey data), studies reveal that Muslims and Christians differ in conflict style preference and that more religious individuals tend to prefer to collaborate during conflicts (Croucher, 2011a; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001; Wilson & Power, 2004).

Future Directions

Religion clearly influences conflict. With this in mind, there are various directions for future research/exploration that scholars should undertake to not only expand research but also benefit practical understanding. An appreciation of the relationship between religion and conflict can help build our knowledge of virtual teams (explained in detail in the next section), resolve organizational and interpersonal conflicts, expand our consideration of religion's influence on intercultural research and international relations, improve our understanding of face negotiation theory, and help us better understand interfaith conflict.

Organizational Conflict and Religion

The growing body of research on religion and organizational dissent demonstrates how religion relates to organizational conflict. There is a vast array of areas under the umbrella of organizational conflict that could still benefit from the inclusion of religion as a variable of study. Two such areas of expansion are in the study of virtual teams and conflict management/resolution. First, as organizations move more toward virtual teams, such teams are increasingly becoming intercultural in nature. Furthermore, as groups increasingly turn to the virtual world for meetings, social presence and information richness are lost, which can both lead to increased conflict within groups (Daft & Lengel, 1976; Lira, Ripoll, Peiró, & Orengo, 2008; Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976). Adding in demographic differences

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such as religious disparity will only increase the potential for conflict, as intergroup differences are likely to increase. When such differences increase, individuals may perceive symbolic threats or intergroup anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1996) in the teams and thus halt effective communication.

Second, while many organizations have policies in place to manage disagreements/conflicts, what impact (if any) does religion have on such policies and disagreements/conflicts? Would or should a religious conflict alter conflict management/resolution policies in an organization? Since individuals from different religious backgrounds are known to approach conflicts in different ways (Croucher, 2011a; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011; Oetzel et al., 2006), conflict management/resolution strategies within organizations should reflect this knowledge.

Relational Conflict and Religion

Clearly, the results of studies on relational conflict that demonstrate a link between religion and relational conflict warrant attention from theorists and practitioners alike. For theorists, the results of such studies reveal clear links between religion and relational conflict. For practitioners, these studies show that religion can be used in the conflict management/resolution process. Along with relational conflict, religion should also be incorporated into studies of other types of interpersonal conflict. Koerner and Fitzpatrick (1997) argue that families socialize children into conflict styles via interpersonal relationships. How do different religions or how does religiosity potentially influence this process? Moreover, how would being in an interfaith family possibly affect this process? Jealousy also creates a great deal of conflict. Does jealousy vary depending on an individual's religiosity or religious denomination/identity? Christians, Hindus, and Muslims in the United States and India were found to differ in their expression of jealousy in an exploratory study of jealousy (Croucher, DeMaris, Oyer, Yartey, & Ziberi, 2011), with Hindus reporting higher cognitive and emotional jealousy than Christians. The authors, however, claim that more work is needed to investigate other potential factors in India and in other nations. For example, Croucher (2008) found that religiosity was a key factor in the expression of emotion among Muslim and Christian couples in France. Individuals (Muslims and Christians) explained how their religiosity affected how likely they were to express guilt, jealousy, anger, and love to their significant other. Such explorations into the relationships between religion and various types of interpersonal emotion and conflict could garner fruitful findings.

Intercultural Conflict and Religion

Collectively, studies revealing how conflict style preferences between religious groups differ in various geographic/cultural contexts, irrespective of whether the samples are from a collectivistic or an individualistic nation/culture (Hofstede, 1991; Zhang, 2007), signify that religious identification plays a role in the development and maintenance of conflict behavior (Croucher, 2011a; Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, et al., 2011). Moreover, such research shows that conflict style preference can be predicted by religion (religious identification and religiosity). Future research should consider the influence of religion on intercultural conflict. First, Croucher, DeMaris, Holody, et al. (2011) urge scholars and practitioners to consider religion's influence on conflict styles when conducting conflict management/resolution among religious groups, such as Muslims and Hindus in the Indian Subcontinent (India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), and among nation-states. The authors assert that scholars and negotiators

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too often ignore religious differences and traditions. Croucher and Cronn-Mills (2011) also suggest that increased knowledge of how Muslims and Hindus approach conflict in India and in Europe will help decrease the potential for conflict not only between these two groups but also between Muslims, Hindus, and Christians. Second, as immigration from non-Christian nations to predominantly Christian nations continues to grow, scholars and conflict practitioners should consider how the varied approaches to conflict affect communication between the dominant and minority populations. Understanding immigration and immigrant populations is key to a stable future; one way to achieve this is through effective intercultural conflict management (Favell, 1998; Fetzer & Soper, 2005; Laurence & Vaisse, 2006). Third, research on intercultural conflict could explore how the incorporation of religion, as a variable, potentially fits within the framework of conflict face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988, 2005; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). It could be fruitful to explore how face threats, humiliation, defensive movements, and conflict over such issues differ among religious groups, as culture is a significant aspect of the theory (Cai & Fink, 2002; Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ohbuchi, 1993).

Interfaith and Intrafaith Conflict

Interfaith conflict is conflict between religions. Religion has been used as a reason for conflict since time immemorial. For example, instead of politics, economics, and prejudice, religion was used as the excuse for the land-grab known as the Crusades (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011; Edbury, 1996; Hallam, 1989). Nehru (1946), reflecting on another significant religious conflict, this time between Muslims and Hindus, the partition of India, said that when religious dogma and philosophy clash, conflict emerges. As we reflect on relations between religious groups, we can clearly see how dogma, belief in religious doctrine, creates divides between religions. Groups are often unable to see eye to eye, and therefore tensions boil over into conflicts. From both a theoretical and a practical perspective, recognizing the influence of religion on conflict can hopefully help in diffusing interfaith conflict.

Intrafaith conflict is conflict within a religion. While Catholics and Protestants differ on some aspects of Christianity, they are still Christians. The differences between the two denominations are significantly pronounced in Northern Ireland. Particularly since the Ireland Act of 1949, Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland have fought an ethno-religious conflict over political control. The issue of contention is whether Northern Ireland should remain part of the United Kingdom (Protestant) or join Ireland (Catholic) (Cairns & Darby, 1998; Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006; McLernon, Cairns, & Hewstone, 2002). A better understanding of how Protestants and Catholics conceptualize conflict could help community organizers/leaders mitigate such intrafaith disputes. At the least, understanding the different ways in which religious groups approach conflict can help in the development of better conflict resolution techniques in such disputes.

Conclusion

My goal in this chapter was to communicate the significance of religion to conflict research. History and scholarship display how religious groups and individuals conceptualize and enact conflicts in similar and different ways. Such differences and similarities offer theoretical, methodological, and practical challenges/opportunities for theorists and conflict practitioners alike. As the communicative

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study of conflict continues to grow, scholars and practitioners should consider the role of religion in conflicts. With previous studies showing significant relationships between religion and conflict, the addition of religion as a macrolevel (religious identification) and as a microlevel (religiosity/religiousness) variable could provide a great deal of insight into various conflict behaviors.

Notes

1. Few studies of conflict using East Asian samples (e.g., Japan, Korea, China, Thailand, and Vietnam) have considered religion as a variable.
2. All Bible verses are taken from the New International Version as opposed to the King James Version.
3. When scholars use the word *Muslim*, they are referring to someone who practices Islam (the religion).
4. As many Muslims consider English translations of the Qur'an fallible, no direct translations will be provided in this chapter. Instead, where appropriate, the Qur'an will be paraphrased from Ali (1993).
5. For examples of familial or communal obligation, connection, and love in the Qur'an, see the following verses: 4: 46, 19: 24, 31: 14, and 7: 190.
6. All direct quotations from the *Gita* are taken from Hawley (2001).

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22

Moral Conflict and Transcendent Communication

Stephen W. Littlejohn and Kristen L. Cole

Human beings live in a world of difference, as we naturally make distinctions and set boundaries. Often differences, though noticeable, are irrelevant to what is going on at the moment. At other times, differences assume importance because of their value, to the point that we often seek them out to enhance our lives. The differences most often featured in this *Handbook*, however, are challenging, precisely because they are problematic and require effort to manage. Challenging differences themselves can have value as they can stimulate creativity and critical thinking, and such differences can help clarify what is most important to us. The problem, of course, is that we must learn to manage differences in ways that lead us away from harm and toward value (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2007). Many conflicts are intractable (Coleman, 2011), and among these are conflicts with a moral base.

Moral conflict is a clash between opposing parties based on differences in deeply held philosophical assumptions about being, knowledge, and the world. The existence of moral difference is neither surprising nor problematic in itself, but how we respond to such a clash can create disturbing conditions that warrant careful attention, creative intervention, and scholarly study. Moral conflict, although a compelling challenge in society, opens rich opportunities for interpersonal learning, improved relationships, and creative collaboration.

This chapter summarizes various lines of work on this important subject. We begin by defining moral difference and moral conflict and then summarize the work that we and our colleagues have done on this issue over the years—including the theoretical and methodological influences on our work. We then move to work on transcendent communication with special emphasis on dialogue as a form of discourse that holds hope for the transformation of intractable conflicts. Finally, we present practical guidelines and concluding thoughts.

Moral Difference and Moral Conflict

Personal action is always embedded within a moral order, or a set of assumptions about

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what is real, how we know reality, and what is right. The moral order is a set of ideas on which we rely (Wong, 1984). As such, it is a kind of common sense (Lakoff, 1996; Wentworth, 1989), a tradition of thought (Stout, 1988), or a grammar of rules (Wittgenstein, 1972). Largely cultural, the moral order is infused with symbols and ways of seeing the world (Carbaugh, 1985; W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). The moral order is a kind of knowledge base, or epistemic field, complete with a system for judging the truth of claims (Willard, 1996, p. 73). In the following section, we discuss the basis for moral difference and the characteristics of moral conflict. We also present an illustrative case.

The Basis of Moral Difference

The observation that human communities differ in how they see the world is a truism bordering on the trite, but the consequence of this state of affairs can be profound as moral orders come to clash. Pro-life and pro-choice forces may disagree on whether abortion should be legal, but their respective positions on this issue rest on very different moral orders. Pro-choice forces tend to think in terms of individual rights, while antiabortion advocates use God-given life as a moral base. Thus, arguing about abortion is useless when the two sides share no common way of resolving the issue. Herein lies the essential problem of moral conflict: The parties have *incommensurate* moral orders.

We take the term *incommensurate* from Thomas Kuhn (1970), who applied the term to competing scientific paradigms, the logics of which cannot be mapped onto each other. The vocabulary, categories, and logical relations of one paradigm do not permit direct translation to those of the other. The two systems of thought cannot be compared point by point. Richard Bernstein (1985) applied the term to philosophy and social theory, noting that incommensurate systems can be compared, but only by moving to larger, transcendent categories that require understanding each moral order on a deeper level. For example, most divorces are strictly interest based. In other words, the husband and wife differ on custody, real estate, money, personal property, and so forth. In such cases, you can actually compare the demands and interests of the parties right down the line issue by issue.

There seems to be a reflexive relationship between culture and moral order, though neither can be reduced to the other. Because cultures are determined in part by underlying belief systems, moral differences among cultures are often salient and can lead to conflict. Where cultural groups come to clash, moral differences may be part of the picture, particularly when incommensurate cultural views are involved. As an example, Foeman and Pressley (1987) stated, "In addition to the perceived chasm between White and Black Americans, a real gap exists between their divergent perspectives regarding the nature of the world and the ways of surviving in it" (p. 295). Hispanic–Anglo differences provide another example, as Hispanics tend to be oriented more to relationships and communities, while Anglos (non-Hispanic Whites) tend to be more task oriented and emphasize independence (Triandis & Albert, 1987).

In a survey of 15 cultural groups worldwide, Shailor (1988) found significant differences in conflict management practices. Specifically, he found that forms of conflict resolution native to a particular cultural group are deeply connected to the group's assumptions about personhood, preferred forms of communication, and power. In particular, local conflict resolution forms aim to manage face, shift responsibility from the individual to the community, and may either reconstruct authoritarian views of power or egalitarian ones, depending on the nature of the culture.

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Determining whether a conflict arises from cultural or moral differences can be difficult, since cultural forms and styles may enter the picture. Orbe, Everett, and Putman (this volume) correctly claim that interethnic and interracial conflict stems from many sources that are hard to sort out, including inequalities, existing tensions, perceptual differences, and stereotypes. For example, differences in communication styles among African Americans, European Americans, and Asian Americans are widely known and experienced (e.g., Fine, 1995; see the chapters in Section 4, this volume). To what extent do these style differences connect to moral differences?

Space does not permit a full exploration of this issue here, but clearly, some moral differences are present among these cultural groups. Ting-Toomey's (1985) distinctions between high and low cultural demand and constraint can help us identify situations in which conflicting moral orders may become relevant in intercultural conflict. A situation, particularly an organization, which is high in cultural demand promotes a single set of values or ways of understanding human experience. Such organizations do not tolerate difference very well. Low-demand organizations (and presumably other situations) actually encourage multiple ideologies. Conversely, cultural constraints are factors that suppress cognitive, emotional, and behavioral differences. Thus, we might expect that moral conflict would be more likely in organizations high in cultural demand and in situations that contain a large level of cultural constraint (Littlejohn, 1995).

Characteristics of Moral Conflict

When moral orders come to open confrontation, several things are likely to be present (W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). The language of the two sides will differ, and where similar terms are used, they will probably have quite different meanings. The parties will seem locked into the dispute and may even say that they have no choice but to fight. Attempts to resolve the dispute by one side may end up actually fueling the conflict. Neither side can explain the moral order of the other in any satisfactory way. The disputants fail to see why the other party rejects their case, which seems so compellingly clear to them, leading each to describe the other as ignorant, misguided, evil, or sick. Creativity is nil, as the conflicting parties can think of no solution other than capitulation or elimination.

This pattern of mutual frustration and entrenchment leads to conflicts that are intractable, morally attenuated, and rhetorically ineloquent (W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997; for a study of cases of intractable conflict, see Crocker, Hampson, & Aall, 2005). Such conflicts are intractable because there seems to be no way to resolve them, and they continue, often in many guises, over the years (Kriesberg, Northrup, & Thorson, 1989). They are morally attenuated because the disputants often violate their own principles of good behavior, and they are rhetorically ineloquent as they rely on the least sophisticated rhetorical strategies. Christians, for example, believing fundamentally in the principle of love, can become rather hateful when they are involved in moral conflicts. Peace advocates have been known to aggress, radical environmentalists have been known to destroy, and pro-life advocates have been known to kill in response to moral difference. When their best and most eloquent arguments are rejected, parties to moral conflict will tend to reduce their rhetorical strategies to chants, slogans, signs, and reciprocated diatribe. As Willard (1996) described it,

> Challenged speakers go to ground. . . . They assume this is not from fear of criticism but from a kind of self-righteousness born of competence: I'm right; my opponent is wrong. This closure thwarts discourse with outsiders. It precludes agreement . . . but its

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> worst political effect is that it obstructs disagreement: It makes argument untenable by undercutting its necessary conditions. (p. 128)

An Illustrative Case of Moral Conflict

A localized case of moral conflict that potentially represents larger paradigmatic perspectives within debates about pornography and public sex is the censorship and later cancellation of Pornotopia in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in October of 2010. Pornotopia is a pornographic film festival that was held in the Albuquerque metro area from 2007 to 2009 and hosted by two self-identified sex-positive feminists who own a local sex shop and sexuality resource center called Self Serve. Pornotopia is advertised as an educational and artistic event meant to serve the needs of a diverse population, which includes hosting erotic films oriented positively toward feminist, gay, queer, transgender, and BDSM (bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism, and masochism) in a supportive environment.

In its first 3 years, the event was held at Guild Cinema, which was zoned as an adult film theater in its early years of ownership. From the start, Pornotopia elicited controversy. Organizers received a citation from the city of Albuquerque stating that Guild Cinema was no longer zoned for adult films and were asked to cancel Pornotopia in 2007. The American Civil Liberties Union got involved and backed Pornotopia organizers in an appeal of the citation, which kept the venue alive for 2008 and 2009. In 2010, Pornotopia was forced by Albuquerque city officials to change venues, which they specified needed to be outside the metro area (including mostly industrial buildings that are not capable of hosting such an event). As a compromise, Pornotopia organizers decided to host a censored version of the event, titled Pornotopia Censored: Cirque de Sex, at a concert venue in downtown Albuquerque called the Sunshine Theater, which is still within the Albuquerque metro area. The censored show planned to include live burlesque, circus, drag, film clips, music, and sexually suggestive comedy instead of full-length pornographic films. However, the night before the show was scheduled to occur, the event was cancelled due to increased scrutiny from city officials.

News media surrounding Pornotopia reveals that its cancellation was indeed a case of moral conflict. In this case, Albuquerque city officials and Pornotopia affiliates occupied two different worldviews governed by different moral orders, or philosophical assumptions, about the nature and purpose of the event. On a most basic level, city officials viewed Pornotopia as an issue of zoning, whereas organizers viewed it as an issue of free speech. Each of these worldviews represented distinct attitudes, values, and beliefs about the nature of the event and its impact on various communities.

The organizers and supporters of Pornotopia occupied a worldview that resonates with that of pro-pornography/anticensorship feminist claims, which are based on appeals to free speech (Hudson, 2006; Rubin, 1995; Strossen, 1995). Such a perspective is often based on three principal assumptions: (1) not all pornography is created equal, meaning, violence is only present within a certain portion of pornographic videos and, often times, is equivalent to that being represented in mainstream television and film; (2) women can potentially elicit pleasure from the inclusion of violence and nonnormative sexual practices in pornography; and (3) the regulation of pornography is directly related to the regulation of constitutional rights such as freedom of speech. Organizers and supporters of Pornotopia made arguments for the venue that included these three major assumptions in the following ways: (1) Pornotopia is no worse than the movie Jackass 3D, which was being shown in a theater at the same

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time and around the corner from where the censored version of the show was scheduled to be held; (2) women can receive pleasure from pornography, in fact, many scientific studies show that women derive just as much pleasure as men do from erotic films; and (3) Pornotopia is artistic expression, which is protected under the first amendment. Although these are important arguments, when put into conversation with the claims made by the city of Albuquerque, it becomes clear that each side is steeped in incommensurate moral orders.

The city of Albuquerque occupied a worldview that resonates with that of antipublic sex claims. The antipublic sex perspective is often based on two basic assumptions: (1) sex and sexuality should be kept private, occurring between husband and wife in the home, and (2) it is the government's responsibility to keep institutions such as family (children) and religion (churches) separate and safe from public sex through law and politics such as zoning ordinances (Berlant & Warner, 1998). Albuquerque city officials embody this worldview in two distinct ways: (1) they focus on the publicness of the event and employ a strict definition of pornography that focuses on nudity and sex as occurring in a public venue and (2) they consistently adhere to arguments of zoning enforcement and only offer a city zoning map as resolution to the conflict.

When put into conversation with one another, these two worldviews created a moral conflict. Organizers of Pornotopia define their event as artistic, educational, and beneficial to women and queer communities while focusing on issues of free speech in their arguments for the venue and ignoring issues of publicness. Albuquerque city officials define the event as publicly indecent and detrimental to the heterosexual community while focusing on issues of zoning restrictions in their arguments against the venue and ignoring issues of free speech. Each of these worldviews is governed by distinct and incommensurate moral orders about the nature of the event and its impact on various communities. Although Pornotopia organizers worked diligently to communicate with city officials regarding the continuation of the venue, the differing philosophical assumptions of the two sides resulted in a moral conflict that fueled anger and frustration rather than possibilities for reconciliation.

After the cancellation of Pornotopia, Self Serve owners and Pornotopia supporters posted their reactions to the Self Serve(d) blogspot (2010) stating that "the City's Planning and Zoning Department, apparently in coordination with other City agencies and departments, has conducted a campaign of bullying and intimidation against all those associated with Pornotopia" (para. 4). They go on to state that the cancellation of the show was a result of legal threats made against Sunshine Theater, the performers of the show, and the organizers and supporters of the event. Overall, attempts to resolve the conflict have only fueled it, and the rejection of one another's perspectives has led to digression into arguments of vilification. As of now, Pornotopia is cancelled indefinitely.

An Evolving Inquiry

Our work has taken some intriguing turns in its 25-year history. In this section, we provide a bit of background and history on the topic. Our inquiry started as an elucidation of the problem of moral conflict and has evolved into an exploration of processes that can transcend difficult differences, including moral conflict. In this section, we outline four dimensions of this inquiry: (1) theoretical and methodological influences, (2) case studies, (3) conceptualizing the discourse of conflict, and (4) exploring transcendent communication.

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Theoretical and Methodological Influences

Since the first studies of moral conflict (Freeman, Littlejohn, & Pearce, 1992; W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997), our inquiry has developed and moved in directions we could not have anticipated in those early years. Consistently over the years, however, this work has been guided by a set of four related academic traditions: (1) systemic theory, (2) social constructionism, (3) practical theory, and (4) action research.

Systemic Theory. This broad tradition draws attention from individual attributes to relationships and connections, in which communication processes are emphasized over personality and individual behavior. Note in the Pornotopia case, for example, that we are not interested in the personalities, styles, or traits of individual players but emphasize interaction patterns within and between the parties in the dispute. The moral conflict in this case stems not from personal characteristics but from interaction patterns. This is why we emphasize the use of language and mutual response. From system theory, we learn that the "whole" is created through interaction among parts and that processes of interaction produce outcomes (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001; Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). Systems are organized sets of components that act on one another to create something more than a mere accumulation of characteristics. When you take a systems approach, you look at the dynamic forces among parts in terms of some kind of energy or information (e.g., Coleman, 2011). Control and self-regulation are also important as the system forces lead to homeostasis as well as adaptation and change. In addition, systems cannot be understood apart from their environments, because the system itself always interacts within a network of shifting relationships.

Our work has been especially influenced by a line of systems inquiry known as *second order cybernetics*, primarily attributable to thinkers such as Gregory Bateson (1972) and Heinz von Foerster (1981); observing always means interacting with the system itself. Automatically, the system widens to include the observer, who both influences and is influenced by the system. The implication of this point is that one can never observe a system purely and objectively but must take his or her own role into account. Observation, then, is intervention. We become part of the system we observe.

In all our work, then, we want to concentrate on what happens between parties in conflict, how they communicate with one another, and how this communication affects and is affected by larger systems. Much of our work is interventionist in nature. In other words, we become involved with actual communities and learn from this experience. Our "knowledge" about moral conflict and transcendent discourse develops over time as a result of this engaged practice. *Our key learning from system theory is that moral conflict is a dynamic relational state arising in certain forms of interaction.*

Social Constructionism. The second influence on our work hails originally from two movements in sociology: (1) symbolic interactionism (Lal, 1995) and the "social construction of reality" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and (2) the philosophy of language (e.g., Schutz, 1967; Wittgenstein, 1953). This work expanded to a movement throughout the social sciences that Kenneth Gergen (1985, 1999) aptly named *constructionism* (Galanes & Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009; W. B. Pearce, 2007). In the communication field, this school of thought forms an important part of what has been called *the social approach* (e.g., Leeds-Hurwitz, 1995; Littlejohn & Foss, 2011), which is based on the ideas that human beings always make

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their realities socially, through interaction, and that language and other symbolic forms shape what we experience. The focus of attention in constructionist research is *what gets made* in a social situation and *how social worlds come into being* through communication (W. B. Pearce, 1995). In other words, humans "make" or "construct" social worlds through the forms of communication they employ. Though the process of social construction is not normally conscious, we have learned that it can become deliberate if participants think about the consequences of their interactional patterns within the situations they face. Although we did not intervene in the Pornotopia case, we do imagine better forms of communication that might have been employed, namely, forms of dialogue, which are explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

In the realm of moral conflict and transcendent discourse, then, we can look at (a) how moral conflict involves certain patterns of interaction, the use of certain kinds of language and action; (b) what is created in moral conflict situations; and (c) what could get made if the language and process of communication were to change. *Our key learning from constructionism is that moral conflicts are made in human interaction, and they can be transcended when communicators shift their patterns of talk*.

Practical Theory. This view establishes a set of principles by which an actor can make difficult situational decisions (Barge & Craig, 2009; Cronen, 2001; Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). Instead of predicting outcomes from causal models, practical theory provides a basis for achieving goals in complex situations where many solutions and outcomes may be possible. Following this tradition, our work is designed to provide practical guides for action. According to Craig and Tracy (1995), practical theories "construct a tentative, revisable, but still rationally warranted normative model that is relevant to a broad range of practical situations" (p. 252). Cronen (2001) wrote that practical theory "offers principles informed by engagement in the details of lived experience that facilitate joining with others to produce change" (p. 14). According to Cronen, practical theories provide a basis for understanding the uniqueness of situations to learn from experience and to weigh alternative courses of action for achieving positive outcomes. Our emerging theory of transcendent communication (Littlejohn, 2004; Lowry & Littlejohn, 2006), summarized later in this chapter, is itself an example of practical theory.

An example—indeed, an exemplar—of practical theory is the *coordinated management of meaning*, or CMM (W. B. Pearce & Cronen, 1980; Pearce & Kearney, 2004). Especially influential in our work, CMM looks at the ways in which action, particularly interaction, is embedded in socially constructed contexts of meaning. CMM provides a basis for understanding how people connect their actions with meaning, the logics that drive interaction, and the ways in which shifting contexts can bring about changes in meaning and action (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001; Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). The Pornotopia case illustrates the power of contextual logic very well. Each side in this clash operates from a "logic" that makes the case seem compelling to the point of total rejection of other points of view. We will see this phenomenon again in the case studies summarized in the following section.

In reflecting on CMM, W. B. Pearce (2004) mentions several themes he believes important in the theory. These include (a) multiple contextuality, or the idea that all experience is understood in a web or dynamic contexts that give meaning to action; (b) connected stories, or the relationship between the interactions that people live and the stories they tell; (c) coordination, or the challenges of organizing and understanding actions within a system;

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(d) mystery, or openness where firm answers cannot be found; and (e) continuing creation, or the dynamic, constantly created nature of our social worlds. *Our key learning from practical theory and CMM is that responses to moral difference are coordinated practices by which communicators manage actual situations in their lives*.

Action Research. As a final influence on our work, action research involves inquiry accomplished through engagement in actual communities (e.g., Stringer, 1996). Action research is learning by doing. We work in communities with real people facing normal conditions of life, experience and learn from this work, codify and write our observations, and continually refine our ideas about how to work in communities. Spano (2001) outlined three characteristics of action research. First, it is participative, working collaboratively with members of actual communities. Rather than treating people as "subjects" to be "observed," action research relies on partnerships and relationships in real situations. Second, researchers take the role of facilitators and invite participants into new forms of communication that will help them reflect on the system and make decisions about how to orient and respond to the situations they face. These processes are never invented out of context and imported into the situation but are tested and developed collaboratively over time so that they become "owned by" and "meaningful to" the participants themselves. Third, action research produces practical knowledge that allows participants and facilitators to gain insight into the situation, the desired changes, and the new forms of action that can lead to salutary outcomes. For the researcher/facilitators, these insights grow over time to enable the development of evolving practical theories that provide frameworks for (a) understanding important dynamics of situations, (b) identifying potential community visions, and (c) making decisions about how to act in complex and potentially problematic situations. *Thus, our key learning from action research is that understanding grows as we engage actual communities facing real situations*.

Our inquiry into moral conflict began with a series of case studies. From these, we began to conceptualize patterns of communication in moral conflict situations, and we explored new forms of interaction that can transcend moral differences. In the following sections, we outline these dimensions of our work: (a) early case studies, (b) conceptualizing the discourse of conflict, and (c) exploring transcendent communication.

Early Case Studies

Moral orders are never just things in themselves but are always reflected in and reproduced by the discourses that the parties use in discussing actual issues such as abortion, women's rights, pornography, and prayer in the schools. Our case studies, then, looked at the discourse used by groups to speak to their own constituents and the logics and categories used to "make the case." We also looked at how groups characterize and address opponents (W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997, p. 12). Two large case studies—(1) the religious right and (2) conflict mediation, in combination with our readings and unpublished studies on gay and lesbian rights, abortion, and the Persian Gulf War (Freeman et al., 1992)—formed the corpus of our initial studies of moral conflict.

The Religious Right. Our first major study concentrated on the conflict between the New Christian Right and its critics. In the early 1980s, certain fundamentalist Christians became active in politics and, indeed, quite powerful in those years. Under the leadership of Jerry Falwell and others, organizations such as the Moral Majority and the Christian Roundtable came into being. This effort became a movement known as the

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New Christian Right, or, more generically, the Religious Right. Liberal critics of this movement immediately emerged. Less organized than their conservative counterparts, many liberals spoke out against the movement. Perhaps the most visible oppositional organization was People for the American Way, led by Norman Lear. The struggle between these two opposing voices continued in different forms well into the 1990s (Yoachum & Tuller, 1993). Our studies concentrated on the pattern of interaction in public discourse between these two broad groups (W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997).

In our early studies of the Religious Right (W. B. Pearce, Littlejohn, & Alexander, 1987, 1989), we began to hypothesize that groups in moral conflict would be unable to understand one another's ideas within a common moral order. We observed a pattern therein by which the discourse within each tradition would inflame the other party and lead to frustration and reciprocated diatribe. We noticed an important difference between the discourse used within groups, which seemed intelligible and eloquent, to that between groups, which appeared strident and ineloquent. Intermural discourse, as opposed to intramural discourse, departed from civil attempts to make the case and moved toward attempts to obstruct or disempower the other group.

Mediation. The second set of cases on moral conflict involved a series of eight case studies of mediation conducted at the University of Massachusetts in the mid-1980s (Littlejohn, Shailor, & Pearce, 1994; W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). Videotaped with permission from behind a one-way mirror, these mediations included a family dispute, a consumer case, two roommate conflicts, an assault case, a deteriorating romantic relationship, a property division case, and a divorce case. Our observations and interviews with the mediators reveal an interesting set of patterns. First, the meaning of essential moral terms such as *fairness* tended to shift from one party to another. Second, the structure and process of mediation itself reflected a certain moral order that may or may not have matched that of the disputants, and mediators sometimes became unwittingly aligned with the party that most shared the mediation process ideal. In other words, moral similarity and difference did play an important part in these cases.

Not all of the cases we observed were moral conflicts, but where significant philosophical and moral principles were at stake, we found that patterns of communication were similar in many ways to that of more public moral conflicts such as the New Christian Right. One case involving a divorce in particular reinforced this view (Littlejohn et al., 1994). This case involved a dispute between a divorced couple regarding custody and property issues. To help understand this case, we constructed an interpretive model consisting of three dimensions: (1) moral reality, (2) conflict reality, and (3) justice reality. The *moral reality* included deeply held ideas about proper conduct. Using the work of Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985), we identified four moral ideals: (1) the authoritarian, based on scriptural or divine authority; (2) the republican, based on civic duty; (3) the utilitarian, based on individual interests; and (4) the expressivist, which is based on individual freedom. These "realities" are not necessarily incommensurate, though elements of them may be. In the divorce mediation, for example, we found that the husband was very much driven by a traditional, authoritarian moral vision, while the wife based her actions on a highly expressivist one. This difference led to very different styles that frustrated both parties. For example, the husband kept referring to how much effort he had put into the house and into keeping the family together, while the wife continued to come back to expressing her own individual desires.

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The second dimension, *conflict reality*, involves assumptions about the meaning of conflict and how it should be managed. Using Zartman (1978) and Kilmann and Thomas (1975), we identified three approaches: (1) reliance on outside parties, (2) conflict "management," and (3) avoidance and prevention. The first of these—*reliance on outside parties*—defers to adjudication and cultural authorities to settle conflicts. The second—*conflict management*—involves negotiation, fighting, competition, and coalition building. The third—*avoidance and prevention*—tends to be libertarian, or "live and let live." In our divorce case, the husband had a strong avoidance, or libertarian, set of assumptions, which led him to want to be left alone. The wife, on the other hand, held a conflict management model that drove her motivation to "be creative" and to negotiate solutions.

The third dimension, *justice reality*, consists of principles for decision making in conflict situations—criteria for what constitutes a just and right solution. We posited three types of justice. The first, *retributive justice*, involves punishing wrongdoers. The second, *competitive justice*, involves moving to maximize gains and minimize losses. The third, *distributive justice*, involves distributing resources fairly according to a defined principle such as entitlement, equality, equity, or social welfare. In the divorce case, both the husband and wife relied on distributive justice but of very different forms. He operated out of a strong sense of social welfare, in which he argued for a settlement in the best interests of the children. The wife, in contrast, worked out of a sense of justice based on equality, or equal division.

It was clear to us that the husband and wife in this case were experiencing a moral conflict. Their apparent moral realities did clash, this frustrated them, and their interaction conformed a typical moral conflict pattern. We saw also in this case that the mediators' moral view conformed largely to that of the wife, and they became unconscious collaborators with her, further alienating the husband. Needless to say, this mediation was not successful. Because of this and our other case studies, we became intensely curious about the patterns of interaction commonly found in conflict situations and began to codify our observations in this regard (W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997).

Conceptualizing the Discourse of Conflict

We have organized forms of conflict communication in several ways over the years (e.g., W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997), but we now prefer to think in terms of three types of discourse, each responding to a particular challenge (Littlejohn, 2004). The first is *advocacy*, which is a response to the *challenge of confrontation*. The second is *negotiation*, which is a response to the *challenge of peacemaking*. The third form of communication is *redefinition*, which responds to the *challenge of transcendence*.

The Discourse of Advocacy. The discourse of advocacy is a response to the challenge of confrontation. Recognizing the radical meaning of the term, we are using confrontation more broadly to mean any form of direct pressure for resistance or change. The most typical means of advocacy in democratic societies involve persuasion, which aims to influence the thoughts and behavior of others. Indeed, the art of persuasion is the oldest and the most studied communication form (Foss, Foss, & Trapp, 2002). On matters of public policy, persuasion and debate are the chief instruments by which differences are settled (Gouinlock, 1986). Traditional debate is especially effective and appropriate when parties agree to the standards of good argument and

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the means by which decisions should be made. For example, legislation and election usually work in democracies, because the stakeholders agree that decisions will be made by vote or by fiat. The process may seem to take forever, but the issue will eventually get settled, or at least the mythology teaches us that this is the case.

Too often, advocacy falters when differences are moral. What seems to happen is that the failure to persuade leads to frustration, diatribe, or even violence (W. B. Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). Moral principle and the will to prevail can make confrontation harsh, as advocates "hit the streets" to force results. Yet open clash is unsettling because of the collateral damage that can occur; the perceived overconfidence of the disputants, whose cause belies the complexity of a multivalued world; and the incivility of the communication between the combatants. Such conditions lead many to search for a way to make peace, which is the second challenge, addressed by the discourse of negotiation (Putnam, 2010).

The Discourse of Negotiation. Peacemaking can take many forms. In international affairs, the term *diplomacy* best captures this genre of action. Bargaining, mediation, and even collaboration among conflicting parties are typical. We are using the term *negotiation* generically to capture many discursive forms associated with the challenge of peacemaking (Folger & Jones, 1994; Putnam & Roloff, 1992). In general, the goal of these types of communication is to work out compromises or consensual solutions that will settle the dispute (e.g., Fisher & Ury, 1991). The discourse of negotiation is vital. It can help reduce tensions and even resolve conflicts in many cases. It can stimulate creative thinking and collaborative problem solving. Erstwhile enemies can even find a common ground in working through a difficult situation, which can in turn create a basis for future collaboration. And negotiation, once it actually gets going, can return a feeling of civility into an otherwise hostile environment.

The discourses of advocacy and negotiation aim to achieve first-order change, or movement, on the issue of contention (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974). In the discourse of advocacy, the aim is to achieve a goal by having others move toward the desired end; in the discourse of negotiation, the goal is to achieve resolution by having one or more parties move toward an acceptable solution. The point of contention does not change though positions can.

For this reason, both the discourses of advocacy and negotiation encapsulate the conflict. By arguing, forcing, bargaining, and even collaborating, communicators participate in the mutual construction of their respective identities as conflicting parties. The idea of encapsulation comes from the theory of dialectics (Handelman, 1984; Rawlins, 1988). In managing a contradiction or opposition, the solution further reproduces the opposition itself. Any attempt to promote or select one option over another or mediate between them merely perpetuates the distinction between choices.

The Discourse of Redefinition. The discourse of redefinition is a search for ways to transform the conversation from encapsulating contradiction to productive dialogue (Putnam, 2010). This discourse is a kind of "negation of the negation" (Rawlins, 1988), a new set of organizing principles that lead participants to think differently about what they are doing as they work through their differences and to help them achieve unimagined outcomes. The discourse of redefinition is akin to what Lederach (2005) calls *moral imagination*, a key to peacemaking. It is "the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth

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to that which does not yet exist" (p. ix). Highlighting the process of transformation, Putnam (2010) describes this as a situation in which "disputants gain new understandings or fundamentally different views of what is happening than when they entered the situation" (p. 325).

In the Cupertino Community Project, which was sponsored by the Public Dialogue Consortium, the undiscussable issue of racial tension was transformed by reframing the issue in citywide dialogue groups from "racial difference" to "cultural richness" (K. A. Pearce, Spano, & Pearce, 2009; Spano, 2001). The Cupertino Community Project is a decade-long dialogue project with many facets within the city of Cupertino, California. Cupertino has afforded us and our colleagues the opportunity to develop a number of dialogue tools and to learn a great deal about what can happen when care is taken about how to frame issues and structure conversations.

Exploring Transcendent Communication

Much of our work in recent years, then, has involved various experiments in transcendent discourse. In this section, we summarize what we now call the Transcendent Communication Project, discuss dialogue as the essence of transcendence, and lay out guidelines for practitioners.

The Transcendent Communication Project

From the beginning of the moral conflict project, we imagined better forms of communication between parties with significant moral differences, and our work soon began to explore creative methods for managing significant differences. The Transcendent Communication Project is an ongoing exploration of methods for helping communities manage potentially complex and difficult conflict situations humanely, effectively, and appropriately (Littlejohn, 2004). We think of transcendence as moving above or beyond typical patterns of communication found in difficult conflict situations.

We have found that transcendent communication tends to embody three characteristics. First, it creates new frames that transcend differences. Using the metaphor of Wittgenstein (1953), this kind of dialogue establishes a new "grammar" that enables parties to reconceptualize their differences and even find common ground. The new categories of conversation constitute a creole of sorts, making it possible for parties to have a coherent dialogue across otherwise incommensurate worldviews (Stout, 1988). In his book *The Soul of Politics*, Jim Wallis (1994) championed a new set of topics that could bridge liberal and conservative ways of thinking. Instead of pitting opposing economic, political, and social categories against one another, Wallis proposed that new conversations address transcendent topics such as compassion, community, reverence, diversity, justice, and courage.

Second, transcendent communication transforms relationships. Abandoning the discourses of confrontation and negotiation that privilege arguments, positions, interests, and solutions, dialogue features personal stories, new contexts of meaning, and relationship building. Lederach (2005) features relationship transformation as a key to "moral imagination" and defines it as "the capacity to imagine ourselves in relationship, the willingness to embrace complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity" (p. 29). The Public Conversations Project, for example, had amazing success in some 20 dialogues on abortion, where participants were invited into a safe environment to talk about their lives (Chasin et al., 1996). Using strong facilitation and ground rules, these dialogues encouraged participants to share stories, to listen well to

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the experiences of others, to ask questions based on curiosity, and to explore the complexity of their own and others' positions on this intractable issue. The outcomes of the abortion dialogues were profound. No one really changed their opinions on the issues, but they changed their perceptions of themselves and those who held opposing views.

Third, transcendent communication creates opportunities to explore the powers and limits of multiple worldviews. In addition to exploring common ground, the discourse of redefinition allows participants to explore differences, but to do so in a way that helps group members learn significant new things, make new distinctions, and realize that every perspective is limited in what it can do. W. B. Pearce and Pearce (2004) write that this quality leads to a realization that one's own stories are always "partial, local, limited, or bounded" (p. 55), and it promotes the value of "remaining in the tension between standing one's own ground and being profoundly open to the other" (p. 55). Correspondingly, then, transcendent communication allows participants to explore complexity in ways often not permitted by advocacy and negotiation. In contrast, when we have the opportunity to go beyond simplistic categories and have a more nuanced discussion, we can learn a great deal about ourselves, others, and the issues at hand.

For example, in a fascinating dissertation on the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) revised reactor oversight process (ROP) for monitoring "safe operations of nuclear power plants" (Ferdig, 2001, p. 2), Ferdig (2001) explains how the revised process involving dialogue "characterized by open communication" (p. 2) transformed the industries collaboration and efficiency. Public scrutiny and technological advancements in nuclear risk assessment led the NRC to revise the ROP and to include "representatives from regulatory, industry, and public stakeholder groups" (p. 91) in order to increase transparency. Additionally, interactional goals of the ROP were shifted from "destination" based to "pathway" based. With the inclusion of new and diverse perspectives and new process-oriented goals, the revised ROP was a radical departure from traditional closed, and sometime antagonistic, communication to a process characterized by "inclusion, exploration, a willingness to search for new possibilities and remain open to inquiry and surprise, collaboration, and movement toward relational understanding" (p. 12). The result was transformative and "heightened capacity to co-create outputs that serve both individual and collective needs" (p. 12).

We use the term *dialogue* to capture these transformative aspects of transcendent communication. Barge and Andreas (this volume) summarize much of the growing literature on dialogue, especially as it relates to communities (see also Anderson, Baxter, & Cissna, 2004). Here, we merely highlight a few aspects of dialogue that have emerged as important in this work.

Dialogue as Transcendence

For us, the term *dialogue* usefully designates a certain communication practice, which aims to *redefine* issues, conflicts, and relationships, thereby enabling participants to *transcend* hopeless patterns of interaction. The terms *dialogue, redefinition*, and *transcendence* are not exactly synonyms, but each term captures a particular dimension of the same process. In general, this process has several characteristics:

- It embodies a relationship in which parties treat one another as fully formed, whole, and complex human beings, whose life experiences provide a basis for their moral orders, positions on issues, and actions in the world.
- It allows communicators to say what is important to them, be assured that their

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stories will be heard, and allow others the same privilege.
- It permits participants to move from a place of being stuck to a new territory where joining places may be found.
- It is multivoiced and nonpolarized.
- It includes fresh, constructive questions that demand critical, creative thinking.
- It is educative and allows participants to learn important new things, including how to look at the problem in new ways.
- It leads communicators to see the powers and limits of a variety of points of view.
- It builds relationships of respect.

W. B. Pearce and Pearce (2004) preferred not to think of dialogue as a "type" of communication but as a "quality of communication in which any speech act can be performed" (p. 45), more appropriately designated *dialogic communication*. Such communication is designed to "keep the conversation going" (Rorty, 1979, p. 378) in ways that open up, rather than close down, possibilities (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). This shift leads to mutual respect, or "a favorable attitude toward, and constructive interaction with, the persons with whom one disagrees" (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996, p. 79). Such change gives us pause to stew a bit about our position and remain open to the powers of other points of view, even when we disagree with them.

Dialogue allows us to go to a new place, to reframe our differences, to find or construct a joining spot (Barge & Little, 2002; Littlejohn, 2004; Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001; W. B. Pearce & Pearce, 1999; Putnam, 2010). If old patterns merely encapsulate old categories, can new patterns be found? If familiar forms of interaction serve to perpetuate, even enflame, a conflict without a positive result, can the participants find a new form of communication that might change their relationship?

Although there are many traditions of dialogue, we find the work of Martin Buber especially helpful. In his book *I and Thou* (1958), he showed how important it is to treat others as subjects whose legitimate experience can affect our own lives. Persons in an I–thou relationship together open up new vistas. There is an interesting irony in the I–thou dialogue. It is a place where you stay in the tension between "standing your own ground" while being "profoundly open to the other." Putnam (2010) referred to developing "a rhythm in conflict interaction that holds dissonance and resonance together" (p. 328). W. B. Pearce and Pearce (1999) called this ability *dialogic virtuosity*. In this section, we outline three keys for the practice of dialogue. These are (1) working with process, (2) creating joining places, and (3) changing the context of the conversation.

Working With Process. The question, *How shall we talk*? sets a new ground or place where the disputants can come together. An illustrative case occurred in Catron County in rural southwestern New Mexico in the 1990s (Smith, 1998). Located amid beautiful national forest land, the community of only 2,500 people found itself in distress. The economy was depressed because of declines in the two major industries—(1) lumber and (2) ranching—caused at least in part by environmental protection policies. This state of affairs led to a severe conflict among environmentalists, ranchers, timber worker, and forest service personnel. The conflict was strident, it was moral, and it seemed intractable. Alarmed by the amount of stress-related illness, the area's only doctor felt that the community itself was sick and arranged to bring in the New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution (NMCDR) to initiate a community-wide dialogue process.

The key question for the NMCDR and local participants was how to have a new kind of conversation, one that could take them beyond hateful slogans, threats of violence, flashing guns, and frightening displays. A small group agreed to meet and take up

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this question. Indeed, much of the initial talk centered on ground rules. One initial decision was to allow all of the perspectives to be heard and to concentrate on listening respectfully to various points of view. Soon the initial group grew to as many as 50, and the discussion moved from various opinions on the issues at hand to a vision for the community. Over the course of several years, a variety of processes were used, including dialogue groups, planning committees, field trip discussions, mediation and negotiation, community visioning meetings, and youth meetings. Although the community did experience setbacks, concrete solutions were created, and, most important, continued conversation was made possible. Community members were able to find areas that could be discussed in ways that built positive relationships.

Creating Joining Places. Process talk addresses the question of *how* we communicate with one another and is seeking an answer to *what* can we talk about. Areas where constructive conversation can occur constitute the joining place. Nola Heidlebaugh (2001) used the term *commonplacing* to identify the ground where people engaged in moral conflict can meet. She likens commonplacing to weaving together two pieces of cloth. In moral conflict, the weaves in the separate tapestries are too tight, so we must find a way to loosen them to make a joining place possible. Notice that the metaphor is not "sewing." Indeed, stitching the pieces together would be like what we see too often in moral conflicts today—some kind of a forced seam that does not work for either piece of fabric. Instead, the metaphor calls for loosening threads and actually weaving them together in at some point without threatening the integrity of either tapestry. This is the joining point. In the vein of social construction, the joining point is not "found" but "created." Where can insights be coordinated in some meaningful way? In essence, we are saying, "Let's be creative and see what we can do."

Between 1999 and 2003, the provinces of Maluku in Indonesia were involved in a terrible conflict, as Muslims and Christians bombed one another's homes, mosques, churches, schools, and public buildings, resulting in some 6,000 deaths and many thousands of displaced persons. As part of a restoration process, the International Catholic Migration Commission put together a dialogue institute for village and religious leaders in Central Maluku in 2004. Tired of war and ready to rebuild their communities, 40 participants came together for 4 days to explore their differences and find a way to build a foundation for restoration. During the institute, the participants created a number of joining places. Despite their many differences, they were able to talk very productively about their common culture and shared religious values and to discuss how to use these as resources for restoration. They did not spend time on old conflict issues, but instead they built a vision for a unified community in which mental, physical, and economic well-being could be achieved. One place where tapestries could be woven was *pela gandong*, a cultural practice akin to blood brotherhood. Recognizing that their ancestors had created a blood bond that made them like family, the dialogue participants found a common place and bond for future work together (Lowry & Littlejohn, 2006).

Changing the Context of the Conversation. A powerful way to create joining places is to shift the context of the conversation. We like to use the metaphor of *scoping* to capture this idea. The frame limits what you see in a scope, but you can change the frame by "scoping out," which leads to a broader context, or "scoping in," which leads to a narrower one (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001; Putnam, 2010). In many conflicts, especially moral conflicts, the parties are stuck at one-lens length. Debates on abortion,

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for example, focus right on the issue of abortion itself; however, the Public Conversations Project (Chasin et al., 1996) has learned that productive dialogue can occur by asking participants to reflect on their life experiences, which is a kind of "scoping in." In the Catron County conflict described above (Smith, 1998), the dialogue groups found it useful to "scope out" to explore a common vision for the community. We can also change the context by moving the scope around to look at different spots. In good dialogue, then, we may want to continually shift the context by scoping and pointing.

In her case study on the NRC summarized above, Ferdig (2001) reflected on the power of questions in shifting the context of the discussion. She outlined several ways in which questions can focus on different contexts. To focus on *contexts of identity*, for example, the group may ask, "Who am I?" "What is important to me?" "Who are we together?" "What do we both care about?" To focus on *contexts of principle*, we might ask, "What do I stand for?" "What do we jointly stand for?" "How do our choices and actions reflect our individual and collective values?" *Contexts of intention* can be revealed in discussions on questions such as, "Where am I going?" "What do I want to see happen here?" "What are we up to in this conversation?" To focus on *contexts of assumption*, we ask questions like these: "What aren't we thinking about here?" "What is our logic for these conclusions?" Finally, a focus on *contexts of possibility* would require questions such as, "What are the things you value most about yourself and the self-organizing experience of which you are a part?" "What are the core factors that give 'life' and 'energy' to the self-organizing process of which you are a part?" "What are the possibilities of that which we can create together based on the best of who we are?"

Practical Guidelines

Over the years, we have learned several lessons that have informed our practice (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001). Since the aforementioned Pornotopia conflict (discussed in the beginning of the chapter) has not yet been interceded and remains unresolved, the following is a synopsis of the practical lessons learned exampled by hypothetical scenarios and possibilities for the Pornotopia case: (a) create the right conditions, (b) manage safety, (c) provide a process that encourages constructive conversation, and (d) maintain ends in view and think about possibilities for outcomes of the conversation.

Create the Right Conditions. Dialogue is rarely possible in the heat of conflict. Timing is a critical factor of success, and opportunities for dialogue must be made, either by intervention agents or concerned stakeholders. Several points can be helpful here:

1. Don't wait until conflict breaks out. Engage stakeholders in conversations early on.
2. If open conflict has already happened, look for the right moment, often when participants are tired of fighting or become desperate for new solutions.
3. Work initially in small, private groups.
4. Be careful about the role of "leaders" and other powerful persons. Allow all of the voices to be heard from the start.
5. Build on prior success. Avoid single-shot interventions, and use a grow-as-it-goes process.
6. Be creative about process. Think about what will work best now under the conditions currently experienced.

In the case of Pornotopia, open conflict has already occurred. Therefore, possibilities for transcending the conflict rest on finding an appropriate moment and an effective process. One of the challenging conditions of the Pornotopia conflict is the power differential between the local business owners and city officials, which has forced much of the conflict to transpire publicly, through news media and Internet blogs. With the indefinite

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cancellation of Pornotopia, much of the media coverage of the conflict has stagnated, suggesting a possible moment for intervention and opportunity for dialogue. For this particular conflict, it would be especially important to first facilitate dialogue on the issue in a private, small-group, face-to-face setting that would equally include the voices of all those involved, including small business owners, city officials, and Albuquerque residents.

It is imperative that the issue not be approached in a way that privileges the perspectives and power of local governmental officials but allows for a space of dialogue equal for all participants. Recently, an Albuquerque city official has proposed that 1 week a year concessions be made regarding zoning restriction so that events such as Pornotopia can occur. This proposal suggests a good starting point for generating, acknowledging, and addressing the multiple perspectives and ideas available in this case. However, these ideas may never reach fruition unless an equal, open, and safe space is managed.

Manage Safety. Safety is crucial and must be managed well. People will not experiment with new forms of talk when they feel unsafe. Here are a few points for guidance:

1. Think consciously about time and place.
2. Provide appropriate structure.
3. Solicit agreements on process.
4. Promote good facework.
5. Respond to willingness and felt need.
6. Find a shared level of comfort.
7. Leave an out.
8. Use an impartial facilitator.

Again, because of the power differential involved in the Pornotopia case, coming to an agreement about the equality of participation in dialogue is important to the process. Ideally, participation by members of the Albuquerque community would be a priority, assuming that as potential spectators and neighborhood citizens they have a stake in whether or not the event occurs. Additionally, using a community-based setting for dialogue has the potential to mitigate unequal power distributions by creating a space for equally valued participation, such as the type of communication that might occur in a public deliberation setting. Utilizing a facilitator who has no personal investment in the conflict, such as someone who does not reside in Albuquerque; who is not a small business owner; and who does not have ties to local government is important for providing a comfortable and judgment-free zone. Additionally, keeping communication open to more than just discussions of law and politics could help save face and also encourage more constructive rather than digressive conversation.

Provide a Process That Encourages Constructive Conversation. Encourage participants to treat people as people, not as representatives of positions. Several principles can help constructive conversation:

1. Take sufficient time to explore.
2. Encourage listening, and build listening into the process.
3. Help participants to listen beyond mere content. Listen deeply to lived experience, stories told, values, shared concerns, and differences.
4. Ask good questions designed to open the conversation not close it down.
5. Frame issues carefully to capture a context that will create a joining place.
6. Be appreciative. Look for positive resources, and look for the vision behind negative comments.
7. When speaking, aim to be understood rather than to prevail in a contest.
8. Base positions in personal experience, and help others understand your life's experiences.
9. Maintain a multivalued, rather than bipolar, purview. Listen for all the voices.

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A key factor listed here for the Pornotopia case is a focus on lived and personal experience. As the conflict stands now, legal issues of zoning and political issues of free speech are stifling the complexity of the topic and constructing individuals as representatives of these two limited perspectives rather than persons being affected by them. Creating a joining point rests on a community-based dialogue process that is concerned with the lives being affected by Pornotopia. In doing so, questions can begin to be asked that construct a context for creating a joining point, such as what is the function of Pornotopia in the community? From here, conversations can allow individuals to reflect on why Pornotopia is eliciting so much controversy and in what ways personal lives and interests are central to understanding and transcending the conflict. Using lived experiences as a starting spot can potentially create points of relation rather than resistance and help envision collaboration as a desirable end.

Maintain Ends in View and Think About Possibilities for Outcomes of the Conversation. Several ends are possible:

1. Discovering the heart of the matter or learning what is most important to all participants
2. Building respect by looking for the ways in which others are experienced, complex, concerned, intelligent, healthy, and rational
3. Learning about complexity and developing a healthy suspicion of a two-valued framing of any issue
4. Building a context for collaboration

In terms of possible ends for Pornotopia, many issues surround all sides of the conflict that have not yet been considered. By creating the right conditions, managing safety, and encouraging constructive conversations, all parties involved might be able to see the issue on a broader scale that encompasses more than just a possible resolution of either enforced zoning or an enactment of first-amendment rights. Building respect for one another begins by focusing on the lived realities of those invested in the conflict. In doing so, goals that both sides seem to be committed to, such as focusing on fulfilling the needs of all members of the Albuquerque community rather than on reasons for Pornotopia's demise, might begin to build a context for collaboration and perhaps yield a space for transcendence.

Lessons Learned and Challenges Remaining

As we look back at this three-decade project, we realize that we have learned a great deal about the discourse of conflict and transformation. From our case studies, we were able to uncover important dynamics of moral conflict. This in turn enabled us to identify some of the factors that lead to frustration and a degraded discourse. We also found in those early case studies that civil discourse is possible in the face of moral conflict, and we learned some of the things that can make discourse more constructive and less destructive. Figure 22.1 outlines the lessons we have learned from our own work and that of others within this realm.

Despite all of our work on moral conflict, we are less clear today about identifying any particular conflict strictly as "moral." Although many public disagreements possess elements of moral clash, persistent conflicts can have other elements that propel them. Coleman (2003, 2011), for example, found more than 50 factors in the literature associated with intractable conflicts. In an impressive interview study of current practitioners, Coleman, Hacking, Stover, Fishker-Yoshida, and Howak (2008) reinforced the idea of complexity in intractable conflicts. They found many stakeholder, personal, political, and cultural constraints that can feed intractability. From our own

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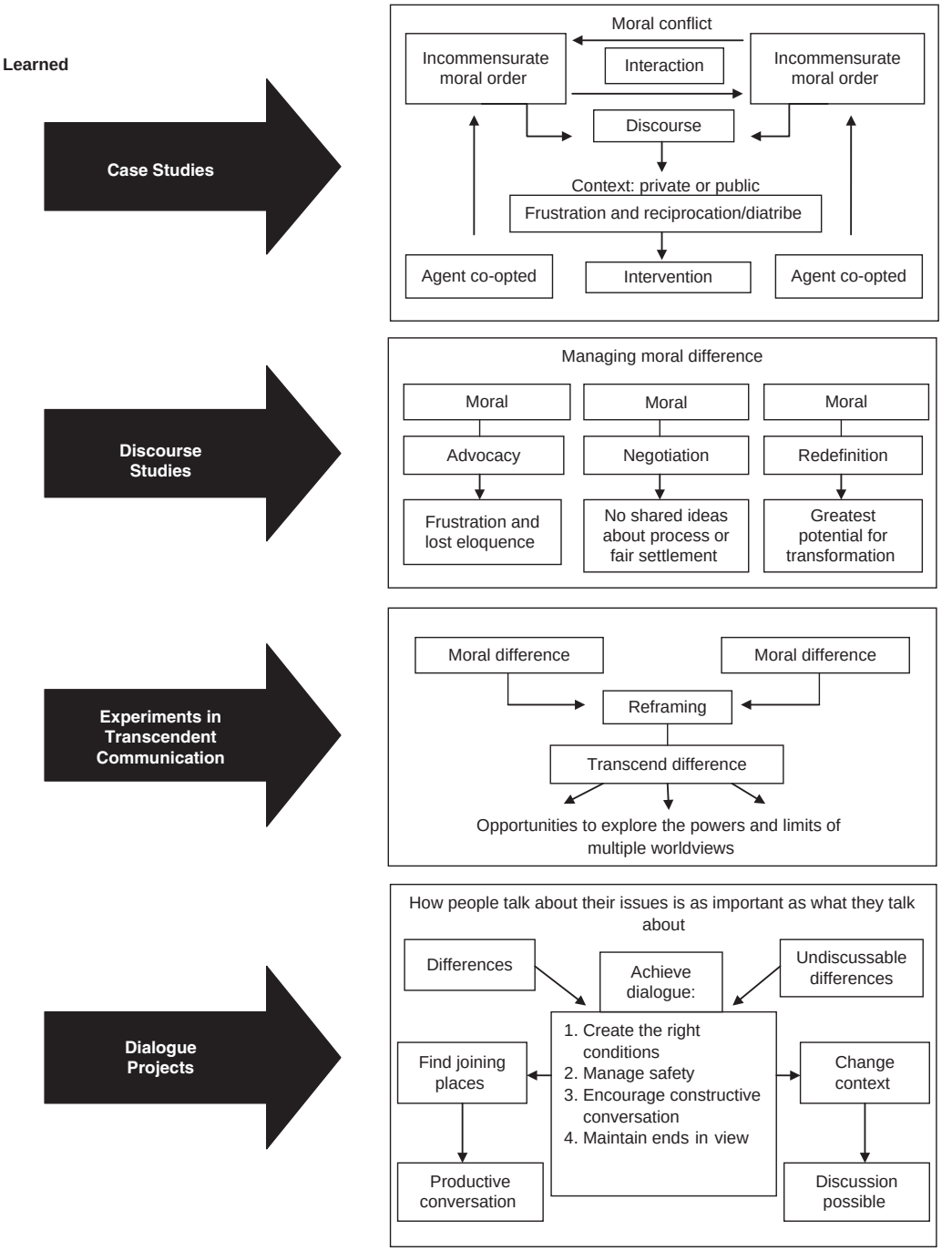

Figure 22.1 Lessons Learned

experience, three factors seem especially important, and these are (1) interests, (2) self-identification, and (3) power. In terms of the theory of CMM, when any of these three becomes a very high level of context for meaning and action—driving all other considerations—conflicts will become intractable.

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We used to distinguish between a moral conflict and an interest-based conflict. We now believe that certain interests are so strong that they can lead to intractable conflicts with the same consequences, whether moral difference is there or not. Here, the problem is not so much that the parties fail to find a common set of premises but that the struggle to prevail in order to meet desired goals has become so entrenched that a solution is all but impossible. The interest assumes tremendous logical force on meaning and action, it defines the self, and it defines the relationship. All actions are understood within the context of the interests, and one cannot imagine responding to one's opponent outside of the struggle to prevail.

Personal identity sometimes assumes the same status in a conflict. In working with many local groups and numerous conflicts over the years—both public and private—we have come to see the importance of self-identity in persistent conflicts. After a period of time in which the struggle has come to dominate the lives of the participants, they come to identify with the conflict itself. The self gets wrapped up in resistance—in being an opponent. Here, "self as combatant" becomes a very high level of context that drives his or her logic of meaning and action within the situation.

Finally, contemporary politics remind us how power can propel conflict. Power matters most, and both sides struggle to gain it, to maintain it, or to regain it. Substantive issues are understood through rules of meaning that define them in terms of power gained or power lost. Rules of action dictate responses aimed solely at gaining, maintaining, or regaining power, regardless of the issues or the stakes.

We do not think it matters much in our work whether conflicts are driven by moral difference or something else. Although we focused initially on *moral* conflict, we now know that good dialogue is a goal whenever difference becomes an obstacle. We are not optimistic about well-meaning mediators injecting preestablished processes into an ongoing conflict with the hope of transformation. Indeed, our experience leads me to the opposite conclusion, that uninvited outside intervention rarely works. Coleman et al. (2008) concluded that the factors affecting intractability and readiness for new forms of discourse form a complex and durable system with a strong tendency for homeostasis. Indeed, attempts to achieve peace can simply lead to a rebound in which the system pulls itself back into alignment with continuing intractability.

The community must be ready, and there must be a willingness of the parties to give dialogue a good-faith try. We believe that transformative discourse is most likely to succeed when you have the experience of mutual adversity (everyone is suffering), powerful models and leaders are behind the search for new forms of communication, lessons have been learned from previous failures to communicate, and community members have come to value their common humanity over their moral differences. All of this may be necessary to shift the system's balance from one of conflict to one of peace, and as Coleman et al. (2008) remind us, this is not an easy task.

One of our most useful insights from system theory has been that processes cannot be imported from outside the system but must connect to the community. An intervention must first *engage the system*, meaning that it must connect with the ways of thinking and working and must engage the vocabulary of the community. This is why a local design team is critical in developing processes. Next, the intervention must *challenge the system*, not in a confrontational manner but by asking participants to think in new ways, to stretch their system in a direction that may permit transcendent discourse. This is reframing writ large. Finally, interventions can then, and only then, invite participants to *imagine a future* that works for everyone (Littlejohn & Domenici, 2001).

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An Agenda

Based on our work in moral conflict and transcendent communication, we offer the following advice for future scholars and practitioners:

1. Case studies are always valuable, but we need to shift from studying cases of failure to cases of success. When and how do parties in intractable conflicts achieve transcendent communication?
2. Look at the role of interest, self-identification, and power in difficult conflicts. In particular, focus on what made it possible for parties to transcend conflicts based on these three factors.
3. Continue experiments in intervention. What works and what does not, and when and where have interventions been more or less effective? What makes the difference?
4. In community-based action research, think beyond face-to-face meetings, dialogues, and forums. Consider the wider media environment and leverage new technologies to bridge parties engaged in intractable conflict.

We live in a world where surface disagreements belie the complexity of the true differences that divide us. In a world of many voices, our very ways of thinking and knowing create chasms on issues that will shape the human condition—issues like war and peace, the environment, poverty and prosperity, the role of science and religion, forms of government, cultural preservation and change, biology and genetics, and education and human development. We need to create meeting places where we can explore the moral orders that lie at the heart of our actions, where we can learn important things about ourselves and others, where we can join in a common endeavor, and where we can create futures of mutual benefit.

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23

Communities, Conflict, and the Design of Dialogic Conversations

J. Kevin Barge and Dorothy C. Andreas

A central challenge communities confront is how to manage significant conflict and disputes over important issues such as land use, economic development, environmental concerns, education, poverty, access to health care, and safety. The ability to manage these contentious issues has been made more difficult by a growing citizenship and democratic deficit (Nabatchi, 2010). An increasing number of scholars have argued that the weakening of civil society has grown over the recent past and that it has produced a citizenship deficit, which is characterized by lower levels of participation by citizens in civic activities as well as decreases in the amount of social capital available to work with complex disputes (Lewis, 2005; Putnam, 2000; Smith, 2003). At the same time, there has been a rising democratic deficit as citizens have lost trust in local, state, and federal governments to represent their interests. The growing disenchantment with the ability of governments to do their jobs can be traced to several factors, including the use of top-down technocratic-managerialist approaches, which deaden the sensitivity of government officials and representatives to local contexts, issues, and interests (Chilvers, 2009); the involvement of risk averse politicians who see little utility in involving citizens in deliberative activities (Durant, 1995); and employing communication strategies that are designed to educate and persuade the public about the plans developed by subject matter experts versus enlisting them in meaningful deliberation (Yankelovich, 1991). The combination of citizenship and democratic deficits creates a deadly cocktail that threatens our ability to create vibrant communities that engage with democratic practice in a meaningful way.

What can we do with a citizenry that is portrayed as not having the ability to engage in civic life and a government that is characterized as being unresponsive to citizen needs, interests, and concerns? Over the past 30 years, one answer to this question has

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been to foster deliberative democracy, which emphasizes the participation and contribution of everyday citizens in making important decisions that affect their community's lives and the common good (Cooke, 2000). Callahan (2007) observes that deliberative democracy, or what she calls *direct democracy*, "promotes a sense of community and common bonds that transcend individual interest" (p. 1180). There are a number of positive outcomes regarding deliberative democracy, including fostering higher levels of social stability and community cohesion, increased levels of information sharing, and improved collective decision making, learning, and the ability to achieve democratic ideals (Bayley, 2008; Lynam, De Jong, Sheil, Kusumanto, & Evans, 2007; Reed, 2008).

A unique feature of deliberative democracy is that it is "talk-centric," which requires creating forums for citizens and other stakeholders to discuss an issue, to make arguments for and against particular positions, and to inquire into the complexity of issues versus relying on sound-bites, rigid ideologies, and a cursory understanding of complex issues to inform decisions and policy making. Nabatchi (2010) states that "deliberative democracy moves away from competitive pluralism by encouraging the distinctive rationality of 'the forum' as opposed to the rationality of 'the market' (Bohman, 1998)" (p. 385). Deliberative democracy within communities relies on a form of communication known as dialogue (Barge, 2006). In its simplest form, dialogue may be defined as a conversational process where interlocutors take turns addressing each other to discursively coordinate their meaning making and relationships (Gergen, Gergen, & Barrett, 2004).

If we accept the notion that deliberative democracy and dialogical practices are one way to address citizenship and democratic deficits, how can we design communication practices and forums that work? In this chapter, we draw on the notions of communication as design and dialectical theory to articulate the challenges that designers of dialogues need to address when they design processes and events to encourage dialogically structured forms of communication. Communication as design blends normative and descriptive approaches by articulating normative ideals for communicative practice as well as creating thick descriptions of the interactional problems associated with particular communication practices (Aakhus, 2007; Aakhus & Jackson, 2005). Dialectical theory emphasizes that communication is a tension-filled activity and that interactional problems are never solved; rather, tensions are ongoing within communication systems and must be continually managed over time (Baxter, 2004). The chapter is organized by the following questions: (a) What characterizes dialogical forms of communication? (b) What dialectical tensions may emerge during dialogue? (c) How can dialectical tensions be managed when designers plan and structure dialogue?

Dialogue, Tensions, and Differences

Dialogue has been variously theorized as a descriptive versus prescriptive practice (Stewart & Zediker, 2000), a generative or degenerative conversational activity (Gergen et al., 2004), and a form of collective thinking (Bohm, 1980, 1985, 1990; Isaacs, 1999) or relational practice (Barge & Little, 2002, 2008). Despite the differences among various intellectual traditions, Stewart, Zediker, and Black (2004) suggest that most dialogical approaches share three theoretical tendencies: (1) discourse, (2) holism, and (3) tensionality. We also suggest a fourth tendency—(4) managing difference.

First, dialogical approaches emphasize the centrality of discourse. They focus on the way in which utterances create and sustain particular patterns of meaning making and social

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arrangements as well as the way in which larger societal and cultural meanings influence each other and local conversations. The former is typically referred to as the "little-d" discourse, which focuses on language in use, while the latter is often talked about as the "big-D" Discourse, which highlights the larger enduring worldviews and systems of meaning that circulate within a society or culture and influences the way in which people make sense of and act in their social worlds (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000).

Second, dialogical approaches adopt a holistic view of communication and focus on the interrelationships among communication, context, persons in conversation, meaning, and action. A holistic perspective looks at the communicative ecology that constitutes human activity. For example, a Bohmian approach to dialogue explicitly resists the tendency to chop up a system and look at issues and situations in a fragmentary way and instead views it as a way of thinking, feeling, and acting that facilitates individuals seeing connections among their own beliefs, attitudes, interpretations, and actions and how they connect to other persons (Bohm, 1990; Isaacs, 1999). Similarly, Buber (1958) fights the tendency to reduce human relations to "I–it" relationships, which treat individuals as commodities that have an instrumental use, and argues that dialogue allows individuals to enter "I–thou" relationships, where persons can engage the full unique complexity of the other and the situation. Bakhtin (1993) maintains that it is important to focus on the undivided wholeness of the sequences of utterances within their sociohistorical context.

Third, dialogical approaches view human systems as constituted by tensions that are managed by communication practices. Tensions or dualities refer to oppositional forces that are typically exhibited in a struggle of perspectives, values, or actions (Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2003). Tensions are characterized by polar opposites that often compete with each other but are not necessarily viewed as being mutually exclusive. Stewart et al. (2004) note how various dialogic theorists emphasize different kinds of tensions. For example, Buber's (1958) dialogic work highlights tensions regarding human relationships, while Bakhtin's (1993) dialogic work foregrounds tensions about the manifestation of multiple voices and multiple points of view and the dynamic between centripetal forces, which move systems toward unity, centralization, and monologue, and centrifugal forces, which generate disunity, decentralization, and dialogue within systems. Alternatively, Freire's (2007) dialogic work draws attention to the tensions between unequal power relations such as the tension people may experience when they are simultaneously the oppressor and the oppressed.

We suggest a fourth shared tendency among theoretical approaches to dialogue, an emphasis on the importance of managing difference in meaning making. Difference is viewed as a resource for enriching one's interpretations and meaning making regarding people, situations, and events. Deetz and Simpson (2004) observe that when people engage the "otherness of the other" (p. 143) they are moved beyond their own existing conceptual schemes creating the opportunity for new meaning making.

> Every interaction, thus, holds the possibility of closure or new meaning—either a reproduction of the dominant socially produced subjectivity or responsiveness to the excess of external events over these conceptions. Developing an appreciation of otherness as a part of a dialogical interaction is central to developing a responsibility appropriate to the contemporary age. (Deetz & Simpson, 2004, p. 143)

Dialogue can facilitate the flow of meaning and the creation of new understandings and interpretations provided people are able

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to discursively manage the differences others bring to the conversation as they coordinate their meaning and relationships.

Gergen et al. (2004) suggest that the discursive coordination of difference is accomplished through the processes of affirmation, negation, and supplementation within conversation. Affirmation confirms the value and reality of a preceding utterance, whereas negation curtails its value. For example, if someone responded to the utterance of a person by saying, "That's stupid," the contribution the person has made in the preceding utterance is negated and the reality that it offers invalidated. As a result, there is no means for productively extending or sustaining the meaning making potential of the utterance. On the other hand, if an individual responded by saying, "Yes, and what I would add to that is . . ." then that individual is supplementing the meaning making potential of the preceding utterance by introducing a difference that sustains and extends the contribution of the other person ("what I would add to that is . . ."). When affirmation is in a productive tension with supplementation then a generative dialogue exists, whereas degenerative dialogue occurs when no affirmation exists and only negation is present, which hinders the coordination of meaning making and action.

Dialectical Tensions in Public Participation and Community Dialogue

The notion that tensions are ever present in our communication is frequently noted in the public participation literature and may be viewed as posing interactional challenges for the designers and participants in dialogues (Heath, 2007; Leong, McComas, & Decker, 2007; Zoller, 2000). While a variety of tensions constituting dialogue can be articulated, the source of these tensions is the democratic paradox (Mouffe, 2000). The democratic paradox conceptualizes tensions as part of a general struggle to "organize a common symbolic space." Mouffe (2000) begins her description of the democratic paradox by distinguishing between *antagonism* and *agonism*. She considers *antagonism* proper to be that "which takes place between enemies, that is, persons who have no common symbolic space." She considers *agonism* to be "a relation . . . between adversaries . . . persons who are friends because they share a common symbolic space but also enemies because they want to organize this common symbolic space in a different way" (p. 13).

The practice of democracy is never realized perfectly, and in fact, Mouffe (2000) points out that if it ever was perfectly realized, then it would cease to be democratic. She writes,

> What is specific and valuable about modern liberal democracy is that, when properly understood, it creates a space in which this *confrontation is kept open, power relations are always being put into question and no victory can be final* [italics added]. However, such an "agonistic" democracy requires accepting that conflict and division are inherent to politics and that there is no place where reconciliation could be definitively achieved as the full actualization of the unity of "the people." To imagine that pluralist democracy could ever be perfectly instantiated is to transform it into a self-refuting ideal, *since the condition of possibility of a pluralist democracy is at the same time the condition of impossibility of its perfect implementation* [italics added]. Hence the importance of acknowledging its paradoxical nature. (p. 16)

The democratic paradox suggests that tensions will continually emerge in dialogue and intertwine in unique ways. Democracy is both the medium and the outcome of participation (Heath, 2007).

The democratic paradox is the primary tension from which other secondary tensions can be articulated. Drawing on the public

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participation and community dialogue literature, we identify dialectical tensions and dualities associated with dialogue. The following clusters are organized thematically; however, the categories of tensions frequently manifest together in lived participatory experiences.

Cluster 1: Tensions Involving Voice

The first cluster provides a vocabulary for addressing the tensions associated with the incorporation of multiple voices in dialogue, the relationship of these voices, and the role of powerful and less powerful voices. Tensions involving voice include (a) silence and expression, (b) consensus and dissensus, (c) formal and informal relationships, (d) equitable and hierarchical relationships, and (e) inclusion and exclusion. These tensions are closely associated with tensions highlighted by dialogue theorists such as (a) Bakhtin's (1981) interest in multiple discourses (silence and expression, consensus and dissensus), (b) Buber's (1958) focus on relationships (formal and informal relationships, equitable and hierarchical relationships), and (c) Freire's (2007) attention to issues of power (inclusion and exclusion).

Silence and Expression. One way to conceptualize the tensions associated with voice is through the duality of silence and expression or the degree to which voices are kept quiet or given opportunity for full expression. Senecah (2004) defines voices as having a trinity of characteristics: (1) access, (2) standing, and (3) influence. Building on Senecah's (2004) work, Heath (2007) distinguishes between "having a say" and "having a voice." "Having a say" is when individuals have *access* to the process but do not necessarily have *influence*, whereas "having a voice" occurs when individuals have *standing* and *influence* that enables them to create new meaning that affect outcomes. In her study about collaboration in early education, Heath (2007) contends that the process of inviting stakeholder groups ultimately led to homogeneity because the funding sources for the project mandated the inclusion of particular groups that were really quite similar. This resulted in permitting expression based on "what" a person or group could bring to the table rather than "who" that person or group is. Normative practices such as schedules and jargon also enabled people from particular demographics to express their viewpoints. Heath observes that expressions from homogeneous stakeholder groups resulted in discursive closures that silenced other groups. The important point is that many groups were granted access but not necessarily standing and influence and therefore were not fully voiced.

Consensus and Dissensus. The duality of consensus and dissensus moves us to consider whether participatory processes are characterized by centralizing forces or decentralizing forces (Bakhtin, 1981). For example, Zoller's (2000) study of the Healthy Communities project notes the tension between representing diversity and developing consensus. Trainers for Healthy Communities sought participants who would speak for the community "as a whole," and this practice demonstrated a preference for consensus. However, the participants were more concerned about the direct representation of their constituencies. To participate in a dialogue of discovery was a "risk" for them because their constituency's interests may get lost in the consensus processes leading them to prefer diverse voices. Similarly, Harter (2004) observes that participants in a farm collective felt pressures of efficiency that contributed to centralizing tendencies.

Formal and Informal Relationships. The conceptualization of the duality about formal and informal stakeholder relationships draws attention to the question of legitimacy in

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participatory processes. Lee (2007) notes that even though formal deliberation is considered more legitimate, because it is public and transparent, pressures for consensus and professionalism may constrain authentic expression. In particular, representatives from environmental groups may feel pressure from national-level organizations to hold certain positions and not deliberate or negotiate. Additionally, some public officials believe that formal processes look like public relations efforts to promote self-interest. Lee noted that when stakeholders mistrusted or felt constrained by transparency of the public process, they engaged in informal communication. Abilities to work within informal networks seem to be in a reciprocal relationship with formal deliberation. That is, the public forums provided them opportunities to build their networks, and informal communication through the networks improved their performance in public forums (Heath, 2007; Lee, 2007). Ultimately, Lee (2007) concludes that the ways people address the tension of formal and informal communication can help scholars and practitioners understand (a) the complementarity of protest and participation, (b) the role of participatory fatigue, and (c) the commodification and outsourcing of participatory expertise and capacity training. However, it is important to understand that informal networks can disempower stakeholders who are not affiliated with a formal organization because they are less likely to be invited to meetings (Zoller, 2000).

Equitable and Hierarchical Relationships. The duality of equitability and hierarchy allows us to consider the degree to which participants relate to each other on an equitable basis or in a hierarchical relationship. For example, Zoller (2000) observes that trainers of the Healthy Communities project greatly valued the dialogic process and their neutral role. They wanted to have equitable relationships with the other volunteers to remove any sense that they were in control over the community's decisions. However, their attitude of neutrality made them seem detached in the eyes of the volunteers. This case helps us understand that "forcing" equality into naturally unequal power structures can have unintentional consequences of distancing planners and participants.

Inclusion and Exclusion. The inclusion–exclusion duality centers on who is invited to participate in dialogue and their level of motivation. Many participatory processes tend to privilege expressions of certain groups through practices that privilege consensual voices—usually the voices that come from already powerful groups. Lee (2007) argues that "community elites with vested interests in negotiation tend to outlast new faces at the table" (p. 69) because they have "the most to gain from other participants' beliefs in authenticity of the formal deliberation" (p. 70). Nonelites felt that others perceived them as provincial, and they often withdrew from the process. This study highlights that formalizing participatory processes by emphasizing transparency, creating pressure to quickly reach consensus, and mandating who must participate in the process may paradoxically and inadvertently lessen participants' perception of the legitimacy of the process and its democratic potential by homogenizing voices and privileging elite perspectives among stakeholders.

There are several reasons why citizens voluntarily exclude themselves from participatory processes and pursue protest activism (McComas, 2003b). McComas (2003a) reports that, in general, citizens had low expectations about the quality of public meetings, and this predicted their low satisfaction with public meetings. Higher quality of relational and informational communication could increase satisfaction with public meetings, but this could not overcome the overall low levels of satisfaction (McComas, 2003a).

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One reason for such low expectations and satisfaction with meetings is the belief that participation at public meetings does not make a difference (McComas, 2003b). However, there are also reasons why citizens voluntarily include themselves in participatory processes: (a) to get formal information from agency, (b) to hear informal views of other participants, (c) to offer support to friends and family who feel strongly about an issue, (d) to gain some "psychological relief" by doing something about the issue as a "civic duty," (e) to help them gain some small sense of control, and (f) to perform a civic ritual (McComas, 2003b).

Cluster 2: Tensions Involving Temporality

The second cluster considers how time and history create tensions in participatory processes. Gadamer's (2005) concept of the historically affected consciousness draws attention to the tension between history and the present that is ever present in dialogue. He emphasizes that understanding is not universal but rather grounded in the inevitable reflexivity between present and past. People must be open to new experience that ultimately disconfirms and modifies their historical experience. We offer three dualities related to concerns about temporality: (1) past and present, (2) episodic and evolving, and (3) mathematical and social representations of time.

Past and Present. One duality associated with temporal tensions asks us to consider the relationship between the past and present. In his study of a long-term land use conflict, Norton (2009) observes that "the significance of stakeholder conflict lies precisely in the history groups have with one another" (p. 528). The current conditions and power relationships between the stakeholders are constructed over long periods of time, which suggests that "the dynamics within one period" were best understood in reference to "the historically unfolding trajectory of these contested terrains" (Norton, 2009, p. 544). This temporal tension is particularly important when examining public policy conflicts because of the relatively long period of time it takes to develop and implement public policy. Harter's (2004) study of a farm collective notes how sociohistorical and contextual discourses of agrarianism and masculinity contribute to "the (re)production of contradictions, tensions, and paradoxes of democratic organizing" (p. 109). Both Norton and Harter direct our attention to the tension between past and present in public participation by emphasizing either the historical development of the relationships among stakeholders or the sociohistorical discourses that give rise to and reinforce the existence of other tensions.

Episodic and Evolving. Another duality regards the juxtaposition of episodic events in relation to unfolding conversation. For example, Hamilton's (2007) description of public participation during reclamation of the Fernald nuclear cleanup site demonstrates the ability for groups to continue in dialogue despite episodic instances of open conflict. Similar to Lee (2007) and Heath (2007), Hamilton (2007) notes that dialogue was sustained by a network of interpersonal relationships rather than formal mechanisms of inclusion because the participants developed the ability to sustain "an ongoing conversation among stakeholders who understand and respect one another's points of view" (p. 65). Her study demonstrates that dialogue in public participation recognizes how episodic interactions can fit within a longer-term image of an unfolding conversation.

Mathematical and Social Representations of Time. A third duality considers how time becomes represented in participatory processes—as a literal, mathematical, and

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calendar-based measurement or a relative, social representation. Since much public participation about community conflict addresses environmental, technical, and health risks, we must consider *when* people represent the manifestation of the risks and *how* this affects the urgency and prioritization of decisions (Norton, 2009). For example, the potential hazard of nuclear technologies lasts for an extremely long time that is beyond our comprehension and, therefore, is subject to interpretation and social construction beyond its quantifiable material reality (Taylor, 1997). Risks about climate change are subject to similar representations. People may acknowledge that climate change could occur, but the possibility is so distant that they do not perceive it as a high risk (Lazaro, Cabecinhas, & Carbalho, 2007; O'Connor, Bord, & Fisher, 1999). This incomprehensible time frame creates a space in which people construct alternative interpretations of the climate change threat that justify their choices to take few preventative actions (Lowe et al., 2006).

Cluster 3: Tensions Involving Ways of Knowing

A third cluster of tensions is associated with different ways of knowing. These epistemological tensions are addressed in Bohm's (1996) conceptualization of dialogue tensions associated with knowing and discovery. Bohm (1996) calls for participants to suspend what they already know and embrace a process of discovery so that they "can see what all of our opinions mean" and that "we are *sharing a common content*, even if we don't all agree" (p. 30). The research about participatory processes paints a picture of the complex ways in which people address these knowledge tensions. In response to the tensions associated with knowledge, we address two dualities: (1) experiential and analytical knowledge and (2) humans and nature.

Experiential and Analytical Knowledge. One way to conceptualize the dualities associated with ways of knowing is to consider experiential knowledge and analytical knowledge. Analytical knowledge tends to be used by scientific, industry, and government experts and is characterized by technical and scientific judgments of probability, costs, and trust in technology; whereas experiential knowledge tends to be used by members of the public and is characterized by social and value judgments based on psychological, cultural, and social trust factors (Elliot, 2003; Fiorino, 1990; Plough & Krimsky, 1987). The key issue concerned with this tension is "What knowledge counts as acceptable?" (Moore, 2008; Wynne, 1992). A classic example of this tension is reported in Wynne's (1992) study following the Chernobyl nuclear accident, when sheep farmers used their local knowledge about typical sheep behavior to adjust incorrect expert assumptions about the presence of radioactive material in the environment. Given this duality, Leong et al. (2007) note a paradox of public participation about environmental issues—that citizens want the best science but not without their input.

An important dimension of analytical and experiential knowledge considers the degree to which knowledge is a lived, embodied experience. For example, Wang's (2003) work with photovoice and community participation illustrates a positive example of how photographs taken by homeless persons can be incorporated into the prioritization of local policymakers. Photographs can contextualize people as fully embodied persons in their lived experiences—in contrast to typical representations in depersonalized symbols like statistics (Taylor, 1997). Moore's (2008) study of the conflict between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and a Native American community regarding water cleanup at a Superfund site provides another example of how lived experience can be integrated with analytical knowledge. The groups were at an impasse until a woman named

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Maya began creating a map of local knowledge about the watershed in terms of homes, fishing, camping, and other experiences. This stood in direct contrast to how the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state officials understood the watershed in scientific terms. The coordination of this tension required an experience of taking a field trip so that officials could understand and "know" the river in person—not just on a map or as abstract technical terms. The juxtapositions of embodied and analytical knowledge embrace decentralizing properties of discourse—leading to greater opportunities to increase voice—by constructing these two distinct ways of knowing as participating in a "dance of affect and reason" (Slovic, Finucane, Peters, & MacGregor, 2004) where they play off each other as opposed to being in opposition. However, such juxtapositions rarely occur in conventional participatory spaces (Taylor, 1996; Wang, 2003).

Humans and Nature. A second conceptualization of the knowing tension addresses the relationship between humans and nature: the physical existence of nature and the human construction of the meaning about nature (Cox, 2007; Peterson, Peterson, & Grant, 2004). Physical entities exist and act with or without symbolic representation, and conflict about natural resources must address the consequences of this phenomenon. For example, in the conflict about the Key Deer in Florida, on the surface it appeared that the participants were expressing concerns about the existence of the deer, but this conflict represented the manner in which disputing parties were addressing the democratic paradox of individual rights and equity (Peterson et al., 2004). A careful observation of the tension between humans and nature notes the ways that discourse imbues material objects from the natural world with "qualities of necessity, inevitability, legitimacy, priority, authority, and validity" (Taylor & Kinsella, 2007, p. 3). The cluster of tensions about knowing invites participation planners to consider the relationship between "questions of fact" and "questions of value." Latour (2004) argues that the public sphere needs to be reorganized to engage with these questions of fact and value through participatory processes.

Designing With a Dialogical Sensibility

A burning issue for conflict scholars is how to design forums and practices for dialogical forms of communication that enable people to respond to these tensions in a constructive manner and enable them to work through the conflict. We suggest that a profitable approach to working with dialectical tensions in dialogue is Aakhus's (2007) notion of communication as design. Designers of dialogue must develop a dialogical sensibility that allows them to attend to the here and now of the present situation in order to develop structures and tools that foster dialogue and fit with the unique qualities of the situation. We use Aakhus's (2007) perspective toward communication as design and integrate it with Barge and Little's (2002, 2008) notion of sensibility to provide a framework for designing dialogue. To help illustrate these concepts, we use Barge, Lee, Maddux, Nabring, and Townsend's (2008) essay that examines a multistakeholder dialogue process for managing conflict and engaging in strategic planning.

Communication as Design

The notion of design and being a designer has emerged as an important concept for creating goods and services. For example, companies such as Apple and Target are noted for their ability to design products that are not only practical and useful but also have a sense of style. In the information technology field, emphasis is placed on designing software and hardware that are accessible to users and

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perform needed tasks. Architects purposely design buildings and public spaces that are simultaneously functional and have a sense of elegance and beauty, and in some instances such as public monuments or cathedrals, invoke a sense of awe, wonder, and reverence. Creating a product, good, or service requires designers to identify the task that must be performed and the challenges that are associated with the task and to develop a concept that responds to the task and its challenges that people find inviting and engaging.

The notion of communication as design begins with the premise that it is conceivable to shape conversations and discourse in ways that promote productive interaction among persons and make difficult, incoherent, and unmanageable conversations possible. As Aakhus (2007) observes, "Communication design happens when there is an intervention into some ongoing activity through the invention of techniques, devices, and procedures that aim to redesign interactivity and thus shape the possibilities for communication" (p. 112). It is based on the commonsense notion that when individuals encounter interactional problems, they employ strategies and techniques to manage the conversation and resolve their interactional difficulties. Viewing communication as design suggests that individuals and communities have preferred and nonpreferred ways of communicating and the task for communication scholars is to articulate the normative commitments regarding how communication ought to be and to design tools and practices that bring communication practices into closer alignment with these ideal norms.

There are at least two ways that communication scholars can engage the design enterprise. First, they can take a design stance when analyzing communication. Using a design stance when conducting empirical communication analyses requires creating rich detailed descriptions of an existing communication practice, identifying the hypotheses about the communication practice that constitute its design, and then critiquing and reconstructing the practice to identify how communication might be more profitably managed. Aakhus (2007) suggests that such analyses may focus on a particular practice such as the conversations between lay people and scientists (Aakhus, 1999) or the way divorce mediators use their tools to engage in critical discussion, bargaining, and therapeutic discussion (Aakhus, 2003; Jacobs & Aakhus, 2002). Second, communication scholars can also design, test, and evaluate tools to help manage interactional problems. For example, Jackson (1998, 2002) developed online protocols to support students in using argumentation concepts and practices, while Aakhus (2010) developed a set of online reflection tools to facilitate medical students' systematic reflection on difficult conversations that they encountered.

The notion of communication as design has both a descriptive and normative foundation. Communication as design focuses our attention on the performance of practice or its accomplishment in interaction. For example, the design logics that Jacobs and Aakhus (2002) identify regarding the practice of mediation are not something that an individual possesses; rather, they are something that mediators do during the course of conducting mediation. Articulating the discursive performance of a practice requires empirical work that rigorously investigates how the discourse works. Communication as design also has a normative foundation as it aims to identify what should be ideal forms of communicative practice. The descriptive and normative foundations of design are intertwined, "Within a design enterprise, models must be both descriptive and normative, which is to say that they are accountable on the one hand to values and ideals and on the other hand to actual practices and circumstances" (Aakhus & Jackson, 2005, p. 420).

The material designers create interventions from is basic communication processes

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that characterize communicative episodes. Aakhus and Jackson (2005) identify seven elements that designers of communication should take into account when developing tools: (1) turn-taking formats, (2) participant identity and face, (3) commitments and their formulation, (4) how act sequences can be expanded, (5) the way repair may be used to coordinate actions, (6) interactional consequences, and (7) cultural assumptions regarding what kinds of communication are permitted, prohibited, or obligated. Designers of communication can create tools that foster productive interaction by changing and shaping these basic communication processes.

Table 23.1 provides a summary of the tensional clusters drawn from the public participation and community dialogue as well as a set of questions for each cluster that designers of dialogue may pose. These tensions may be viewed as posing interactional challenges for designers and participants in dialogues that need to be considered when designing strategies, methods, and tools for managing conflict within communities.

Table 23.1 Dialogical Tensions and Design Questions

Tensional Cluster	*Specific Tensions*	*Design Questions*
Voice	Silence and expression tensions Consensus and dissensus tensions Formal–informal relationships Equitable–hierarchical relationships Inclusion and exclusion tensions	• How can inclusion strategies resist tendencies to promote consensus around dominant paradigms? • How can designers transform their privileged status through a series of moves that lead to collegial relationships?
Temporality	Past and present tensions Episodic and evolving tensions Mathematical and social representations of time	• How can designers treat decisions and meeting outcomes as contingent and merely an episode in an evolving process of addressing the issue and relating to each other? • How can designers recognize the impact of historical relationships and sociohistorical discourses on the participants? • How can designers determine when to focus on achieving outcomes and when to focus on "organizing the common symbolic space"? • How do representations of time affect prioritization of issues?
Ways of knowing	Experiential and analytical knowledge Humans and nature	• How can designers resist tendencies to legitimize the expert, analytical, and human ways of knowing that are often privileged in participatory processes? • How can designers utilize disruptive practices that can enable participants to uncover and discuss questions of legitimate knowledge? • How can designers reorganize the discussion about questions of fact and questions of value?

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Barge et al.'s (2008) study of multistakeholder dialogues to manage conflicts in strategic planning is illustrative of the way in which dialectical tensions inform communication design. The Circle of Prosperity Initiative was a 2-year process cosponsored by the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and the American Indian College Fund to help the 32 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) develop strategic technology plans for their respective universities and the tribal college system as a whole that would foster economic development while respecting and elaborating Native American identity and culture. A number of stakeholders were involved, such as technology providers, local and governmental agencies, tribes, and the TCUs, which often had conflicting interests.

Barge et al. (2008) identified three primary tensions that influenced the design of the overall dialogue process: (1) inclusion–exclusion, (2) preservation–change, and (3) centrality –parity. The inclusion–exclusion tension centered on whether all 32 tribal college presidents would be present at each phase during the dialogue, a physical impossibility given limitations due to size, funding, and participant location. The preservation–change tension reflected competing pulls to simultaneously preserve tribal culture and heritage while at the same introducing information technology to Indian country. The centrality–parity tension concerned the need to keep the TCUs at the center of the process while at the same time needing to treat them as equal to the other stakeholders.

According to Aakhus (2007), communication tools are developed to manage interactional difficulties, and these tensions influenced the way in which the overall dialogue process was intentionally organized by members of the design team. First, the inclusion–exclusion tension was managed by developing procedures for providing continuous feedback to tribal college presidents who were not present at different phases in the dialogue such as written briefing documents and face-to-face meetings, a strategy known as commonplacing. Second, the preservation–change tension was managed through the strategy of bounded mutuality where the oral and written materials that were used to frame the process for participants placed cultural preservation as the frame for determining how information technology would be used. Any adoption of information technology needed to be accomplished in such a way that it preserved or enhanced tribal culture and identity. Third, the centrality–parity tension was addressed through the strategy of reflexive positioning. Tribal college presidents were placed in a unique position as the process needed to be centered on them, but they needed to understand how they were also equal partners in the process. Reflexive positioning involved framing the overall process and employing specific communication tools that emphasized the importance of learning. These tools, while keeping focus on the tribal college presidents, also emphasized the importance of them learning what it meant to be an equal partner in the process, where they did not occupy a privileged position.

Designing With a Dialogical Sensibility

The primary tension emerging from the democratic paradox centers on managing issues of convergence and divergence. Hamilton (2007) defines dialogue as "a process in which convergence and divergence exist simultaneously or alternately, rather than a process that moves in one direction toward resolution such as consensus on a course of action" (p. 63). Designers need to develop the wisdom for managing this primary tension and the secondary tensions associated with it by developing their judgment for how and when to "promote plurality" and when to

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"craft consensus." The promotion of plurality involves creating discursive spaces where multiple points of view are freely expressed. Designers need to develop a sense of when to invite participants to use dissonance tropes such as irony, humor, parody, sarcasm, and anomaly as responses to the tensions and contradictions. These tropes tend to create an open discursive space by making multiple meanings visible, challenging conventional ways of knowing, and acting as mechanisms for paradigm disruption (Oswick, Putnam, & Keenoy, 2004). Practitioners can also strategically introduce practices that disrupt paradigms and promote heterogeneous discourse by using creative activities such as situation mapping, issues forums, gaming exercises, and photovoice (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006; Wang, 2003).

Designers also need to be able to recognize when the time is appropriate to bring people together to claim an outcome and "craft consensus." Sometimes, advice about public participation focuses too much on creating "good dialogue" and inadvertently neglects the fact the participants really do desire an outcome (Zoller, 2000) and will evaluate the value of the participatory process based on the quality of the outcome (McComas, 2001). Designers should recognize when the time is right to craft consensus by calling attention to shared values, new ways of thinking, and listening for resonance tropes like metaphors, metonymies, and synecdoches, which tend to crystallize points of view and act as mechanisms that reinforce paradigms (Oswick et al., 2004). Zoller (2000) cautions that "we must treat moves toward consensus as temporary, always open to revision with the inclusion of new voices. In this way, we may pursue consensus without erasure of differences" (p. 205).

Given the democratic paradox, designers need to develop the ability to design processes that constructively connects problem-solving discourse, which focuses on consensus, with sense-making discourse, which builds understanding of similarities and difference among a plurality of perspectives (Hamilton & Wills-Toker, 2006). Making judgments of how to build such connections is challenging because the tensions that designers engage in change over time and become intertwined and connected in different ways as they enter and exit the field of play. We offer the notion of sensibility as one approach that designers may use to develop and assess the tools, protocols, and processes they create (Barge & Little, 2002, 2008). Similar to communication as design, sensibility blends normative and descriptive processes to enable designers to make wise choices regarding how dialogical forms of communication can be invited and sustained.

Sensibility. Barge and Little (2008) articulate sensibility as "a moral–aesthetic framework regarding the commitments one makes toward issues of human agency and power within a tradition or community of practice" (p. 506). Moral–aesthetic commitments refer to the value commitments that a tradition or community of practice makes regarding what counts as moral, beautiful, and elegant practice when working with issues, agency, and power. Moral–aesthetic commitments serve as living standards for evaluating to what degree one's practice addresses the commitments one has made. For example, designers working within the tradition of Habermas's communication planning theory (Sager, 2009) prioritize design and practices that reflect communication planning theory's values regarding openness, fairness, and competence to work with people's sense of agency and issues of power in a responsible way (e.g., see Renn, Webler, & Wiedemann, 1995).

The notion of sensibility addresses how practitioners such as designers make judgments regarding the way they design and plan processes in ways that align one's moral–aesthetic commitments and the unique demands posed

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by the situation. Barge and Little (2008) argue that practitioners may have a wide repertoire of methods, tools, and techniques at the ready to employ in various situations. The way in which practitioners make judgments about how to design a process as well as which specific tools will be used in a specific context depends on *phronesis*, a kind of practical reasoning (Benner, 2000). *Phronesis* involves tacking back and forth between the moral–aesthetic commitments practitioners subscribe to in their practice and the particulars of the situation to arrive at a judgment regarding what tools and techniques offer the best opportunity to move forward.

There is not necessarily a tight coupling between a specific set of moral–aesthetic commitments and a particular set of tools and techniques. To be sure, particular traditions or communities of practice can develop specific practices (e.g., tools and techniques) that evolve out of their moral–aesthetic commitments, and those who are recognized as a member of that practice tradition or community necessarily employ those specific tools. For example, the Appreciative Inquiry movement has articulated a distinct set of value commitments such as the generative and narrative commitment that has led to the development of specific tools and techniques such as the Appreciative Inquiry Summit, the 4-D cycle, and provocative propositions (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Powley, Fry, Barrett, & Bright, 2004). However, sensibility allows for the possibility of designers utilizing other methods, tools, and techniques from other traditions and communities of practice.

The integration of other tools and techniques from different traditions and communities of practice can occur in two ways. First, tools and techniques from traditions and communities of practice that share similar moral–aesthetic assumptions or have a family resemblance can be easily integrated into one's practice. For example, Deliberative Mapping is a participatory tool that combines expert panels, citizen groups, and quantitative decision analysis techniques for exploring policy options (Burgess et al., 2007). Deliberative Mapping draws on two distinct multicriteria processes: (1) multicriteria mapping (Stirling & Mayer, 2001) and (2) stakeholder decision analysis (Burgess & Clark, 2006). These two distinct analytic–deliberative processes are relatively easily integrated because they share a family resemblance as both are multicriteria approaches. Second, tools and techniques from traditions and communities of practice with dissimilar epistemological, ontological, and axiological assumptions can still be adopted through a process of deconstruction. Burnham (1992) observes that techniques from different traditions and communities of practice can be adopted provided they are used in the spirit of one's moral–aesthetic commitments. For example, tools from Appreciative Inquiry could be integrated with Deliberative Mapping during the option scoping phase by embedding Appreciative Inquiry's focus on working with assets and future within the frame set by Deliberative Mapping.

We want to focus attention on what we call a *dialogic sensibility* and how it might be used by designers to manage the tensions associated with engaging, managing, and sustaining dialogue. Given that tools and techniques can be appropriated from various traditions, we do not present a list of the various tools and techniques that could be used to design dialogue. Excellent summaries of these approaches are reviewed elsewhere (e.g., French & Bayley, 2011). We focus our attention on the key moral–aesthetic commitments that constitute a dialogical sensibility and how these commitments serve as resource for managing tensions during the design process.

Dialogical Moral–Aesthetic Commitments. Barge (2003, 2006) initially articulated a set of sensibilities that practitioners such

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as community builders and designers might employ when they craft community dialogues and conversations. Within his evolving framework of sensibility, we would now call these *moral–aesthetic commitments* as they involve value positions regarding what counts as moral, beautiful, and elegant practice. While not exhaustive, we extend this initial framework and offer five moral–aesthetic commitments that inform a dialogical sensibility for communication designers: (1) affirmative, (2) relational, (3) generative, (4) imaginative, and (5) conversational. These moral–aesthetic commitments serve a normative function as they articulate a set of standards that practitioners may use when evaluating their practice and designs.

A *commitment to affirmation* holds that designers should develop dialogical processes that create life-generating moments of excellence through managing difference. One important thread in the dialogue literature, inspired by the Appreciative Inquiry movement, highlights the importance of focusing on what generates life within a community such as core values, best practices, and life-generating moments (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). While a good deal of support has been offered for using affirmative forms of dialogue, what counts as life generating is contested and what might be viewed as life enhancing in one instance may prove to be debilitating in another (Barge & Oliver, 2003). Therefore, we suggest that affirmative forms of practice are associated with introducing and managing difference using generative and productive dialogue (Deetz & Simpson, 2004; Gergen et al., 2004). For designers, this means that they are committed to designing forums and tools that enable "differences that connect"—where some element from the past is given value to bring the past into the present but is connected to a difference that opens up new forms of meaning making (Barge, 2004).

A *commitment to relationality* suggests that designers should develop dialogical processes that engage persons in understanding the systemic quality of issues, their history, the current state of play, and possible futures. A number of participatory processes emphasize the importance of stakeholders working systemically to gain a more detailed and nuanced description of the issues, challenges, and possibilities (Daniels & Walker, 2001; Pearce & Pearce, 2000). As discussed earlier, dialogical processes are relational and systemic as they explore the connectedness among d/Discourses and persons in conversations. The notion of relationality not only involves designing processes and tools that enable dialogue participants to see connections among various d/Discourses, stakeholder groups, issues, dilemmas, and solutions but also takes into account how these elements interact over time. Social entrainment theory suggests that the rhythms and tempos for action may differ among individuals, groups, and organizations and that for different human systems to interact effectively their rhythms and tempos must mesh with one another (Arrow, Poole, Henry, Wheelan, & Moreland, 2004; Bluedorn & Jaussi, 2008; Bluedorn & Standifer, 2004). For example, activists may want to accelerate the pace of dialogues to determine action steps and pursue quick timelines for taking these action steps, whereas governmental agencies or businesses may wish to slow down the process because their organizations may not be well equipped to move quickly due to resource constraints. A designer committed to relationality is interested in developing processes and tools that enable participants to articulate and recognize patterns over time, and these evolving patterns may influence the kinds of actions or policies they pursue.

A *commitment to generativity* maintains that designers should emphasize individual and institutional capacity building for developing new forms of talk, ideas, perspectives,

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issue frames, policies, and solutions. Dialogical processes are presumed to unleash the creative potential of people to create new ideas, perspectives, problem formulations, policies, and solutions. They contribute to the mutual learning that participants engage in as they further their understanding of the situation. Reed (2008) observes that people-centered participation focuses on capacity building, which enables individuals and groups to develop their ability to address issues by having different forms of conversation. Designers working from a commitment to generativity need to pay close attention to how the events and processes they design model the kinds of conversations that they wish the participants will learn to have in the future and the kinds of preparatory work in the form of training and other developmental activities that will enhance the competence of individuals and groups to participate in the conversation.

A *commitment to imagination* emphasizes the importance of capturing the imagination of participants by crafting events that inspire people's creative capacity. Reed (2008) points out that citizens often suffer from consultation fatigue as they are continually bombarded with requests for information, which diminishes their willingness to participate and engage in participatory activities. The challenge is how to create processes and tools that fire the imagination of the participants and inspire their creativity, which, in turn, will maintain their level of interest and engagement with a project. Barge's (2003) analysis of the Imagine Chicago project revealed that one strategy for fueling the creativity of adults was to create intergenerational activities that involve the arts. The energy and fresh perspectives that the children brought to the conversations inspired adults to be open to new ideas and different ways of thinking and enhanced their commitment to the process. This suggests that designers need to create processes and tools that are creative, inspiring, and "sticky." Gladwell's (2000) notion of "stickiness" refers to the way in which certain messages literally stick with people over time, are remembered, and are continually referenced. Designers need to think about the way in which they can craft processes and tools that are "sticky," which people find sufficiently engaging to keep returning to.

A *commitment to conversation* emphasizes the importance of designers focusing on the unfolding of conversation over time versus discrete events. In one sense, a commitment to conversation infuses design work as its purpose is to invite and create more productive forms of talk. In a second sense, however, a commitment to conversation involves recognizing that a discrete activity or tool is part of a larger unfolding conversation. Reed (2008) highlights this when he distinguishes between the "tool metaphor" and the "service contract" metaphor of public participation. He argues that most participatory approaches adopt a "tool metaphor" that focuses on the way in which specific tools are used to stimulate public participation and dialogue. This neglects issues of where the tool is placed in the unfolding process in terms of the past (what invited the use of particular tool) and the future (what the use of this tool invites). He suggests that individuals working with participatory practices would be better served by thinking of the process as a "service contract," which suggests a focus on the longer term, and considering what sequence of events is needed to keep a process moving forward.

Designers who work from a conversational commitment need to develop three different kinds of abilities to thinking about how they can create processes and tools that facilitate the unfolding of the dialogue over time. Pearce and Pearce (2000) distinguish among the three levels of facilitation skills: (1) process design, (2) event design, and (3) microfacilitation skills. Process design refers to the overarching arc of dialogical process—how designers put

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together different events or conversational episodes in ways that build on each other and move the process further. Event design refers to a specific meeting, episode, or piece of the overall process. For example, as part of a larger citywide dialogue on cultural richness, a town hall meeting may be designed and planned (Spano, 2001). Microfacilitation skills refer to the skills that facilitators may exhibit when conducting meetings such as reframing, summarizing, and agenda setting. Researchers have developed rich vocabularies and repertoires for event design and microfacilitation skills but have tended to neglect the way in which processes may be designed over time. Process design skills are crucial for individuals to develop as they design dialogue.

In Barge et al.'s (2008) study, the designers created a number of tools and processes that reflected these dialogical commitments. For example, the commitment to relationality was shown in the Circle of Prosperity's use of a multistakeholder dialogue tool called *a prosperity game*. The game was intended to simulate the "real" system in action by having each stakeholder team initially develop its vision and a plan and then subsequently negotiate agreements with other stakeholder teams in order to test out which agreements, proposals, and solutions were possible for addressing the issues and which were not. The commitment to conversation was demonstrated in the five phases of the strategic process carried out over 2 years where each phase was treated as a specific kind of conversation that had a particular purpose that was simultaneously a response to earlier conversations and in anticipation of future conversations. The Circle of Prosperity began with conversations among the TCU presidents to determine the focus and scope of the project, with later conversations being expanded to include other stakeholders. The final phase of the process had TCU presidents meet to finalize their strategic plan. The designers explicitly viewed the strategic planning process as an unfolding set of conversations built on earlier conversations.

Orientation and Design

Managing tensions involves making choices about how to connect the poles of dualities in ways that keep the meaning making within dialogue alive and moving forward. Work by dialectical theorists such as Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and Seo et al. (2003) have articulated five strategies for managing tensions:

1. *Selection*: Selecting one pole of a duality over another
2. *Separation*: Recognizing that both poles of a duality exist but splits them apart such that only one of the poles is emphasized when discussing particular topics or is only relevant at particular moments in time
3. *Integration*: Acknowledging that both poles of a tension exist but combining them in ways that may neutralize them (e.g., split the difference)
4. *Transcendence*: Synthesizing the duality by reframing polar opposites to construct a new reformulated whole
5. *Connection*: Maintaining the unique differences between the poles of the tension and connecting them in a synergistic fashion where they mutually benefit the other

The specific strategy selected will depend on what kind of difference needs to be introduced at a particular moment in the conversation in order to constructively coordinate meaning and action. For example, in the case of intractable conflicts where the oppositional tensions are quite high and strong, introducing the strategy of transcendence might create a new set of understandings that allow the participants to work through the conflict (see Littlejohn & Cole, this volume). To manage the complex tension between experiential and analytical knowledge, multiple strategies may

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need to be used. For example, Deliberative Mapping uses the strategy of separation in the early stages of the process by running concurrent discussions with specialists using MC-Mapper computer software and convening citizens panels, while later phases are based on the strategy of connection by bringing specialists and citizens together in a joint workshop to discuss the issues (Burgess et al., 2007).

Designers need to develop a sense of what dialogical tensions are present within a particular context, how they are connected to each other, and their relative importance, as well as to anticipate how particular tensions may enter and leave the field of play due to the actions of others in the stakeholder network and the process the designer implements. In light of how they punctuate the discursive field of play, designers need to draw on their repertoire of dialogical tools and craft a design that simultaneously reflects the commitments associated with a dialogical sensibility and the particular demands of the situation. The design process is iterative where designers constantly tack back and forth among their moral–aesthetic commitments, their dialogical tool kit, and the particulars of the situation to design a discursive space that addresses the tensions.

How can designers of communication make situated judgments regarding what tensions constitute a situation and the best way to manage them? This is a question that centers on how designers orient themselves to the emerging situation and immerse themselves in it. Drawing on Shotter's (2005, 2008, 2009, 2010) relationally responsive approach to communication, we suggest that the ability of designers to make better-situated judgments involves the development of poised resourcefulness through the practices of presencing and preparation.

From Shotter's perspective, design work is a difficulty of orientation as opposed to problem solving or decision making. Shotter (2009) suggests that problem solving and decision making presume that a clear end in view already exists and that the application of a particular method or process of reasoning can be applied to solve the problem and make a decision. This is similar to Heifetz's (1994) notion of technical work where there are clear ends and specified means that may be undertaken to achieve that end. An orientational difficulty, however, begins with the notion that "it is only *after* we have discovered/created a way of *relating* ourselves to and attending to our surroundings, that the data relevant to our achieving our goal can be brought to light (and then, be applied in *solving* problems)" (Shotter, 2009, p. 7). This requires designers to exercise judgment as

> the process of *resolving* on a line of action cannot be a simple matter of calculation, or of *decision making* as a choice among a set of already clear alternatives; it involves *judgment*, a moving around on the landscape of possibilities while being *spontaneously responsive* to the consequences of each move, and judging which one (or combination of moves) best resolves the initial tension aroused in one's initial confusion. (Shotter, 2010, p. 14)

This shifts the position of designers from being outside the process and separate from it and trying to generate as much information about it in order to master it. They move to an engaged location within the process recognizing that the field of play shapes their sense making and action and that their actions simultaneously influence the sense making and actions of others within the field of play.

It is important to recognize that every situation in which a designer of communication engages in is unique comprising a set of distinctive connections among people, time, space, topic, history, aims, and interpretations.

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Shotter (2010) contends that the primary role of the practitioner is

> that of a judge who must gather together, in both actual and imaginative explorations of each new situation, the distinctive details relevant to each such situation in an effort to resolve on a best way of "going on" within them. In doing this, our initial task involves our actively dwelling in, or amongst, whatever is "out there" in each situation in order, first, to find an attitude, a stance, or a way of relating to, what seems to be "there" around us, and then to discover what we *can* want within it, while finally, trying to organize our engagements with the "things-we-can-now-see-within-it" to get what we want. (p. 19)

The process of dwelling within a situation emphasizes the importance of being in touch with the uniqueness of the situation to develop a sense of what would be useful and is needed for moving the conversation forward at this particular moment. Designers need to make sense of what the context is and what it calls them to do. This process of getting in touch with one's context may be called *presencing*. Scharmer (2009) suggests that presencing involves understanding the dynamic complexity of systems—of how parts and wholes are interconnected and how they intertwine over time. Presencing is often difficult as we typically respond to situations by downloading our habitual ways of thinking to assess situations and respond to them. This is called *reactive learning*, where our habitual ways of thinking govern both the way we make sense of situations and interpret them as well as the actions we take. Reactive learning moves designers to see situations using their preexisting frameworks and biases rather than deeply engaging with the present situation to understand its unique complexity.

Presencing carries with it at least two meanings (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2004). First, presencing refers to being present in the moment, giving one's full attention to the here and now. Being present in the moment not only requires a focus on the here and now but also involves recognizing how this moment came to be as well as what this moment might become. The former refers to a historical consciousness that acknowledges that the past influences the present, while the latter refers to an anticipatory consciousness that recognizes that the present holds different possibilities for the future. Second, presencing refers to deeply listening to the situation and opening oneself up beyond one's own preconceptions and historical ways of knowing and making sense. It involves entertaining new possibilities for making sense of situations and responding to them. Presencing involves biographical reflexivity, an ability to understand that the way you story your experience leads you to make meaning in particular ways and to live out the present and future in different ways (Stroobants, 2005). Your ability to tell different stories about a situation highlights and foregrounds differing connections.

Presencing enhances a designer's level of *poised resourcefulness* and *preparation*. Drawing on the work by Todes (2001), Shotter (2010) suggests that the act of intentionally immersing oneself into the situation

> is aimed at our achieving *poise*, a being "at homeness" in our current surroundings. Indeed, as he sees it, being poised is "being in touch with one's *circumstances*" (Todes 2001: 66), being ready to respond immediately and spontaneously in what ever way is required by the exigencies of our circumstances. "To lose touch is immediately to lose one's poise" (Todes 2001: 66). (p. 10)

When designers are fully present in the emerging situation, they create a clarity regarding the situation for which they are preparing by looking at the uniqueness of the situation and considering a variety of possibilities for acting. This preparation creates a sense of poised resourcefulness, a readiness to respond,

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because dwelling in the situation has allowed us to create a richer, detailed, and nuanced portrait of the emergent possibilities in the situation.

The notions of poised resourcefulness, presencing, and preparation are illustrated by how the external consultants designed the Circle of Prosperity initiative (Barge et al., 2008). They became present in the situation by taking the time to immerse themselves into the culture of TCUs by holding a series of meetings with the presidents as well as making site visits to campus in order to gain a deeper appreciation of the presidents' aspirations as well as the resources and constraints that might influence their ability to achieve their aspirations. They prepared by anticipating a number of possible challenges that might emerge in each phase of the process. For example, as they trained facilitators to conduct each phase, they spent time talking about how cultural expectations might influence the way in which participants could experience the process and developed strategies for managing them. As a result, the poised resourcefulness of the facilitators was enhanced as they were more in touch with the situation that they were about to enter into.

Summary

A dialogical sensibility provides designers a resource for articulating the tensions that comprise a particular field of play as well as a set of normative criteria in the form of moral–aesthetic commitments that may be used when making judgments regarding what tools and processes to employ when designing communication. A dialogical sensibility is premised on the notion that resolving on a line of action involves a descriptive component where designers need to inquire deeply into their relationship with the field of play as well as the relationships of others in the field of play. This allows them to be confident that they know their way around the situation and equips them with a normative component in the form of moral–aesthetic commitments that allows them to judge which tools and processes fit what the context is calling them to do. Table 23.2 highlights the basic concepts associated with dialogical sensibility, moral–aesthetic commitments, and the processes involved to make a judgment and resolve to a line of action with a set of questions that designers might ask themselves in order to assess the way they employ and develop their dialogical sensibility.

Looking and Living Forward

We suggest that designers of dialogue need to encounter the world holistically, fully experiencing the intersecting tensions that constitute a project, and manage their experience through absorbed coping using dialogical sensibility and the associated activities of presencing and preparation to develop poised resourcefulness. It is through a "re-search" of that experience, looking backward, that scholars and practitioners can begin to spotlight certain strategies and tools that manage the tensions associated with dialogue and build our vocabulary of concepts and tools for designing dialogue. As we look forward to developing these ideas, two areas for further inquiry emerge.

First, further study should be conducted into the experiences of designers using the notions of design as communication and dialogical sensibility. The dialectics associated with dialogue were derived mainly from the academic literature on public participation and public dialogue as opposed to the stories and accounts provided by the designers of publication participation and dialogue projects. Similar to work by Forester (1999, 2009), it is important to generate designers' oral histories and stories focusing on how they experience the tensions associated with their craft and how they manage them. Additional work into the kinds of moral–aesthetic commitments

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Table 23.2 Dialogical Sensibility and Design Questions

Concept	*Questions to Sharpen One's Understanding*
Moral–aesthetic commitments	
Affirmation	How can we develop dialogical processes that create life-generating moments of excellence? How can we keep processes of affirmation in a constructive tension in "differences that connect"?
Relationality	How can we engage persons in understanding the systemic quality of issues, their history, the current state of play, and possible futures? Which processes and techniques enable us to recognize patterns over time and articulate how these evolving patterns may influence the kinds of actions or policies we pursue?
Generativity	How can we leverage and create individual and institutional capacity building of the participants' mutual learning about the situation? How do the designed events and processes model the kinds of conversations that we wish the participants will learn? What kinds of preparatory work in the form of training and other developmental activities will enhance the competence of individuals and groups to participate in the conversation?
Imagination	How can we capture the imagination of participants by crafting events that inspire people's creative capacity? Which design processes and techniques are "sticky"—sufficiently engaging to keep people returning to the conversation?
Conversation	How is a discrete activity or tool part of a larger unfolding conversation? What is the long-term vision and what sequence of events is needed to keep a process moving forward?
Resolving to a line of action	
Presencing	How can we dwell within the contextual surroundings and recognize the mutual influence between their actions and the field of play? Based on the uniqueness of the situation, what is useful and needed for moving the conversation forward at this particular moment? How do my own preconceptions and historical ways of knowing limit new possibilities for making sense of situations and responding to them?
Preparedness	How can we tell our stories in different ways that foreground different types of connections? How can we maintain diversity in the kinds of stories we tell to make sense of the situation? How can we connect the different stories together into a coherent whole? How can we simultaneously connect the common themes for different stories and yet retain their own unique insight?
Poised for action	How can we keep our sense of being at home? How can we avoid being wed to a specific way of making sense of the situation? How can we continue to generate new stories and ways of making sense of the situation as it evolves? How can we manage the tension between planning our response and being spontaneous? How can we keep our curiosity alive regarding the situation?

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they embrace and the types of practical reasoning they engage in when undertaking these projects would provide insight into the way in which their explicit and tacit knowledge is used to design dialogue.

Second, additional work regarding the contribution of practical theory to public participation and dialogue should be conducted. Design as communication represents a form of communication theory called *practical theory*. Practical theory encompasses a broad range of approaches that are intended to theorize communicative practice (Barge & Craig, 2009). Approaches to practical theory such as communication as design, as well as Craig's (Craig & Tracy, 1995) grounded practical theory, emphasize the importance of describing communicative practices and their associated challenges and dilemmas as well as how persons manage or should manage them. For example, grounded practical theory reconstructs a practice using three levels: (1) problem level—the dilemmas or challenges experienced by those participating in a practice, (2) technical level—the strategies or moves that manage the problems, and (3) philosophical level—the normative principles that link problems with techniques. Practical theory not only provides a strong base for integrating descriptive and normative approaches, it also begins to articulate various design logics that practitioners may use when making choices among alternative designs. Practical theory provides a nice complement to postpositivist and critical theory and research as it offers one way to articulate the role of judgment in framing and designing dialogue. Postpositivist theory is very good at exploring the causes and consequences of public dialogue, and critical approaches provide rich descriptions of the problems associated with the way power is used in dialogue and strategies for managing them; but both approaches have not paid sufficient attention to the way in which judgment is connected to the design of dialogue.

Dialogue is an important form of communication that facilitates the construction of healthy communities and manages conflict. Our chapter points to the possibility of (re)designing interactivity within dialogue using the ideas associated with a design approach and dialogical sensibility. When we are able to design interactive spaces where different perspectives can be shared and talked about in ways that enable mutual learning, enhance our capacity for jointly managing important challenges, and transcend individual interest, then we have the opportunity to create more democratic and participatory communities.

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SECTION 4

INTERCULTURAL/ INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

Introduction to Intercultural/ International Conflict

Stella Ting-Toomey and John G. Oetzel

The study of intercultural/international conflict is a daunting task. Complex explanatory factors exist on multiple levels of intricacy. On the macrolevel, sociopolitical ideologies, globalization, and shifting cultural values can influence and shape conflict beliefs and standards and also scripts and frames enacted through various filtered communication channels. On the microlevel, individuals have developed different routines or capacities in managing a particular conflict situation with different astuteness or competence levels.

Cultural members from polarized identity communities often have contrasting images of how conflict should be properly handled and how conflict goals should be effectively attained. We define *intercultural conflict* in this essay as the implicit or explicit emotional struggle between persons of different cultural communities over perceived or actual incompatibility of cultural ideologies and values, situational norms, goals, face orientations, scarce resources, styles/processes, and/or outcomes in a face-to-face (or mediated) context within a sociohistorical embedded system. While *intercultural* conflict often refers to microlevel to mesolevel influence of how an intercultural conflict episode actually plays out in an ongoing scene and within an interdependent relationship web or location container (e.g., see Chapters 25 and 30), *international* conflict often implies group membership conflicts on the exo- or macrolevel—especially with a strong influence of international and historical political overtone and flavor (e.g., see Chapters 26 and 28) between nation-states. Three other chapters (Chapters 24, 27, and 29) also address the

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diverse spectrums of macrolevel globalization influence to intergroup membership identity relating issues to microlevel conflict styles and tactics.

In Chapter 24, Kim views the conceptualization of collective in-group identity as a motivational base of symbolic or real power in intergroup conflict situations. This identity-based power also propels individuals into an "us-against-them" intergroup membership posture and, in turn, creates stress and conflict in the intercultural interaction process. Her chapter covers a wide spectrum of conflicts that involve sojourners and immigrants in their boundary-crossing experience. During this developmental adaptation experience, individuals' identities evolve, adapt, and transform. Against this backdrop, her chapter provides answers to the following two questions: (1) How does an individual's identity influence intercultural conflict and cooperation? and (2) How do intercultural conflict experiences influence an individual's identity over time? Her chapter covers an extensive terrain grounded in the social science disciplines, particularly drawing from the social/intergroup psychology and intercultural communication studies. She also maps out the various approaches to the study of identity and systematically links some of the major contemporary intercultural identity-based theories with the theme of intercultural/intergroup conflict.

In Chapter 25, Orbe, Everett, and Putman focus their attention on interracial and interethnic conflict within the United States. They also make a clear distinction between interracial conflict (conflict between members of different races, e.g., African American/Asian American) and interethnic conflict (conflict between members of different ethnic groups, e.g., Cuban Americans/Puerto Rican Americans). Their objective in the chapter is threefold: (1) to summarize existing research that addresses issues of race, ethnicity, and conflict; (2) to identify the limitations and gaps in existing lines of comparative ethnic-based conflict studies; and (3) to review and apply a co-cultural theoretical framework in understanding the various racial or ethnic-based conflict issues and also to outline important avenues for future studies and practical applications of interracial/interethnic conflict research.

In Chapter 26, Dorjee discusses His Holiness the Dalai Lama's nonviolence and Buddhism's Middle Way Approach to further research on intergroup and intercultural conflicts and resolution. Nonviolence (*Ahimsa*) is a cardinal guiding principle in Buddhism. Simply put, nonviolence in Buddhism means not to harm anyone through physical, verbal, and mental actions. The Dalai Lama argues that this century should be the century of dialogue and cooperation. Furthermore, according to the Nalanda tradition of Buddhism, individuals who aspire for liberation (*Nirvana*) and full enlightenment (*Mahabodhi*) must realize the emptiness (*Shunyata*) in all things physical/metaphysical and social. Its basic principles are identifying and refuting the extreme views in various conflict situations, establishing and affirming the Middle Way, and cultivating deep insights into every communicative situation through the threefold practice of listening, contemplation, and meditation. The Middle Way Dialogue Approach contends that intergroup conflict can be resolved through productive dialogue especially if conflict parties show genuine mutual concerns for each other and the core conflict issues. The chapter is organized along the following lines: (1) discusses the nonviolence approach, drawing largely from the Buddhist literature; (2) introduces and reviews the Middle Way Approach and its philosophical underpinning; (3) extends and connects an intergroup perspective with various intergroup conflict communication strategies; (4) applies the intergroup perspective to the Sino-Tibetan conflict issues, which

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have been sorely missing in previous conflict studies; and (6) concludes with a summary of the core nonviolence ideas and future theoretical directions.

In Chapter 27, Stohl, McCann, and Bakar's "Conflict in the Global Workplace" addresses the changing face of the global workforce and accelerated increases in participation by traditional minorities (e.g., women, Hispanic workers in the United States, Turkish workers in Scandinavia and Germany, South Asian workers in the gulf-states region). While globalization has brought amazing opportunities to work smarter and more creatively with more people across time and space, it also brings challenges and greater possibilities for conflict. Studying conflict from a global communicative perspective enables the authors to address workplace conflict from multiple levels of the sociocultural system analysis. The chapter reviews and interconnects ideas along the following five central arguments in the global workplace nexus: (1) definitions of globalization, culture, and cultural variability and how these factors shape workplace conflict; (2) conflict dynamics occur at the interface of macrofeatures of the environment and the microcontext of the work group; (3) paradoxes of globalization create powerful tensions across the organizations and groups; (4) transnational teams are a primary site of workplace conflict; and (5) global alliances mirror the conflict dynamics found in teams. The authors argue that a global communication approach addresses how the dynamics of globalization via convergence are entrenched in the microprocesses of divergence and cultural variability, and also resulting in differentiating perceptions concerning justice and fairness issues at multiple standpoint levels.

In Chapter 28, Broome offers the practice of intergroup dialogue as one of the key human activities for dealing meaningfully with differences and minimizing separateness. Dialogue is characterized by nonpolarized discourse in which individuals and groups trapped in conflict have an opportunity for enhanced understanding and healthier relationships. It refers to a process of creating meaning through talking and reasoning together. It represents a form of discourse that emphasizes listening and inquiry, with the aims of fostering mutual respect and understanding. The chapter focuses on ways in which dialogue can promote a culture of peace in situations of protracted conflict. Broome offers an overview of dialogue as a communication process, with a look at some of the dialogic approaches that have emerged in response to the challenge of building peace in protracted intergroup conflict situations. Subsequently, the potential contributions of dialogue toward building a culture of peace are described. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the many challenges using dialogic processes in protracted and intractable conflicts. Protracted conflicts are often embedded in a context of long-standing differences and inequalities stemming from colonialism, ethnocentrism, and human rights abuses. Culture-sensitive dialogue offers the possibility for changing some of the destructive communication patterns that lead to intergroup violence and, simultaneously, developing new structures and common goal norms for more effective responses to conflict.

In Chapter 29, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel review a classic intercultural conflict mode—the culture-based situational conflict model (CBSCM; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001) and some related research findings in the intercultural conflict arena. They then offer a critique of the gaps in the CBSCM and advocate for the importance of developing a multilevel model to capture the intricate complexity and nuances of studying a complex conflict case. The purpose of the chapter is twofold: (1) to offer a synoptic review and critique of the original conflict model, CBSCM, and (2) to propose an update model, the culture-based social ecological conflict model (CBSECM)

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in order to capture the dynamic change in the area of intercultural conflict communication theory and practice. They further emphasize the importance of studying any contemporary intercultural conflict cases from a multilevel, multi-contextual analytical viewpoint. A multilevel theorizing process may illustrate that a particular intercultural conflict case history contains both consistencies and inconsistencies at multiple levels of analysis. Additionally, a multilevel perspective helps illuminate the multitude of factors that shape macrosystem-level, institutional membership–level, immediate community–level, family socialization–level, and also individual- and interpersonal-level conflicts within and across the nested units of emphasis.

In Chapter 30, Fisher-Yoshida explores three primary concepts in culture-based conflict communication situations: self, other, and relationship. The author believes that by elevating the relationship frame as the highest order of context in intercultural conflict communication, this relational focus could lead to renaming the person or group we call "opponent," to "partner." Furthermore, she proposes that by framing cultural difference dimensions as paradoxes to manage, creative insights can be generated. The five paradoxes identified in the chapter are (1) paradox of knowing (knowing self and honoring others), (2) paradox of focus (I-centric and we-centric), (3) paradox of communication (communicating across difference—direct and indirect), (4) paradox of action (doing and reflecting), and (5) paradox of response (short term and long term). By engaging in a self-reflexive and other-reflective approach concerning the five paradoxes as a starting point, conflict teams or individuals can generate positive energy and momentum in moving toward a transformational, shared-reality trajectory. Last, the author incorporates Barnett Pearce's (2005) Coordinated Management of Meaning framework and its accompanying three principles—(1) coordination, (2) coherence, and (3) mystery—to help transform conflict parties' habitual lens and also their visions of their conflict relationship.

In sum, from Chapter 24, on the theme of identity, to Chapter 30, on the importance of self-reflexivity and other-reflectivity, intercultural conflict theory and practice is at a vibrant stage of maturation and development. Motifs such as multilayered complexity, historical and global changes, identity shifting and differentiation, intergroup alliances and competitions, ethnopolitical conflicts, the intentional practice of nonviolence and dialogue, the importance of bringing spiritual awareness to our conflict practice, and the journey of personal and intercultural relationship transformation represent some of the chapters' diverse yet complementary approaches.

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24

The Identity Factor in Intercultural Conflict

Young Yun Kim

"Birds of a feather flock together." This folk wisdom speaks of one of the basic human instincts—to identify and associate with an "in-group," be it a tribe, a race, a nation, or a culture. Human beings are social animals who desire to live in the company of others with a sense of shared identity. In this sense, the question of who we are as individuals is inextricably linked to people with whom we share a common identity. Particularly in the context of intercultural communication, it is this collective dimension of identity that often surfaces as the primary entity influencing how the interactants see themselves and each other. Even as the forces of globalization diminish traditional physical and social group boundaries, the desire for a sense of belonging continues to drive the psychological tendency to define and differentiate oneself from others. Within and across societies, the seemingly innocent banner of collective in-group identity is used as a source of power, symbolic or real, galvanizing individuals into an "us-against-them" posture and creating stress, strain, and conflict in intercultural relationships. Such conflict-inducing nature of identity along the lines of group categories are amply documented in social science literature, not to mention the daily news headlines from around the world highlighting the seemingly irrepressible hostilities perpetuating in the name of identity.

Often sidelined by the prevailing conflicts associated with group-based collective identities, however, is the fact that, at the individual level, identity vis-à-vis a social group category is also a dynamic and pliable entity that can be negotiated, accommodated, and changed over time through extensive and cumulative intercultural experiences. Many urban centers present culturally diverse social contexts in which the natives, some of whom are themselves culturally and ethnically mixed, routinely come into face-to-face encounters with nonnatives. Such intercultural contacts and communication experiences often lead to interpersonal relationships in which the very notion of in-group is blurred and changed. Furthermore, individuals of differing ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as well as immigrants and temporary sojourners, have amply demonstrated

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that individuals do cross group boundaries and manage their experiences of intercultural conflict, and in the process, their identities evolve in the direction of greater complexity beyond the lines of conventional group categories. Recognizing such conflictive, constructive, and transformative potentials of identity in intercultural communication, the author examines a broad range of literature across social science disciplines to address two basic questions guiding the present examination: (1) How does an individual's identity influence intercultural conflict and cooperation? and (2) How do intercultural conflict experiences influence an individual's identity over time?

In seeking to address these two questions by surveying pertinent literature, the focus of attention is placed on the microlevel phenomenon of direct contact and communication activities involving individuals of dissimilar cultural backgrounds. Intercultural conflict is defined broadly as a state of stress or strain in intercultural relationship—a state that entails a degree of "either an explicit or implicit interpersonal struggle process" (Ting-Toomey, 2005a, p. 72). A similarly inclusive definition is applied to the term *culture* to refer not only to the shared life patterns associated with a society or nation but also to those patterns associated with distinct ethnic (including racial or language-based) groups within a society. Accordingly, any interpersonal encounter is considered "intercultural" whenever the interactants differ, or perceive themselves to be different from each other, in cultural or subcultural backgrounds. The term *intercultural conflict* is likewise employed to represent related terms such as *interethnic, interracial*, and *intergroup* conflict.

The Concept of Identity: A Historical Perspective

Systematic inquiry in identity can be traced back to psychologist Erikson's (1950, 1959/1980, 1968) groundbreaking work. Erikson conceived identity as a central feature of "personhood," namely, a person's unified "essence," and a special experience of it, from which superficial characteristics of the person are differentiated. In this conception of identity, both personal and social dimensions are merged into a unitary whole. According to Erikson, identity emerges during a person's formative years and continues to evolve throughout one's life. This continuous process of identity development is regarded as being shaped by the individual's unique personal experiences as well as the experiences of significant social group(s) with whom the individual interacts. As such, when someone achieves an identity, the way the person interacts with the social world—his or her ability to trust, to work, to play, and to develop relationships—is recognized externally by others in a way that is more or less consistent with the person's internal constitution and the person's self-conception of it.

Since Erikson's formulation of identity as a unitary psychosocial concept, there has been a general shift in ideology toward cultural and ethnic pluralism, particularly in the United States and Western European societies. This ideological shift is marked by a variety of collective movements of ethnic minorities and other traditionally nondominant cultures and social groups protesting that members have been denied their own voice in establishing the conditions of their lives and in determining their own identities as peoples. The "new ethnicity" movement during the civil rights era has been visible within the ranks of academia as well, elevating the notion of identity as one of the most salient concepts across social science disciplines and beyond.

Approaches to Identity Inquiry: From Objectivism to Activism

An expansive and diverse social science literature has been generated by the decades

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of inquiry in identity-related issues in intercultural contexts. The literature reveals that the rise of pluralism and the increased salience of identity as an academic concept tend to correspond with a methodological shift among intercultural researchers away from the traditional "disciplinary" research built on the principle of objectivity (or value neutrality) to the ideology-based research of social activism (cf. Hammersley, 1995; Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). The activist stance is most clearly reflected in what is broadly known as the "critical" approach, one that places the primary emphasis on social change as the primary aim of academic investigation. A growing number of critical intercultural researchers, including those who are associated with cultural studies, postcolonialism, muted group and standpoint theory, and critical pragmatism, and the like, have mounted vigorous arguments to gear research directly to emancipatory political goals of countering White racism at home and Western/American cultural imperialism abroad (e.g., Collier, 2005; Gonzalez & Tanno, 1997; Nakayama & Martin, 1998; Orbe & Spellers, 2005; Tsuda, 1986; Young, 1996).

By and large, critical intercultural researchers are united in their opposition to the social scientific theory and research as serving to reproduce the status quo of the dominant ideological construct (Hall, 1989). They characterize the social science research as a universal science that serves as "the beholders of cultural individualism" of European societies whose work "has led to a theory of politics about individual power" neglecting the "battles of cultural politics" (Young, 1996, p. 148). Young (1996) further argues that it is only when one understands "the process through which cultural exclusion and manipulation of identity of culturally different people is carried out in everyday communication," can one have a clear basis for "effective politics aimed at changing empirically observable mechanisms for the creation of ideology or the assertion of the reality of one culture over another" (p. 29).

Identity Conceptions: From the Personal to the Collective

The rise of activism in social research in general, and in intercultural research in particular, is reflected in the recent trend in academic conceptions of identity. Increasingly, researchers have moved away from the primacy of the individual personhood and distinctiveness of the individual accorded in the tradition of Erikson (1950, 1959/1980, 1968). Researchers, instead, have emphasized the individual's association with a cultural or social group, often using the term *identity* interchangeably with group-based terms such as *cultural identity, ethnic identity, ethnolinguistic identity*, and *racial identity*. In the words of Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell (1987), there has been "a shift towards the perception of self as an interchangeable exemplar of some social category and away from the perception of self as a unique person" (p. 50).

This shift in emphasis toward the collective dimension of identity appears to have resulted in a corresponding decrease in the attention given to the personal and unitary nature of identity originally articulated by Erikson (1950, 1959/1980, 1968). Cultural categories have become the prevailing focus in many contemporary conceptions of identity. In cultural anthropology, identity of a cultural group is often viewed as a kind of temporal continuity or common tradition linking its members to a common future reflected in the communal life patterns associated with language, behavior, norms, beliefs, myths, and values, as well as the forms and practices of social institutions (e.g., Nash, 1989). In sociological research, identity has been generally treated as an ascription-based social category of an entire

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class of people associated with a set of extrinsic and intrinsic qualities or conditions associated with national origin, language, religion, race, and culture. Such is the way, for instance, Glazer and Moynihan (1975) investigate the phenomenon of "ethnic stratification" in the United States. For the social psychologist De Vos (1990), the identities of members of an ethnic group are regarded as being rooted in "the emotionally profound self-awareness of parentage and a concomitant mythology of discrete origin," providing "a sense of common origin, as well as common beliefs and values, or common values" and serving as the basis of "self-defining in-groups." Giordano (1974) likewise sees ethnic identity as a psychological foundation offering the individual a "ground on which to stand" that "no one can take away" (p. 16), while Roosens (1989) characterizes it as "the driving force of individual and collective ethnic self-affirmation" (p. 15).

Despite the increased emphasis on the collective dimension of identity, however, the traditional identity conception as an individuated and unitary psychological system continues to influence psychological studies of ego identity (Augusto & Kimberly, 1995; Bentz, 1989; Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; Ford & Lerner, 1992; Kroger, 1993, 2007; Syed, 2012) and of an individual's self–other orientation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c). The unitary nature of identity is similarly articulated by Hecht and his associates (Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005) in their communication theory of identity, in which identity is described as a joining point between the individual and the society, and communication is the link that allows this intersection to occur. In addition, many social psychological studies of intergroup relations merge the personal and social dimensions of identity by focusing on the variations among individuals in the degree of subjective identification toward their cultural or ethnic origins (cf. Alba, 1990, p. 25).

Theoretical Accounts Linking Identity and Intercultural Conflict

The recent trend toward social activism in academic inquiry and the corresponding emphasis on the collective dimension of identity serve as the backdrop against which this author organizes various theories pertaining to intercultural conflict within the microlevel context of intercultural communication into six groups. These six groups of theories are arranged and discussed below, from the ones emphasizing the collective dimension of an individual's identity to the ones emphasizing its more flexible, individuated, and adaptable nature.

Identity as Collectivity, Power Inequality, and Intercultural Conflict

An unambiguous link between identity and intercultural conflict is suggested in the works of researchers associated with the Critical School. Critical intercultural researchers broadly share a conception of identity that is largely based on a stable, discreet, and nonnegotiable social category (including culture) to which an individual is ascribed. Relatively little consideration is given to the possibilities that individuals vary in the extent to which their personal identities are bound up with their cultural group, or that a given individual may embrace one or more cultural identities beyond the one to which he or she is ascribed.

Such a categorical view of identity underlies the basic thesis commonly shared by critical scholars that intercultural conflict is a natural outcome of intergroup power inequality and even a necessary means for advancing the aim of challenging the relational status quo between groups. This claim of intercultural conflict as being rooted in intergroup power inequality is evident, for instance, in Tsuda's (1986) criticism of the Western ideological domination as the genesis of "distorted intercultural communication" around the world.

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Tsuda argues, in particular, that the dominance of English language imposes an overt restriction on non-Western peoples' freedom of expression and damages their collective identity. Similarly, Hedge (1998), based on interviews with 10 Asian Indian women in the United States, characterizes the adaptation experiences of these women almost exclusively in light of their identity struggle and "displacement." These experiences are attributed by Hedge to the "contradictions" between their internal identity and external "world in which hegemonic structures systematically marginalize certain types of difference" (p. 36). Opposition to assimilation of "members of marginalized communities" is also suggested by Flores (2001). From a Chicana feminist perspective, Flores appears to dismiss assimilation as a myth and instead argues that members of marginalized communities, including "those of us in academia," produce "oppositional readings of dominant or mainstream texts" as a "strategy of resistance" (p. 27). Likewise, Gonzalez, Houston, and Chen (1994), in introducing an anthology of essays presented largely from a critical perspective, state their goal of presenting the perspective of each author's own cultural experience "instead of writing to accommodate the voice that is culturally desirable by the mainstream Anglo standards" (p. xiv).

From this critical perspective, at least two theories take into account variations among individual communicators in their responses to conflictual intercultural encounters. The cocultural theory (Orbe, 1998; Orbe & Spellers, 2005), informed by the muted group theory and the standpoint theory, explains how individual members of cocultural (or marginalized) groups (e.g., non-Whites and women) "negotiate attempts by others to render their voices muted within dominant societal structures" (Orbe, 1998, p. 4). Orbe argues that cocultural group members generally have one of three goals (or preferred outcomes) for their interactions with dominant group members: (1) assimilation (e.g., becoming part of the mainstream culture and acquire its identity); (2) accommodation (e.g., accepting dominant group members while trying to get the dominant group members to accept the cocultural group members); and (3) separation (e.g., rejecting the possibility of common bonds with the dominant group members). Combining these interactional goals with individual cocultural group members' communication approaches (aggressive, assertive, or nonassertive), Orbe presents a typology of nine communication strategies (e.g., nonassertive separation, assertive accommodation, and aggressive assimilation) that cocultural group members employ in intercultural encounters with members of a more dominant group.

Likewise, individual variations in responses to conflictual intercultural communication are explained in Collier's (2005) cultural identifications theory, which is an updated version of the original cultural identity theory (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Motivated by a recognition of the structural constraints against members of historically marginalized groups and a desire to seek "social justice" through "progressive social change" (Collier, 2005, p. 236), cultural identifications theory offers an interpretive framework for examining the dynamics of "cultural identification systems" as "lived, situated experiences" (p. 242). Employing a broad definition of cultural identity to include national, racial, ethnic, class-related, sex- and gender-based, political, and religious identities, the theory posits that cultural identities are "formed through processes of avowal (self views) and ascription (views communicated by others)" (p. 240) and that individuals have a range of cultural identities that vary in salience across situations and over time. To understand the dynamics of identity negotiation between intercultural communicators, Collier emphasizes the importance of "[paying] attention to structures, institutions, representations, and

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ideologies that constrain agency, and are the root of injustice, patriarchy, and oppression" (p. 242).

In both of these two critical theories, the root cause of intercultural conflict is the institutional or structural intergroup inequality marking the dialectic tension that exists in specific intercultural encounters. Given such underlying tension, the nine interaction strategies identified in the cocultural theory suggest a variety of ways individual members of a nondominant group respond to, and navigate, their intercultural encounters. Similarly, the cultural identifications theory provides an interpretive framework for understanding different ways in which individual communicators, particularly members of a nondominant group, negotiate their collective identities.

Identity as Cultural Communication System and a Source of Intercultural Conflict

Compared with the primary emphasis placed on categorical, collective dimension of identity in the writings of critical researchers, a more individuated, although largely collective, identity conception underlies studies of "cultural communication." Aimed at a deep understanding of communication symbols and practices unique to specific cultural communities, the main perspective taken in these studies emphasizes the inseparable and communal nature of the relationship between culture and the identity of individual members within a cultural group. In laying the groundwork for the ethnographic study of cultural communication systems, Philipsen (1981) observes that "the function of communication in cultural communication is to maintain a healthy balance between the forces of individualism and community, to provide a sense of *shared identity* [italics added] which, nonetheless, preserves individual dignity, freedom, and creativity" (p. 5).

Grounded in the traditional representational and value-neutral social scientific tradition, researchers of cultural communication have employed an emic (or "insider") perspective exemplified in the speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1992, 1997; Philipsen, Coutu, & Covarrubias, 2005). Applying Geertz's (1973) framework of the interpretation of culture, Philipsen and his associates have developed an interpretive theory of cultural communication to provide a framework for identifying and illuminating the essential features of communication unique to a given culture. In a recent rendition of this theory (Philipsen et al., 2005), speech codes are defined as "constructs that observer-analysts formulate explicitly in order to interpret and explain communicative conduct in a particular speech community" (p. 57). The six general propositions address the principles of the inseparable connectedness of culture and speech codes in a given cultural community. Proposition 6 stipulates, for example: "The artful use of a shared speech code is a sufficient condition for predicting, explaining, and controlling the form of discourse about the intelligibility, prudence, and morality of communicative conduct" (p. 63).

Directly or indirectly, the speech codes theory has served as a significant intellectual foundation for an extensive body of original field studies that commonly employ qualitative research methods such as ethnographic field observations, conversational analysis, discourse analysis, and textual/rhetorical analysis. The theory and associated studies have contributed to deepening understanding of the shared patterns of communication practices unique to a given cultural community. Among the notable works are an examination of the culturally shared meaning of the word *communication* in some American speech (Katriel & Philipsen, 1990), recognizable Indian ways of speaking in Native American communities (Pratt, 1998; Wieder & Pratt, 1990), Russian "cultural pragmatics" in Russian–American

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encounters (Carbaugh, 1993), Finnish silence and third-party introduction (Carbaugh, 2005), the second-person pronoun *Sie* among Germans (Winchatz, 2001), and interpersonal communication and relationship patterns in Columbia (Fitch, 1998), to name a few.

Studies such as these offer insights into the communally shared identities of individuals affiliated with specific cultural groups by describing their unique communication practices. Although the issue of intercultural conflict is not addressed directly or explicitly, the communal identity as conceived in the cultural communication approach suggests potential intercultural conflicts arising from the interface of individuals of dissimilar cultural backgrounds who are unaware of, and unaccustomed to, each other's cultural communication rules and practices. The classic study by Gumperz (1978) provides an illustration of how intercultural conflicts arise from differences in cultural communication systems. Employing conversational analysis of naturally occurring episodes, Gumperz reveals in this study a heated exchange between a young female staff member in an industrial language-teaching unit and a middle-aged male Indian worker. The episode is filled with paralinguistic and prosodic differences in the two individuals' manners of speaking, along with frequent interruptions, poor listening, and the experiences of frustration and anger. Gumperz follows the conversational analysis of this episode with in-depth questioning of the participants in the episodes to recall what was intended at a particular point and pinpoint the perceptions of style and content that led to their interpretations. By identifying specific cultural verbal strategies employed by each interactant, Gumperz's analysis illuminates how intercultural conflicts between culturally dissimilar individuals can arise from inaccurate interpretation processes attributable to dissimilar cultural communication rules and pragmatic strategies and their lack of awareness of this fact.

Culture-Based and Individually Flexible Identity as a Source of Intercultural Conflict

The above-described conception of identity as a communally shared cultural communication system further underlies some of the etic (or objective-outsider) approaches to cross-cultural comparisons of communication patterns. In particular, Ting-Toomey's (1988, 2005a) face negotiation theory is built on the premise of the communal nature of an individual's identity. Extending the concept of facework in Goffman's (1955, 1959, 1967) seminal ethnographic works, the face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988) was initially developed to help understand group-level differences in conflict styles between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Through extensive research efforts in a number of different countries (e.g., Oetzel et al., 2001; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998), the theoretical domain has since been broadened to incorporate individual-level identity orientations (in terms of independent and interdependent self-construal types) and a situational factor (in terms of in-group and out-group relational contexts) in explaining face concerns, facework, and conflict styles, among others (Ting-Toomey, 2005a).

At the cultural group level, the theory presents 12 propositions (e.g., "Members of individualistic cultures tend to express a greater degree of self-face maintenance concerns than members of collectivistic cultures"; "Members of collectivistic cultures tend to express a greater degree of other face concerns than members of individualistic cultures"). At the individual level, the theory offers 10 propositions linking independent and interdependent self-construal to individual communicators' patterns of face concern and conflict style (e.g., "Independent self is associated positively with self-face concern"; "Interdependent self

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is associated positively with other-face/mutual-face concern"). Two additional propositions describe facework variations according to in-group and out-group conflict contexts (e.g., "Individualists or independent-self personalities tend to express a greater degree of self-face maintenance concerns and less other-face maintenance concerns in dealing with both in-group and out-group conflict situations").

Underlying the face negotiation theory is a culture-based communal conception of identity that is situationally and individually enacted, and, accordingly, a potential source of conflict when individuals of differing cultural backgrounds interact. Ting-Toomey (2005b) makes this conflict-prone nature of identity the main focus of her identity negotiation theory. Applying the core concept in the face negotiation theory, facework, to the context of intercultural interaction, Ting-Toomey (2005b) in the identity negotiation theory characterizes communicating with individuals of dissimilar cultural identities as potentially face-threatening. Based on this premise, Ting-Toomey explains that an individual's ability to negotiate his or her culture-based identity is a key factor for effective intercultural communication, and she defines such ability in terms of communicative resourcefulness (Ting-Toomey, 1993) and facework competence (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998).

Ting-Toomey's conception of identity as culture-based as well as individually enacted and situationally negotiable is shared by Imahori and Cupach (2005) in their identity management theory. In both the theories, intercultural conflict is addressed in terms of the relational tension that arises from intercultural communication experiences that are face threatening to individual participants' culture-based identities. Both theories further argue that an individual's ability to negotiate or manage such identity-threatening situations is essential to effective intercultural communication and relationship development. Based on these premises, Imahori and Cupach explain in their identity management theory that individuals' identities, derived mainly from their cultural interpretive framework, are revealed through the presentation of face in intercultural interactions.

Specifically, Imahori and Cupach (2005) explain that, once culturally dissimilar individuals are engaged in a communicative relationship, they are likely to experience dialectic tension, or psychological and relational conflict, since they find themselves having to make a "choice between supporting one's own face and the other's face" (p. 200). Imahori and Cupach further explain that such tension can be competently managed as the relationship between intercultural communicators undergo the three-phased cycles of relationship development: (1) the "trial-and-error" phase of finding identities on which they share some similarities, (2) the "enmeshment" phase in which their identities come together in "a mutually acceptable and convergent relationship identity," and (3) the subsequent "renegotiation" phase involving their continuing search of an optimal balance between the conflicting needs for maintaining one's culture-based identity and, at the same time, supporting the partner's culture-based identity.

Identity as Subjective In-Group Identification and a Source of Intercultural Conflict

In varying degrees, in the approaches and theories described thus far, conflict is explicitly or implicitly suggested as a natural and likely feature of intercultural interactions, given the presumed conceptions of identity as categorically ascribed or communally shaped and manifested in individual communicators' behaviors. Shifting the focus away from the group-based collective identity conceptions, however, a large body of literature exists, mainly in social psychology, to offer

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a further individuated conception of identity that is primarily subjective in nature in the form of subjective and voluntary identification with a particular social group (Abrams, O'Connor, & Giles, 2003).

Representative of such an individual-based psychological approach are three interrelated theories: social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974, 1978, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987), and integrative theory of intergroup conflict (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Together, these theories lay the intellectual foundation for an extensive body of experimental and survey-based studies. Group identification arises, according to these theories, from basic cognitive activities of social categorization. Although almost all sources of variation among human beings can be considered as continuous dimensions, these theories focus on an innate tendency to simplify cognitive representations of the social world by dividing persons into discrete social categories, that is, to perceive out-group members as "undifferentiated items in a unified social category" and not as individuals (Turner, 1982, p. 28).

Based on the ubiquitous psychological tendency of human beings to simplify cognitive representations of the social world by dividing persons into discrete group categories, these theories focus on social identity (including cultural identity) and define it as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). The social identity theory, in particular, explains that individuals identify with an in-group such that a positive self-identity is maintained and that this motivation is enacted in interrelated forms of conflict such as in-group bias and out-group discrimination.

Swann, Gomez, Seyle, Morales, and Huici (2009) further explain that in extreme cases of in-group identification, people can become "fused" with a group, their personal and social identities become functionally equivalent, and that activating either personal and social identities of fused persons increase their willingness to endorse extreme behaviors on behalf of the group when their personal or social identities had been activated. This theoretical claim linking strong in-group identification and intergroup conflict has been supported in empirical studies, including the ones that demonstrate in-group–out-group differentiation, leading to a wide range of conflicts from the tendency to accentuate differences or de-accentuate similarities (Oddou & Mendenhall, 1984), communicative distance (Lukens, 1979), prejudicial talk (Van Dijk, 1987), and hate speeches (Kirkland, Greenberg, & Pyszcynski, 1987), to ethnopolitical warfare (McCauley, 2001).

Extending social identity theory and self-categorization theory, communication accommodation theory directly addresses the relationship between an individual's in-group identification and his or her conflict-generating intercultural behaviors. It does so by offering a broad-based account for both collective (intergroup) identity orientation leading to nonaccommodative behaviors and individuated (interpersonal) identity orientation leading to accommodative behaviors. Since its first formal presentation in propositional form (Gallois, Franklyn-Stokes, Giles, & Copeland, 1988), communication accommodation theory has been expanded and elaborated. In its latest, streamlined version (Gallois, Ogay, & Giles, 2005), the theory identifies two types of individual communicators' initial identity orientation, intergroup and interpersonal, along with key factors of the sociohistorical context (intergroup history, interpersonal history, and societal/cultural norms and values) and the prevailing norms governing the immediate situation surrounding a given interaction between individuals. The immediate

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situational norms, in turn, is explained as influencing each communicator's psychological orientations, including interaction strategies (accommodative or nonaccommodative), behavior tactics (convergence, divergence, and maintenance), and future intensions with respect to the other communicator. Linking factors across the dimensions, the theory offers 11 sets of propositions specifying the interrelationships between/among the identified groups of factors. Proposition 1, for example, identifies strong collective intergroup identity orientation as a key psychological factor that is likely to foster intercultural conflict in the form of nonaccommodation of out-group members in intercultural interactions.

Identity as Unitary Personhood and a Source of Intercultural Conflict

Consistent with the above-described communication accommodation theory, Kim's (2005a, 2009a) contextual theory of interethnic communication offers a theoretical argument that an individual's identity plays a dual role in intercultural interaction as a factor that contributes to both conflictive and cooperative experiences. Incorporating the concepts from the communication accommodation theory, convergence and divergence, along with various other related concepts employed in studies of intercultural communication, intergroup communication, social psychology, sociolinguistics, and related social science disciplines, Kim employs two integrative concepts, association and dissociation, to represent all-inclusive continuum of communication behaviors and actions that are likely to take place when individuals of differing ethnic (including cultural) backgrounds come into contact. Close to the associative end of this continuum are behaviors that foster understanding, cooperation, intimacy, and other forms of cooperation, or the "coming-together" of the involved parties. In contrast, behaviors at the dissociative end are defined as those behaviors and actions that introduce some form of relational conflict such as tension, misunderstanding, competition, hostility, and even violence, all of which contribute to a temporary state of conflict, or "coming-apart" of intercultural relationships.

Kim's theory then places the associative–dissociative behaviors in a reciprocal–causal relationship with eight key factors of the context in which intercultural encounters occur: (1) two communicator factors (identity inclusivity/exclusivity and identity security/insecurity, (2) three situational factors (ethnic proximity/distance, shared/separate goal structure, and personal network integration), and (3) three environmental factors (institutional inequity, relative in-group strength, and environmental stress). Linking each of these eight contextual factors to associative/dissociative intercultural behavior, Kim presents eight theorems based on which specific research hypotheses can be generated. Regarding the issue of identity, Theorems 1 and 2 link identity inclusivity/exclusivity and identity security/insecurity to association/dissociation in intercultural communication, thus, providing a basic profile of communicators who are more or less prone to engender intercultural cooperation or conflict.

In positing Theorem 1, Kim argues that inclusive identity orientation serves as a motivational basis of associative behavior, whereas exclusive identity orientation fosters a more rigid differentiation of oneself from ethnically dissimilar others. Likewise, identity security/insecurity, defined in terms of the degree of an individual's overall self-confidence or self-efficacy, is explained as a key psychological force that tends to trigger defensive and, at times, even offensive, behaviors when dealing with individuals of dissimilar cultural backgrounds. The relationship postulated in Kim's Theorem 1 between identity exclusivity and dissociative interethnic behavior echoes the observation by Sherif (1966) that conflict is

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more likely "whenever individuals belonging to one group interact, collectively or individually, with another group or its members in terms of their group identification" (p. 12). An extensive body of empirical evidence exists in support of Kim's Theorem 1, including the finding from Franklin's (1998) analysis of the beliefs and attitudes of Malcolm X, as described in the African American leader's own words. Franklin reports that Malcolm X not only believed that the integration of African Americans into White society would destroy both races, but furthermore, steadfastly opposed most White attempts to help with the civil rights movement from inside African American organizations.

In Theorem 2, Kim identifies the reciprocal influence between an individual's identity insecurity and dissociative interethnic behavior. In presenting this theorem, Kim integrates a number of social psychological concepts of intergroup relations that have been found to be closely associated with various forms of intergroup conflict, including aggression, status anxiety (De Vos, 1990), and collective self-esteem (Crocker & Luthanen, 1990). Likewise, the theoretical link between identity insecurity and intercultural conflict identified in Theorem 2 is consistent with the core arguments made in at least two other social psychological theories of intergroup relations. One such theory is the realistic conflict theory (Sherif, 1966), which highlights the role of perceived or real threats to in-group resources (territorial, economic, and power or status interests) in creating or intensifying hostility toward members of one or more out-groups. More recently, the uncertainty-identity theory (Hogg, 2000, 2007; Hogg, Meehan, & Farquharson, 2010) stipulates that when people are faced with high levels of "self-uncertainty" or "identity threat" created by actual or potential in-group–threatening events and circumstances (e.g., terrorism incidents and bad macroeconomic times), they are likely to harbor prejudice against out-groups and are more likely to seek reassurance by turning to the solace of radicalism.

Identity as Unitary Personhood, Intercultural Conflict, and Identity Development

A substantially different perspective on identity and its relationship to intercultural conflict is taken in the theories proposed in the ethnic identity development theory (Phinney, 1993; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992) and in the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005b, 2008, 2009b). Although different in the respective focal phenomena being addressed, both theories are built on a unitary conception of identity that incorporates influences of culture into the whole of an individual personhood, consistent with the identity conception originally articulated by Erikson (1950, 1959/1980, 1968). Unlike in the other theories, an individual's identity is conceived in these two theories as a dynamic and evolving entity that undergoes change over time through the cumulative experiences of person–environment interaction. Accordingly, whereas the previously discussed theories regard some form of the identity factor (e.g., collective cultural identity, subjective in-group identification, and insecure identity orientation) as leading to some form of intercultural conflict, these two theories explain the reverse process of influence, that is, the influence an individual's experiences of intercultural conflict are likely to affect his or her identity orientation over time.

In theorizing specifically about the process of ethnic identity development among minority adolescents, Phinney and Rosenthal (Phinney, 1993; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992) assume that minority adolescents growing up in a larger society experience conflict because, unlike adolescents of the majority group membership, they need to struggle with alternative sources of identity. Given the negative attitudes

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to which they are likely to be subjected and the importance of achieving a secure sense of themselves as members of a minority ethnic group, as well as a "commitment" to their ethnic identity, Phinney and Rosenthal (1992) propose a three-stage model of ethnic identity development: Stage 1—an unexamined ethnic identity; Stage 2—an exploration of ethnic identity; and Stage 3—a resolution of conflict and contradictions. It is the third stage of a resolution of internal conflict and contradictions that Phinney and Rosenthal refer to as the stage of "achieved identity," in which minority adolescents feel a secure sense of themselves. Even though Phinney and Rosenthal allow for the possibility of individual adolescents moving beyond the three stages by pointing out the possibility for some minority adolescents to develop a "bicultural identity," their main emphasis is on the "achieved ethnic identity." Not achieving such a commitment to one's own ethnic group, according to Phinney and Rosenthal, is likely to result in a significant detriment to the individual's psychological and social functioning.

Whereas Phinney and Rosenthal focus on the identity development process among ethnic minority adolescents, Kim (1988, 2001, 2005b, 2008, 2009b), in her integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, explains the lifelong process in which individuals, presumed to have already formed a cultural identity, move to a new cultural environment, struggles to function in that environment, and are transformed by their adaptive struggles toward an increasingly intercultural personhood. Kim explains that the adaptation process unfolds over time through the "stress-adaptation-growth dynamic," and that, over time, this psychological experience "moves" an individual through the trajectory of an unfolding intercultural transformation. Through prolonged and cumulative experiences of conflict (stress) in coping with, and overcoming, various challenges of the new cultural environment, individuals are to undergo a continual dialectic process of acculturation and deculturation (adaptation), which, in turn, brings about a gradual and largely unconscious transformation in the individual's identity orientation in the direction of a higher level of psychological development (growth).

Kim theorizes that, along with an increased functional and psychological fitness vis-à-vis the host cultural environment, intercultural identity transformation brings about a gradual transcendence of conventional cultural categories. Employing a unitary, holistic conception of identity in which the collective dimension of culture or ethnicity is a part, Kim describes a *continuum* of adaptive changes in identity from a monocultural to an increasingly intercultural character. Through prolonged and cumulative experiences of stress stemming from the inner struggle to meet the challenges of the host cultural milieu, Kim explains that an individual's identity is likely to undergo two interrelated transformative processes of individuation and universalization. Individuation involves a clear self-definition and definition of the other more as a singular individual than as a member of a cultural category. With this capacity, Kim argues that one is better able to see oneself and others on the basis of unique personal qualities. Accompanying individuation is universalization, a parallel development of a synergistic cognition born out of an awareness of the relative nature of values and of the universal aspect of human nature. In the process of becoming intercultural in identity orientation, according to Kim, individuals form an outlook that is not locked in a provincial interest of their own group, but one that is more flexible, resourceful, and creative.

By highlighting these two transformational subprocesses of individuation and universalization in identity orientation, Kim differentiates her concept, intercultural identity, from other similar terms that connote various forms

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of additions of specific cultural components such as bicultural and hybrid identity. While incorporating these concepts, intercultural identity goes beyond them, highlighting one of the fundamental principles of all living systems: "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." This means that, although the cultural base of an individual's identity is not going to disappear even if he or she wanted to get rid of it, what does happen in the process of intercultural transformation is a juxtaposition of deculturation and acculturation—one loses some and gains some—in doing so becoming transformed into something that is more than the simple addition of new cultural elements to the original ones. This identity transformation is represented by a formula, $A + B = A' + B' + X$, with A' and B' reflecting modifications in some of the original (A) and new (B) cultural patterns and X representing the extra dimension of individuation and universalization in an individual's overall unitary identity.

Synthesis

Identity, indeed, has been one of the most ubiquitous concepts in the field of intercultural communication and across social sciences. Focusing on the microlevel phenomenon of communication between individuals of dissimilar cultural backgrounds, and defining intercultural conflict as a state of stress or strain in the communicative relationship, the present examination of the pertinent literature has shown two broad and interrelated trends in academic perspectives on identity, paralleling the pluralistic ideological shift in the United States and beyond: (1) an increased emphasis on activism in academic research on behalf of traditionally disadvantaged cultural groups and (2) the corresponding rise in research interests in the collective dimension of an individual's identity, commonly referred to as cultural identity, ethnic identity, and racial identity.

Identity as Conflictive, Cooperative, and Evolving Entity

Against the backdrop of these broad trends, the author has identified six different conceptual and methodological perspectives on identity in the context of intercultural communication and theories that are representative of each perspective. These six approaches and associated theories range from those that focus exclusively on the collective dimension of identity to those emphasizing the individuated and unitary nature of identity in which the collective dimension is only a part. Taken together, these six groups of theories offer a full spectrum of ideas that directly or indirectly address the two basic questions that were initially posed to help guide this work: (1) How does an individual's identity influence intercultural conflict and cooperation? and (2) How do intercultural conflict experiences influence an individual's identity over time?

With respect to the first question, a dual role of identity in intercultural communication is revealed from the six groups of theories between identity and intercultural conflict: conflictive and cooperative. The conflictive role of identity is explained, for example, by critical scholars associated with the first identified approach ("Identity as Collectivity, Power Inequality, and Intercultural Conflict"). Based on a group-level identity conception, critical scholars view identity as being essentially conflictive whenever power inequality exists between the interactants' respective in-groups, particularly from the perspective of traditionally nondominant or marginalized groups. Built on this basic idea, the cocultural theory (Orbe, 1998; Orbe & Spellers, 2005) proposes a typology of differing strategies nondominant group members employ when interacting with dominant group members, while the cultural identifications theory (Collier, 2005) provides an interpretive framework with which to examine the dynamics of cultural identity

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positioning and negotiation between dominant and nondominant group members.

The potentially conflictive role of collective identity is suggested in all other theories examined earlier, including the speech codes theory (Philipsen, 1992, 1997; Philipsen et al., 2005) associated with the second approach ("Identity as Cultural Communication System and a Source of Intercultural Conflict"). Whereas the critical theories place their focus on the condition of relative power inequality between cultural groups, the speech codes theory suggests the differences between cultural communication systems and the lack of understanding and appreciation of such cultural differences as the main potential source of conflict, as demonstrated in Gumperz's (1978) conversational analysis of intercultural communication between an Asian Indian and a native Londoner.

Likewise, collective cultural identity is regarded as a source of intercultural conflict the three theories associated with the third approach ("Culture-Based and Individually Flexible Identity as a Source of Intercultural Conflict"). Each of the three theories—the face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988, 2005a), the identity negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 2005b), and the identity management theory (Imahori & Cupach, 2005)—is built on the premise that an individual's collective cultural group identity is likely to lead to intercultural conflict. Unlike the critical theories and the speech codes theory, however, these theories go beyond intercultural conflict to recognize individual differences in their ability or willingness to prevent or mitigate intercultural conflicts. In addition, these theories highlight the importance of recognizing and respecting each other's face concerns, in the case of the identity negotiation theory, or by working through a dialectic process toward forming and maintaining a relational identity between the communicators, in the case of the identity negotiation theory and the identity management theory.

Along with the conflictive role, the cooperative role of identity is addressed in the theories associated with the fourth approach ("Identity as Subjective In-Group Identification and a Source of Intercultural Conflict"): the social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974, 1978, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), the self-categorization theory (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987), the integrative theory of intergroup conflict (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and the communication accommodation theory (Gallois et al., 1988; Gallois et al., 2005). In these social–psychological theories, the focus of emphasis is shifted away from the collective social category to the subjective identifications of individuals with a cultural or social group. Built on the basic human tendency to categorize people into discrete groups and to favor one's in-group over an out-group, these theories account for individual differences in degrees of subjective in-group identification as a key factor in explaining intercultural conflict, particularly under the condition of a real or perceived competition or threat to in-group identity, thereby suggesting greater possibilities of intercultural cooperation by individuals with lower levels of in-group identification. The communication accommodation theory, in particular, explicitly explains the likelihood of individuals to act cooperatively toward out-group members.

The dual role of identity is most explicitly captured in the theories associated with the fifth approach ("Identity as Unitary Personhood and a Source of Intercultural Conflict"). The contextual theory of interethnic communication (Kim, 2005a, 2009a) links two identity orientations, identity inclusivity/exclusivity and identity security/insecurity, as exerting a reciprocal influence on associative and dissociative behaviors and actions between individuals of differing ethnicities. Incorporating related concepts and ideas from a number of social psychological theories, including the realistic conflict theory (Sherif,

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1966) and the uncertainty-identity theory (Hogg, 2000, 2007; Hogg et al., 2010), Kim's contextual theory explains that the more an individual's identity is exclusively tied to the collective in-group identity, and the more insecure he or she feels about his or her identity, the more likely he or she experiences conflict in intercultural interactions. Conversely, the more the individual regards himself or herself inclusively as part of a greater community that includes out-group members, the more likely he or she acts to facilitate cooperation and relationship building with out-group members.

Moving beyond the link between identity and intercultural conflict/cooperation, the theories associated with the last approach identified in this overview ("Identity as Unitary Personhood, Intercultural Conflict, and Identity Development") address the second guiding question regarding the role intercultural conflict experiences play in influencing the nature of an individual's identity over time. Emphasizing the dynamic and evolving nature of identity, the two theories associated with this approach—the ethnic identity development theory (Phinney, 1993; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992) and the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1988, 2001, 2005b, 2008, 2009b)—regard intercultural conflict as an important underlying social–psychological force influencing the course of an individual's identity change. These theories are unlike all other theories examined in this work, in that they uniquely regard intercultural conflict not as an outcome of individual identity orientations but as a main driving force behind an individual's identity development and change. In the case of the ethnic identity development theory, the internal psychological conflicts that ethnic minority adolescents experience are the very condition under which their self-conceptions as members of an ethnic group are formed through the developmental process. Similarly, in the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, the continuing evolution of an individual's identity beyond conventional cultural categories is explained as being brought about owing to the long-term, cumulative experiences of stress and the internal psychological experience of disequilibrium.

Altogether, the six groups of theories provide a comprehensive understanding of the varying degrees of emphasis scholars have placed on the collective dimension of identity and the corresponding knowledge claims about its role in intercultural conflict and cooperation and the influence of intercultural conflict experiences over a prolonged period on the development and evolution of the individual's identity beyond the boundaries of a single culture. These theories further identify a set of conditions under which identity serves as a conflict- or cooperation-inducing factor in intercultural communication—from the group-level power inequality and cultural communication systems to the characteristics of each communicator, including the degree to which his or her identity is tied to a cultural group. In addition, intercultural conflict is presumed as the main condition under which the collective dimension of an individual's identity is formed in adolescents, in the case of ethnic identity development theory, and a nonnative individual's identity is transformed further beyond the ascribed monocultural boundaries toward a more individuated and universalized intercultural identity.

Convergence of Ideas

Despite the differing perspectives, foci of interests, and knowledge claims described above, many of the theories examined in this work share three basic ideas with respect to collective and individuated identity, identity adaptability, and identity security and their relationships to intercultural conflict and cooperation.

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First, the theories are generally in agreement in suggesting that individual communicators can better achieve intercultural cooperation and relationship building through an identity orientation that is more individuated and less exclusively tied to their cultural group. Conversely, as communicators interact with culturally dissimilar others with a categorical "us-and-them" identity posture, they are likely to focus more on group stereotypes and perceived cultural differences that tend to lead to conflict experiences. This idea is most explicitly identified as "interpersonal/intergroup orientation" in the communication accommodation theory. In the contextual theory of interethnic communication, it is represented in the construct, "identity inclusivity/exclusivity," which is one of the eight contextual factors influencing, and being influenced by, the associative/dissociative behaviors of individual communicators. Also, in the writings of critical scholars, there is a presumption of intercultural conflict between individuals whose collective identities reflect unequal intergroup power inequality. In speech codes theory, intercultural conflict is suggested as occurring when the interactants are unwilling or unable to understand and accommodate each other's cultural group identity reflected in his or her communication practices.

Second, all theories commonly acknowledge, at least, some degree of adaptability if an individual's identity is recognized as a factor that contributes to reducing intercultural conflict and fostering intercultural cooperation. The social identity theory, identity negotiation theory and the identity management theory, and the communication accommodation theory, for example, point to the possibility of individuals making a positive difference in intercultural encounters through their own flexible attitudes and actions. The significance of identity adaptability is also explained in the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation theory as an important aspect of nonnatives' adaptive changes over time through the psychological dynamic of stress–adaptation–growth. Even the two critical theories, the coculture theory and the cultural identification theory, account for possibilities for individual communicators to adapt their identity orientations through the choices they make in negotiating their identities in specific intercultural situations.

Third, a number of theories converge in suggesting that a secure identity orientation contributes to promoting intercultural cooperation and minimizing intercultural conflict. This idea is suggested in the realistic conflict theory, the uncertainty-identity theory, and the contextual theory of interethnic communication. Directly or indirectly, each of these theories identify an individual's identity security as a factor that facilitates intercultural association and deters intercultural conflict. Similar ideas are indicated in the identity negotiation theory and the identity management theory, as these two theories discuss the importance of being respectful and mindful and thereby assuring the identity of the interacting partner. Identity security, as such, is an inner resource for interpersonal empathy and accommodation without compromising one's own personal integrity. The idea that identity security is a constructive force in intercultural communication becomes even clearer when secure identity is understood as a "metamotivation" (Maslow, 1969, p. 35) or "ego-strength" (Lazarus, 1966)—a kind of self-trust that allows individuals not to cripple themselves with irrational feelings of inferiority or defensiveness and, instead, to seek more practical and adaptive alternatives when interacting with others, particularly with those with culturally dissimilar backgrounds.

The above-identified three convergent ideas are consistent with an extensive amount of empirical evidence documented in the literature (see Kim, 2005a, 2009a, 2009c). For example, each of the three identity characteristics fostering intercultural cooperation

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and relationship building—inclusivity, adaptability, and security—is indicated in a recent case study by Ybema, Vroemisse, and van Marrewijk (2012) of a Dutch international nongovernmental organization working in development aid. In describing how staff members of the organization build and maintain partnerships across cultures in their identity discourse, the investigators report that instead of polarizing differences between themselves and their "Southern" partners in their identity talk, they are able to "smooth out, trivialize, upend differences," and create an atmosphere of assurance and trust by adopting a "thin" notion of cultural identity, constructing an inclusive identity of "we" in talk of personal relationships.

Looking Forward

As the global interface of individuals of differing cultural traditions continue, so does the question of identity as a significant topic for academic inquiry. Given this prospect, the six approaches and associated theories identified in this overview serve as a groundwork and an intellectual guide for future studies. Together, they provide a broad and comparative perspective on how identity has been conceived and what corresponding knowledge claims have been made about the role identity plays in intercultural interactions at the grassroots level. Future investigators may find one or more of the six approaches and associated theories of particular relevance to their own interests and concerns, and seek to advance them further through empirical tests. Over time, such efforts are likely to add clarity to the relative veracity, utility, and durability of the existing theories.

For now, the theories identified in this work reveal a clear link between the level of an individual's identity exclusivity and identity insecurity and the likelihood to experience intercultural conflict. That is, the more strongly and rigidly our identities are tied to our cultural in-groups and the more defensive and protective we are of our in-group identities, the more conflict we are likely to experience when interacting with culturally dissimilar others. Conversely, the more individuated and secure we are in identity orientation, the more cooperative we are likely to be interculturally. This general insight suggests that to minimize conflict and maximize intercultural cooperation and relationship building, we need to orient ourselves toward each other less in terms of our respective cultural categories and more in terms of our individual characteristics, to be more adaptable so as to embrace and accommodate each other's personal particularities including the ones that are rooted in culture, and to help each other feel assured and comfortable in our communicative relationships.

The present overview also reveals a more nuanced understanding of intercultural conflict. We need to move beyond the commonly held view of intercultural conflict as almost exclusively a negative experience to be avoided or minimized. While this view accurately reflects the stress we experience in the face of conflict, we also need to acknowledge the long-term positive consequences that intercultural conflict experiences can bring to intercultural communicators. As much as conflict can bring tension in intercultural relationships, it also serves as a force that invites and compels a new stage of awareness, adaptation, and identity development as explained in the theory of ethnic identity development and the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation. This insight into the dual nature of intercultural conflict can be applied to understanding the long-term consequences of intergroup conflicts at the macrosocietal level, as suggested in the works of critical scholars. As such, determinations as to whether a given intercultural conflict is "good" or "bad" must

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rest not only on how it feels to a particular individual or group at a particular point in time, but also on the long-term changes it engenders in individuals, in relationships, in society, and beyond.

In the end, the present overview, with its focus trained on intercultural interactions of individuals at the grassroots level, points to the freedom and choice each individual can exercise to help shape what Toffler (1980) aptly describes as a project of "building a remarkable new civilization from the ground up" (p. 44). It is, after all, up to individual communicators to decide for themselves as to how they wish to orient themselves to culturally dissimilar others. Whether at home or in a foreign soil, numerous people the world over are being challenged to undergo at least some experiences of intercultural conflict and cooperation. To those who are nostalgic for the age of certainty, permanence, and a fixed and unitary cultural identity, this rapidly changing environment can represent an unsettling discontinuity and malaise. They may refuse to admit the new social condition but only at the cost of the immense effort of resisting or denying it. Such an exclusive and insecure identity posture may help them to "feel better" about themselves, at least temporarily. Yet it is also possible that they are going to engender a further refusal to strive for a more constructive way of living in an increasingly intercultural world—a world in which culture in its "pure" form has become more a nostalgic concept than a reality.

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25

Interracial and Interethnic Conflict and Communication in the United States

Mark P. Orbe, Melodi A. Everett, and Angela L. Putman

Conflict is an inevitable part of the human experience, one that people in relationships find themselves in on a regular basis (Collier, 1991; Roloff, 1987). When in conflict, individuals often demonstrate preferences for certain communication styles (Roloff, 1987)—a cognitive process that cannot be separated from the cultural context in which it resides (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Orbe, 1998a). As part of an individual's racial and ethnic background, one is taught how to deal with conflict through one's family and friends; in this regard, race, ethnicity, and culture are the frames through which we view, experience, and perceive conflict (Collier, 1991; Ribeau, 1995). People from different cultural backgrounds define conflict differently and, thus, have different goals and ways of managing the conflict (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001).

This chapter focuses on interracial and interethnic conflict. We adopted the definition of intercultural conflict conceptualized by Ting-Toomey (1994): "the perceived and/or actual incompatibility of values, expectations, processes, or outcomes between two or more parties . . . over substantive and/or relational issues" (p. 360) to apply specifically to individuals from different racial and ethnic groups within the United States. As such, we differentiate between interracial conflict (conflict between members of different races, i.e., African American/Asian American) and interethnic conflict (conflict between members of different ethnic groups, i.e., Cuban Americans/Puerto Rican Americans; see Orbe & Harris, 2008). Our objective in this chapter is threefold. First, we summarize existing research that addresses issues of race, ethnicity, and conflict. Second, we identify several limitations inherent in existing lines of research. Third, and finally, we utilize a co-cultural theoretical framework to outline what we suggest are important avenues for both future studies and practical applications of interracial/interethnic conflict research.

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Summary of Existing Research on Interracial/Interethnic Conflict

Research on intercultural conflict generally, and interracial and interethnic conflict specifically, is a rapidly growing area of study. The vast majority of research on culture and conflict, however, has focused on comparison studies of conflict styles among people from different national cultures (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). In other words, the focus has been on differences in styles used by members of different countries (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). The same could be said for research on interracial or interethnic conflict (Houston, 2002). Yet a significantly smaller amount of intercultural conflict research exists that focuses on race and ethnicity.

At times, it is the different cultural styles of individuals, and not necessarily the context of the conflict itself, that creates problems within the conflict episode (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Not surprisingly, much of the existing research on interracial/interethnic conflict focuses on these differences. This section summarizes existing research studies on race, ethnicity, and conflict. Specifically, our review is organized into two main areas of research: (1) sources of conflict and (2) conflict styles.

Sources of Conflict

A significant amount of existing research on race, ethnicity, and conflict has focused on identifying various sources of conflict. Despite these attempts to identify specific sources of interracial/interethnic conflict, interracial/interethnic conflict is a dynamic process; any one episode is typically the result of multiple sources of conflict (Waters, 1992). However, to delineate these in a coherent manner, we separate various sources of interracial/interethnic conflict as if they exist in a unilateral manner.

Present-Day Social Inequality. While in-group/out-group tensions may be grounded in a historical context, another source of interracial/interethnic conflict is seen within present-day social inequality between different groups (Stephan & Stephan, 2001). As described earlier, some of this current racial differentiation—especially as it relates to acceptability by the European American dominant group—can be traced to historical conceptualizations of a racial hierarchy (Blumenbach, 1865/1973). According to Y. Y. Kim (1994), another reason for interracial/interethnic conflict lies within the fact that the status quo is the focal point, and those racial/ethnic groups closer to the European norms are more accepted into existing value systems. What is especially frustrating for those perceived as most divergent from the dominant group are recent attempts to deny racial and ethnic differences and to assume a colorblind (or "postracial") communicative stance (Orbe, 2011; Tierney & Jackson, 2002).

Yet, despite the attempts to mend a history of oppression, African Americans continue to suffer from oppression in employment, housing, and health care (Rudman, Ashmore, & Melvin, 2001). African Americans do not have equal opportunity in the area of the justice system or police protection, and although they have equal access to public education, the quality of education is highly unequal (Rudman et al., 2001). In research on face-to-face interactions between Korean immigrant retailers and African American customers, Bailey (2000) concluded that social inequality in the United States shapes the local context in which interracial encounters occur. Specifically, he found that social inequality fueled social assumptions that storekeepers and customers brought to the stores, the result of which were interracial episodes grounded in misunderstanding and mistrust.

Similar social inequalities are at the root of tensions between African Americans and Latinos/Latinas. Despite the portrayals of

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Latinos/Latinas as experiencing more severe injustice and hardships than do African Americans, African Americans have also been portrayed as victims of Latino/Latina immigration (Shah & Thornton, 1994). In this context, African Americans are shown as unsympathetic victims who complain about Latino/Latina success despite their continued struggles (Shah & Thornton, 1994). A key component of these tensions is competition for limited resources, which pit different underrepresented groups against one another (Meier, McClain, Polinard, & Wrinkle, 2004). As such, similar dynamics between African Americans and Korean Americans exist in urban areas across the United States (Bailey, 2000). Overall, at the core of these tensions is the existence of social inequalities.

In-Group/Out-Group Tensions. Within a historical context of domination, slavery, colonization, and military conquests, it is no surprise that in-group/out-group tensions exist among different racial and ethnic groups (Y. Y. Kim, 1994). At times, individual knowledge of the history of mistreatment of one group at the hands of another enhances negativity between racial and ethnic groups (Gallois, 2003). Given this history, community conflict is often triggered by an influx of new racial and ethnic groups (Oliver & Wong, 2003) that are perceived by residents as a threat (Ross, 2000). Within this context, the majority group may feel that its economic and social privilege is threatened; such, reportedly, has been the case for some European Americans and African Americans who have felt threatened by the economic power of Asian Americans (Oliver & Wong, 2003). The end result is an increased in-group/out-group tension, one that typically results in increased communication apprehension (Toale & McCroskey, 2001). According to Hornsey, Oppes, and Svensson (2002), any criticism from the out-group can be seen as a threat to the in-group and, consequently, can aggravate intergroup tensions, heighten intergroup differences, and result in defensiveness and hostility. To make matters worse, in-group members believe that the motives behind the criticisms of the out-group are discriminatory and that out-group members are not qualified to cast judgment on the in-group (Hornsey et al., 2002).

In her research on intergroup dialogue between African American and Jewish high school students, Wayne (2008) found that when members of different cultural groups are brought together, intergroup relationships can improve and prejudice can be reduced, but it can also degrade intergroup relationships. She also concluded that when intergroup interaction causes members of the in-group to get information that is inconsistent with negative stereotypes or views of the out-group, there should be an improvement in attitude by in-group members. Additionally, Oetzel, Dhar, and Kirschbaum (2007) asserted that dialogue is a useful tool for addressing intercultural conflict within communities, and it addresses mutual respect between conflicting parties (e.g., MacLennan, 2011; Orbe, 2004).

Historically, much of the literature on race, ethnicity, and conflict has focused on tensions between European Americans and different racial/ethnic groups. However, according to Shah and Thornton (1994), an increasingly tense relationship exists between African Americans and Latinos/Latinas (see also Kaufmann, 2003). Because of the political inroads that have been gained by the Latin community, and the new Latin immigrants taking low-paying jobs, African Americans believe that Latino/Latina success has come at their expense (Meier et al., 2004). Latinos/Latinas counter the African Americans' argument, stating that African Americans are insensitive to Latino/Latina needs and that African Americans do not want to share their resources with other minorities (Shah & Thornton, 1994).

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Another form of in-group/out-group tension currently exists between some Korean Americans and African Americans in urban areas across the United States. According to Jo (1992), the tension began when Korean Americans moved into the African American communities and established residences and businesses in the area. African Americans accuse Korean Americans of overcharging, rudeness, taking over African Americans' businesses, and taking money out of the community without reinvesting (Jo, 1992). Korean Americans argue that the African Americans are wrong and that the misunderstanding comes from conflicting cultures and miscommunication. For instance, Jo explained that the reason Korean Americans are less likely to exchange pleasantries is because of their unfamiliarity of the English language, not rudeness. Also, Korean Americans are less likely to hire African Americans in their stores because they cannot afford to pay well, so they employ their own families, who will work for a lot less than the average employee. In many instances, contemporary conflict situations must be understood within a larger historical frame. For instance, some groups have a long history of conflict both inside and outside of the United States. According to Maoz and Ellis (2008), groups in conflict, specifically Israeli Jews and Palestinians, often have an extensive history of power and status asymmetries and distrust between the groups is the typical result of this type of history.

Perceptual Differences. Members of different racial and ethnic groups define and perceive conflict differently (Collier, 1991). From a person of color's standpoint, it is not always clear if the conflict is a function of race or some other variable like personality differences (Waters, 1992). In addition, when conflict arises, people of color are left wondering if the conflict was malicious (reflective of racial bias) or more indicative of naïveté, miscommunication, or misperceptions (Waters, 1992). European Americans, in comparison, often misunderstand the degree of offense that often accompanies unintentional, subtle forms of racially biased statements and questions (Warren, Orbe, & Greer-Williams, 2003). Such appears to be the case with perceptions of racial profiling (Park, 2009). When perceptions differ regarding the magnitude of the problem, the end result often is a polarized conflict situation where trust and respect are lacking (Buttny & Williams, 2000), and further distorted perceptions emerge (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001).

Communicating styles and values can be misinterpreted by individuals who are not a part of the same race (Houston & Wood, 1996). For example, certain common practices that are valued within the African American community (e.g., verbal dueling) can be misperceived as attacking by members of other racial groups (Kochman, 1990). Another example involves instances when European Americans view African American styles of communicating as rude and African Americans see European American styles as cold and unfeeling (Houston & Wood, 1996). African Americans have a tendency to be very expressive with their feelings, while European Americans tend to be more reserved and believe that emotions should be more contained (Speicher, 1995). Accordingly, when interethnic encounters do occur in the context of differing interests, values, and norms, there is a sense of psychological distance, which inhibits the ability for different races to reach common goals (Y. Y. Kim, 1994). Furthermore, interracial/interethnic interactions generate different meanings, which may fuel a conflict (Habke & Sept, 1993; Speicher, 1995).

In addition to different perceptions toward one another, racial and ethnic groups may view the same communication episode in contrasting ways (Orbe, 2011; Orbe & Warren,

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2000; Speicher, 1995). For example, Warren et al. (2003) conducted a study in which a videotape of an interaction between a European American woman and an African American man was shown to separate groups of African American men, African American women, European American men, European American women, Latinos, and Latinas. The participants were then asked to discuss the conflict and analyze what they felt the source of the conflict was. Interestingly, European American women responded that they viewed the primary source of the conflict to be about gender. European American men determined that personality differences were at the core of the disagreement. The other groups of people of color defined the conflict in terms of race albeit to varying degrees (Warren et al., 2003). African American women saw race as the most salient issue, whereas African American men, Latinos, and Latinas identified race, gender, age, and socioeconomic differences as influential to the interaction. This research concluded that perceptions of conflict are informed by racial and gendered standpoints (Orbe & Warren, 2000). Along similar lines, a study by Hohmann-Marriott and Amato (2008) on interethnic and interracial marriages revealed that growing up with different cultural backgrounds had an effect on the couples' lack of shared perspective. This, in turn, caused the couples to perceive events and situations differently, which led to increased stress and conflict within the relationship and lower relationship quality (Hohmann-Marriott & Amato, 2008).

In addition to differing perceptions of communicative episodes, different racial groups may also find themselves in perceived conflict with one another due to a lack of empathy and/or knowledge of the others' perspective. For example, in her research, Wayne (2008) conducted focus groups with African American and Jewish students during which the students shared reactions and feelings regarding Louis Farrakhan's stereotyping of Jews. Many of the Jewish students discussed the strong and painful effect that the comments had on them, while African American students shared the importance of Farrakhan to them as a strong Black man (Wayne, 2008). Participants admitted to their lack of ability or desire to see the viewpoints of the other side because the issue was so personal to them; however, after dialogue and 3 months of participation in the interracial program that was the focus of Wayne's (2008) study, the students seemed to be more empathetic and open-minded to one another regarding an issue where they initially seemed on opposite "sides."

Stereotyping/Lack of Exposure. Although the United States is attempting to move toward an ideology of a racially integrated nation, most races tend to live apart rather than together (Oliver & Wong, 2003). Racial segregation in neighborhood communities, worship centers, educational institutions, and social organizations increases the likelihood of misunderstanding (Y. Y. Kim, 1994). One of the primary reasons is that racial segregation facilitates the perpetuation of stereotypes and false generalizations that make interracial/interethnic interactions potentially volatile (Oliver & Wong, 2003). At the least, it results in great caution on the part of diverse individuals (Allen, 1995). At worst, it creates a history of relational inequality that makes effective intercultural encounters difficult (Gallois, 2003). These issues manifest themselves in various aspects of society, but they have seemingly taken center stage in representations of reality television. Accordingly, meanings surrounding race that emerge through reality television "must remain at the forefront of our consciousness, in order that we confront ideologies of racial discord and division" (Bell-Jordan, 2008, p. 369).

An excellent example of intergroup attribution biases and perceived stereotypes can

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be found in the reality television show *Black. White.*, a show described as a unique social experiment that was applauded and criticized by critics and viewers alike (Bell-Jordan, 2008). A White family and Black family "traded places" by wearing makeup to switch races and lives with the other family. Through this experiment, viewers discovered the limited knowledge both families had about the experiences of people of a different race. Brian and Renee Sparks (African American couple) hope that this experience will help Bruno and Carmen Marcotulli (European American couple) to see what racism feels like when they switch lives. However, Bruno instead resists the claims of institutionalized racism by the Sparkses "by asking why they continue to focus on the past, why they go 'looking' for racism, and why they don't just toughen up" (Bell-Jordan, 2008, p. 367). Through Carmen's perceived thoughtlessness and the inability of Bruno to see why his wife's comments continuously upset the Sparks family, the belief of many African Americans that Whites are insensitive to their struggles and do not acknowledge the reality of racism is reinforced (Bell-Jordan, 2008).

Y. Y. Kim (1994) recognized stereotyping and a lack of interest in communicating with other ethnic groups as a source of conflict. When different races are trying to uplift their own race while other races hold stereotypes against them, it can cause serious conflict between the two races (Habke & Sept, 1993). For example, according to Oliver and Wong (2003), in some contexts Asian Americans are likely to view Latinos/Latinas as having a lack of intelligence and being welfare dependent. Alternatively, both Blacks and Latinos may view Asian Americans as difficult to get along with, based on their lack of social involvement (Bailey, 2000). Both stereotypes, given the competition for limited resources, typically result in pseudoconflicts between these racial and ethnic groups (H. Lee & Rogan, 1991). Romer, Jamieson, Riegner, and Rouson (1997) noted that ethnic tension may also be ongoing because many Latinos/Latinas still have negative feelings and hold negative stereotypes toward African Americans. In their research on interracial roommate conflict, Bresnahan, Guan, Shearman, and Donohue (2009) found that interracial roommate conflicts are often linked to negative stereotypes about race, and when unmanaged, can reinforce said stereotypes and act as a barrier for future interactions with other members of the same group (see also Urban, Orbe, Tavares, & Alvarez, 2010).

Media also play a role in accelerating stereotypical images of racialized others (e.g., Orbe, Warren, & Cornwell, 2001), especially when people have little or no contact with individuals from that particular race (Bramlett-Solomon & Hernandez, 2003). Shah and Thornton (1994) found that African American and Latino/Latina communities were represented as inner-city, Black ghettos, and Hispanic districts, and positioned as isolated from other communities. The neighborhoods of African Americans, for example, were portrayed in the media as neighborhoods of destruction and danger (Shah & Thornton, 1994). Naming the neighborhoods in this manner created a symbolic distance from the European American community (Shah & Thornton, 1994). Not surprisingly, journalists who report to mainly European American audiences frame minority stories as interracial conflicts to make the stories more newsworthy (Romer, Jamieson, & de Coteau, 1998). When negative images are constantly placed in the media, individuals who have not had contact with the different racial and ethnic groups may either have the stereotypes that they hold against these ethnic groups reinforced, or new stereotypes and negative feelings may emerge (Oliver & Wong, 2003). In either case, the result is a public image that perpetuates interracial and interethnic conflict as normative (Viswanath & Arora, 2000).

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Conflict Styles

Styles themselves can be regarded as a source of conflict (Ting-Toomey, 1988). However, to review the wealth of existing literature in this area, we treat it as a separate area of research. In this regard, we summarize research on the ways in which individuals from different racial and ethnic groups "do" conflict (see Chapter 1 in this volume for definitions of the conflict styles), not necessarily how divergent styles themselves lead to interracial/interethnic conflict.

Racial/Ethnic Conflict Styles. As alluded to earlier, intercultural conflict researchers have primarily focused on the conflict styles of U.S. and non-U.S. cultures (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). This significant body of research has largely utilized traditional conflict frameworks and measures of individualism/collectivism as a means to identify patterns of conflict strategies (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). In similar ways, interpersonal conflict researchers in the United States have tended to use similar constructs to inform their research on race, ethnicity, and conflict. The result has been research that stems from individualistic and collectivistic value systems regarding communication, generally, and conflict, specifically.

According to Ting-Toomey et al. (2000), the assumption is that European Americans are individualistic, while Latino/Latina, Asian, and African Americans are collectivistic. Consequently, research has explored how these cultural values affect the ways in which these racial and ethnic groups regard conflict. Trubisky, Ting-Toomey, and Lin (1991) found evidence that during conflict with acquaintances, Asians tend to use higher degrees of obliging and avoiding conflict styles than European Americans. Asians also tend to use a third party more often than other racial groups (Leung, Au, Fernandez-Dols, & Iwawaki, 1992). Zhang, Harwood, and Hummert (2005) revealed through their research that aspects of Chinese culture, such as filial piety, hierarchy, and the influence of cultural change, affect conflict management and conflict style among intergenerational Chinese. The younger Chinese adults adopted four conflict management styles: (1) competing, (2) avoiding, (3) accommodating, and (4) problem solving; whereas the older Chinese adults favored the accommodating style over problem solving. In comparison, European Americans tend to use upfront, solution-oriented styles, such as integrating and compromising, in dealing with conflict problems (Leung et al., 1992). Mexican Americans, according to Kagan, Knight, and Martinez-Romero (1982), utilize avoiding conflict styles as a means to preserve relational harmony when conflict arises among close Mexican American friends. Given their high degree of collectivism, conflict styles that privilege tactfulness and consideration of others' feelings appear logical (Garcia, 1996). Research on African Americans has concluded that they tend to use more emotionally expressive and involving modes of conflict (Ting-Toomey, 1986).

While this line of research reflects the dominant frame of traditional research on race/ethnicity and conflict, research has begun to advance conceptual assumptions beyond a simple individualistic–collectivistic dichotomy. As early as the mid-1980s, researchers begun to study intragroup differences, like those related to gender. For example, Ting-Toomey (1986) found that African American women tend to use more emotionally expressive conflict styles than African American men, European American men, and European American women. Other research has also utilized self-construals—one's conception of oneself as either independent or interdependent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)—to explore additional factors predicting conflict style patterns. In a study of Latinos/Latinas and European Americans, self-construals were a

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better predicator of conflict styles than racial/ethnic background (Oetzel, 1998). While some have criticized the dichotomous nature of self-construals (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000), they represent an advance in research beyond unilateral assumptions between race, ethnicity, and conflict styles. Another area of interest within research on interracial conflict style is the inclusion of age as a factor. A study of college undergraduates living in dormitories on campus looked at whether the race of the roommates had an effect on how conflict was handled (Bresnahan et al., 2009). Findings indicated that European Americans were more likely to seek outside help for a disruptive roommate situation than were African Americans. The study also revealed that European Americans attributed disruptive roommate behaviors to external/situational factors, whereas African Americans tended to attribute these behaviors to internal causes and personality flaws of the roommate (Bresnahan et al., 2009).

A smaller, but significant, body of research exists alongside that which is situated within social scientific examinations of cultural variables and conflict behavior. Much of this research has utilized culturally based qualitative research designs to uncover conceptualizations of conflict that were traditionally difficult to obtain through recall data via written surveys. For example, ethnographic studies involving various Native American nations have pointed to the importance of recognizing varying cultural values and the ways in which they explicitly and implicitly are manifested through communication (Sanchez, 2001). Such research has been invaluable in recognizing that dominant interpretations of other racial and ethnic group behavior often missed the mark in terms of the rationale/intention of conflict strategies. For example, Basso (1990) reported that, in times of conflict or negotiation, non-Native Americans often can misinterpret the silence of Native Americans—like that which occurs within the Western Apache culture—as disinterest, a reluctance to speak, or lack of personal warmth. What cultural outsiders fail to recognize in this context is that silence itself carries multiple meanings, as is evidenced through the research that examines generative and consumptive silence among American Indian college students (Covarrubias, 2007).

Gaining the perspectives of traditionally marginalized racial and ethnic groups—outside of comparisons with European Americans as the normative group—represents an important advance in existing conflict research. As such, additional research has focused on accessing in-group racial and ethnic normative assumptions of communication behaviors. Of particular note is the work of Hecht and colleagues on African American (e.g., Hecht, Ribeau, & Alberts, 1989) and Mexican American (e.g., Hecht, Ribeau, & Sedano, 1990) perspectives on interethnic communication. This research does not focus solely on conflict but instead on what each racial/ethnic group regards as satisfying interaction, a framework that is useful when looking at conflict (Ribeau, 1995). While this line of research appears especially useful in advancing existing understanding of how different racial and ethnic groups conceptualize conflict, the dominant pattern of research has been that of intergroup comparisons (Houston, 2002; Orbe & Allen, 2008).

Racial/Ethnic Comparisons. From the outset of scholarship in the area of race, ethnicity, and conflict, researchers have compared the conflict styles of different groups (Donahue, 1985). For instance, in his seminal research on Black and White styles in conflict, Kochman (1981) focused on direct comparisons: "Black mode of conflicts is high-keyed, animated, interpersonal and confrontational; the white mode of conflict is relatively low-keyed, dispassionate, impersonal, and non-challenging" (p. 18).

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Contrasting African American and European American conflict styles were adopted by other interethnic communication researchers (e.g., Hecht, Larkey, & Johnson, 1992; Ting-Toomey, 1986) and continues to frame current work (e.g., Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003).

Such research has provided insight into various points of particular comparison. For example, Martin, Hecht, and Larkey (1994) explored the concepts of realism and honesty. African Americans view realism as telling it like it is whether you are being positive or negative (Martin et al., 1994). According to Martin et al., European Americans' conceptualization of realism is slightly different. European Americans use the term *honesty* in the place of realism. Honesty can be honest but unrealistic and can become problematic when disclosing positive and negative concepts. For example, if an African American is too honest to a European American, the European American may become offended; similarly, if a European American is not "real" with an African American, it can produce the same results (Martin et al., 1994).

This line of research has generated additional racial comparisons between African Americans and European Americans within particular situational contexts, like organizations. Shuter and Turner (1997), for example, focused on the different perceptions of organizational conflict between African American and European American women. While both groups perceived their own attempts to reduce conflict as most effective, each enacted different strategies toward the same objective. African American women, interested in getting the conflict out on the table so it could be readily addressed and moved beyond, reported that a direct approach to conflict is most effective (Shuter & Turner, 1997). In comparison, European American women used more of an avoidance strategy and felt fear or anxiety when having to approach conflict directly (Shuter & Turner, 1997).

In a study conducted by Collier (1991), three ethnic groups (Mexican, African, and Anglo American) were examined to analyze conflict differences within friendships. Participants were asked to describe their definitions of friendship and conflict and whether or not they felt that their friends handled conflict effectively or ineffectively in a recalled interaction. Collier found that the different races defined conflict differently. The Anglo American males defined conflict as a difference of opinion, attack on a person's beliefs and opinions, an unresolved situation, and an inability to compromise; African American men saw conflict as a disagreement, different views, and misunderstandings; Mexican Americans described conflict in a more relational manner. The study also examined how each racial/ethnic group perceived competent communication during conflict episodes. Anglo Americans valued taking responsibility for behaviors, directness, equality, rational decision making, concern for others, and shared control. African Americans found that information should be given, opinions should be credible, criticism is not appropriate, and assertiveness is important. Mexican Americans' answers were similar to European Americans in the sense of being concerned about the other person, but unlike European Americans, Mexican Americans believed confrontation was appropriate in some situations (Collier, 1991). In a different study on intercultural friendship, P. W. Lee (2006) found that the nature of the conflict between friends allowed them to understand the interests and personality of each other better. However, it was their conflict management styles that were a determining factor in the sustaining of the friendship after the conflict.

The research of Ting-Toomey et al. (2000), which compared the conflict styles of multiple racial and ethnic groups (Latinos/Latinas, African, Asian, and European Americans), is significant for three reasons. First, it studied

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conflict styles of all racial and ethnic groups without privileging any one as normative. Second, it did not assume that racial/ethnic identity was the strongest predicator of conflict style. Instead it examined the relationship between ethnic identity salience (how important is ethnicity to an individual), larger U.S. cultural identity (how important is belonging to the larger culture), and conflict management styles in the four different racial/ethnic groups. Third, the research focused on acquaintance relationships, a relational context where racial/ethnic conflict styles are largely maintained.

According to Ting-Toomey et al. (2000), strong identification with one's racial/ethnic group increases the likelihood of culturally orientated conflict behaviors. African Americans were found to identify strongly with their own racial/ethnic group; Latinos/Latinas and Asian Americans identified both with their racial/ethnic group and U.S. culture; European Americans identified primarily with the larger U.S. culture. Some of Ting-Toomey et al.'s findings reaffirmed earlier research (e.g., Asian Americans use more avoiding than European Americans, and Latinos/Latinas use more third-party conflict styles than African Americans). However, the study did make significant contributions to existing research on race, ethnicity, and conflict by providing insight into the complex ways that multiple aspects of a person's identity influence conflict styles.

Limitations of Existing Research

As illustrated through our summary in the previous section, existing research on interracial and interethnic conflict has established a strong base of foundational knowledge. While earlier studies explored the conflict styles of different racial/ethnic groups, more recent scholarship has advanced this research by examining the saliency of other variables (e.g., gender and national identity). In similar ways, researchers have explored various sources of conflict. Despite its strengths, existing research is limited in a number of different ways. Within this section, we highlight five of the most salient limitations: (1) traditional empirical approaches, (2) eurocentric/ethnocentric bias, (3) essentializing generalizations, (4) assumptions of/focus on difference, and (5) focus on microlevel practices.

Traditional Empirical Approaches

One limitation of the existing research on interracial/interethnic conflict is that the vast majority of research is situated within a traditional empirical methodological framework that addresses race as a demographic variable (Orbe & Allen, 2008). While existing quantitative work has generated an important foundation for culture and communication scholarship, it lacks the ability to provide descriptive insight into how individuals *experience* interracial/interethnic conflict. It also has failed to adequately capture the intricate ways in which interracial/interethnic conflict episodes are influenced by multiple factors simultaneously (Houston, 2002). Consequently, contemporary scholars have called for more methodological diversity in research exploring the dynamics of race, ethnicity, and communication. Without question, qualitative research, such as that described by Hecht et al. (2003), can collaboratively advance existing conceptual understandings of interracial/interethnic conflict.

Earlier we discussed the value of recent research by Ting-Toomey et al. (2000), who sought to explore the saliency of factors beyond racial/ethnic identity. While they found correlations between larger national (U.S.) identity and conflict styles among different cultural groups (an important contribution to the study of interracial/interethnic conflict), the study remains limited because it fails to consider

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the differences among these cultural groups. In this regard, racial differences (e.g., European American and Asian American) are privileged over ethnic differences (e.g., Italian Americans, German Americans, Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans, Korean Americans, Asian Indians). As established by Miyahara, Kim, Shin, and Yoon (1998), assumptions that all members of one racial group (e.g., Asian) share common cultural values (e.g., individualism/collectivism) are problematic. Additional empirical research suggests that using self-construals (Markus & Wurf, 1987) offers a better lens for predicting racial/ethnic conflict styles (Oetzel, 1998). However, we argue that even this line of research is limited because it fails to capture the complex essence of racial/ethnic conflict styles (see also M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000).

Eurocentric/Ethnocentric Bias

Much of the existing research on interracial/interethnic conflict is limited in that European Americans have been situated as the normative group. That is, the norms and rules of the European American group have been the focus of study while other racial and ethnic groups have been neglected (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). As such, the vast majority of research reviewed earlier situates interracial/interethnic conflict around the experiences of the dominant group (e.g., European American/African American conflict, European American/Latino–Latina conflict, etc.). What is largely absent from the literature are studies that focus on intraracial and intraethnic conflict—or any studies that do not involve European Americans—as a legitimate area of study in its own right (Houston, 2002). The earlier mentioned study by Zhang et al. (2005) accomplishes this call for intraracial and intraethnic research by examining conflict between intergenerational Chinese dyads.

Existing research is also limited in the ways in which the conflict styles of people of color are situated, both explicitly and implicitly, in comparison with European Americans (see, e.g., Orbe, 1995). Traditionally, European American conflict styles have been situated as the norm (Donahue, 1985); divergent styles were misinterpreted as strange, deviant, incompetent, and unproductive (see, e.g., descriptions from Kochman, 1981). More recently, several scholars have revealed how historical conceptualizations of conflict styles reflect Eurocentric values; the most notable examples involve the conflict strategies of Asian and Native Americans. Specifically, M. -S. Kim and Leung (2000) critiqued widely accepted conflict management styles that define avoidance style as reflecting a low concern for self and other. They argued that a Eurocentric bias failed to conceptualize the strategy, when enacted by Asians, as positively related to one's desire to preserve relational harmony (high concern for self and other). Similar insights have been offered regarding the use of silence by Native Americans—not as avoidance but as a means to communicate uncertainty, ambiguity, or a respect for the unknown power of others (Braithwaite, 1990).

Essentializing Generalizations

A significant limitation of existing research on race, ethnicity, and conflict are the ways in which studies have contributed to the creation of preferred conflict styles of prototypical "culture-typed" persons (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). In other words, much of the research has contributed to a universal iconography (Orbe, 1995) of racial/ethnic conflict styles that gives little, if any, attention to intragroup differences. Instead, stylized forms for each racial/ethnic group have been perpetuated without much scholarly critique (Hecht, Anderson, & Ribeau, 1989).

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Studies have pointed to the importance of considering ethnic, gender, and class differences alongside racial lines (Cook-Gumperz & Szymanski, 2001; Houston & Wood, 1996; Miyahara et al., 1998). However, the majority of research continues to promote racialized conflict styles as normative. A good example of this can be seen within the work of Kochman (1981). His often-cited book, *Black and White Styles in Conflict*, has served as the foundation reference for research on African Americans and European Americans. While his findings are applied generally across contexts, he specified the particular circumstances of Blacks and Whites described in his work: "middle-class whites, the white group I have been writing about, and Blacks whose social networks exists almost entirely within the Black community" (p. 165). Research often fails to recognize that conflict is experienced differently by racial/ethnic group members based on factors such as class, gender, age, and spirituality. This point is driven home by Houston (2002), who provided the following caution, and guidance, to researchers:

> While researchers may choose to emphasize one aspect of African Americans' complex, intersecting identities in a particular study, no single aspect should be conceived as universally "more important" than the others. . . . Researchers should take responsibility for finding productive ways of breaking the silences and demonstrating how African Americans construct and perform complex, heterogeneous communicative lives. (p. 37)

Assumption of/Focus on Difference

The essentializing generalizations of racial/ethnic conflict strategies have been grounded in and, in turn, been limited by historical conceptualizations of racial and ethnic groups. In large part, this has meant a focus on, and assumption of, racial/ethnic differences. This is not to say that differences among cultural groups do not exist. Yet existing research is limited in that it pays little, if any, attention to seeking similarities between different racial and ethnic groups. In this regard, few researchers have studied the interpersonal *and* intercultural nature of intergroup encounters (Gallois, 2003). While some studies have reported on both similarities and differences in communication patterns within intraethnic and interethnic relationships (e.g., Collier, 1996), empirical research has *generally* hypothesized differences as the primary means of examination. Quite simply put, "racial/ethnic 'difference' has been the dominant story in research" (Houston, 2002, p. 37).

The dominant focus on racial and ethnic differences does little to acknowledge the similarities that exist between groups or the ways in which diverse groups work together in harmonious ways (Diaz-Veizades & Chang, 1996). As described earlier, much has been written on how cultural differences between African Americans and Korean Americans have resulted in tensions across U.S. urban areas. However, according to the in-depth research of J. Lee (2002), these tensions fail to capture the full range of interactions that oftentimes are positive, supportive, and productive.

Focus on Microlevel Practices

The final limitation described here relates to the focus on microlevel practices, namely, how existing research has concentrated primarily on two areas: (1) the sources of interracial/interethnic conflict and (2) conflict style differences. While these lines of research have produced multiple studies providing significant insight, they have been criticized as doing so through an "evaded analysis of how interpersonal practices connect to larger cultural, historical, and political systems" (Houston, 2002, p. 31). Communication generally, and the

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ways in which individuals engage in conflict specifically, is an essential aspect of one's culture. Yet simply focusing on communication micropractices without recognizing how they are shaped by larger macrolevel frameworks does little to advance understanding of these particular forms of communication (Ribeau, 1995). Contemporary scholars, in fact, have called for research that attends to historical power structures within society (Stephan & Stephan, 2001) that inform present-day hostile cultural distances between different racial and ethnic groups (Gallois, 2003).

Recent research that addresses issues such as interracial conflict, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination also calls for a more progressive approach to social change than increasing the amount of liking between parties in intergroup conflict. Within a collective action perspective, the focus is on mobilization of members of disadvantaged groups, a challenge of the status quo, and destabilization of unjust institutions (Dixon et al., 2010; Klandermans, 1997). Recognizing that the practice is situated within the larger political, economic, and social systems of oppression enhances our understanding considerably (Stephan & Stephan, 2001). In short, existing research has failed to adequately address issues of power in interracial and interethnic conflict.

A number of different communication theories exist that provide useful frameworks for understanding interracial and interethnic communication. These include, but are not limited to, face negotiation theory, communication accommodation theory, anxiety/uncertainty management theory, expectancy violations theory, cultural types theories, integrated threat theory, and the cultural values dimensional grid (for a brief summary, see Nicotera, 2009). Our final section of this chapter turns to another emerging theoretical framework, co-cultural theory, to help frame a discussion of future research and practical applications in the area of interracial and interethnic conflict.

Co-Cultural Theory: A Framework for Future Research and Practical Applications

Co-cultural theory, as described by Orbe (1998a), assists in understanding the ways that people who are traditionally marginalized in dominant societal structures communicate in their everyday lives (see also Orbe & Spellers, 2005). It assumes that communicative behavior is inextricably linked to both cultural standpoints and societal power dynamics. Grounded in muted group (e.g., Kramarae, 1981) and standpoint theories (e.g., Smith, 1987), co-cultural theory is derived from the lived experiences of a variety of "nondominant" groups, including people of color, women, persons with disabilities, gays/lesbians/bisexuals, and those from a lower socioeconomic background. Two epistemological assumptions ground the theory: (1) although representing a widely diverse array of lived experiences, co-cultural group members will share a similar positioning that renders them marginalized within society and (2) to negotiate oppressive dominant forces and achieve any measure of success, co-cultural group members adopt certain communication practices and orientations in their everyday interactions (Orbe, 1998a). While the theory purports to address marginalized group members generally, it has depended largely on the lived experiences of people of color in the United States (e.g., Orbe, 1996).

According to co-cultural theory, six factors influence the strategic selection of different communication practices: (1) field of experience, (2) perceived costs and rewards, (3) abilities, (4) preferred outcomes, (5) communication

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approaches, and (6) situational context. The core concept of the theory incorporates these factors and is best summarized as follows:

> Situated within a particular field of experience that governs their perceptions of the costs and rewards associated with, as well as their ability to engage in, various communicative practices, co-cultural group members will adopt certain communication orientations—based on their preferred outcomes and communication approaches—to fit the circumstances of a specific situation. (Orbe, 1998a, p. 13)

According to the theory, no one particular communication style or set of strategies exists for any particular co-cultural group. Instead, co-cultural theory explores the various ways in which all individuals enact certain strategies depending on the negotiation of the six co-cultural factors.

Since its inception, communication researchers have utilized co-cultural theory to study the communication of different co-cultural groups based on race/ethnicity (e.g., Buzzanell, 1999; Gates, 2003; Matsunaga & Torigoe, 2008; Orbe, 1996, 1998b; Ramirez-Sanchez, 2008). In different contexts, the theory lends insight into the process by which co-cultural group members negotiate their "cultural differentness" with others (with others both like, and unlike, themselves). Such a framework, as noted by Allen (2007), appears especially relevant to the study of interracial/interethnic conflict and the possibility for interracial/interethnic dialogue (see, e.g., Bashir, 2009; Camara & Orbe, 2010; MacLennan, 2011; Miura, 2001; Orbe, 2004). First, co-cultural theory provides a mechanism to gain insight into how racial/ethnic minority group members perceive interracial/interethnic conflict. It also presents the opportunity to situate majority group members (e.g., European Americans) as co-cultural group members in certain settings (Harris, Miller, & Trego, 2004). Second, the theoretical framework allows researchers and practitioners to explore how power, explicitly and implicitly, is manifested within interracial and interethnic conflict situations. Power, in this regard, can be situated as both a negative and positive power force (Hammond, Anderson, & Cissna, 2003). Third, and most important, given the existing work on interracial/interethnic conflict, co-cultural theory represents a holistic theoretical framework that captures how the selection of certain communicative practices (i.e., strategies) is negotiated around six different factors (Lapinski & Orbe, 2007). Unlike much of the current literature, it does not presume a unidimensional relationship between race/ethnicity and conflict style. Instead, it purports to understand the multiple factors that potentially have the greatest saliency during interracial/interethnic conflict episodes without ignoring the larger societal structures that frame them.

Future Research

As described earlier, existing research on interracial and interethnic conflict is limited by traditional empirical approaches that largely have reflected a Eurocentric bias and produced findings that essentialize culture-typed microlevel communicative practices of individuals from different racial and ethnic groups. The challenge for future research, then, is to address these limitations through innovative studies that make contributions beyond what currently exists. Within this larger context is also the need to determine relevant intervening variables that assist in understanding the complexities of the influence of culture on conflict behavior (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). While these potential variables are countless, we situate co-cultural theory as a productive framework to outline potential lines of research on race, ethnicity, and conflict. In this section, we specifically discuss future research as it relates

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to situational context, field of experience, communication approach, abilities, perceived costs and rewards, and preferred outcome. Throughout each description, we also highlight the ways in which this research can be applied in various contexts.

Situational Context

In all communication interactions, considerations of situational context are important. Some scholars argue that conflict styles are not static patterns of behavior but are influenced by the situation (Stephan & Stephan, 2001); individuals are flexible and change their behavior during conflict (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 1993). Within co-cultural theory, "different practices are considered the most appropriate and effective depending on the specific situational circumstances" (Orbe, 1998a, p. 98). In other words, conflict styles can be strategically selected to meet the needs of any particular situation. Existing research on race/ethnicity and conflict has concentrated primarily on that which occurs during interactions between people of different racial and ethnic groups. Additional research is warranted that examines both intragroup and intergroup conflict across a variety of contexts. Only through multiple studies, across diverse settings, will existing findings be understood contextually.

How conflict is negotiated by various racial and ethnic group members can be studied by diversifying both relational and situational contexts. By relational contexts, we are referring to studies that look at conflict within coworkers, family, acquaintances, strangers, and close friends (e.g., Collier, 1996; Houston, 2002; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000; Way, Cowal, Gingold, Pahl, & Bissessar, 2001). This line of research can explore conflict within the context of positive relationships (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). Future research can also include a variety of situational contexts in which to study race/ethnicity and conflict: spiritual centers, athletic teams, various organizations, online computer exchanges, and the like (Shuter & Turner, 1997; Vance, 2002/2003). Both positive and negative in-group/out-group situations (Tzeng & Jackson, 1994) as well as task/social contexts (Bradford, Meyers, & Kane, 1999) can also be investigated (Tzeng & Jackson, 1994). Ultimately, scholars can explore "the combined effects of context" (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000, p. 259) within both intra- and intergroup conflict. Results that demonstrate divergent conflict strategies for different contexts should be viewed, not as "waffling, hypocritical, or pathological" (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000, p. 249), but as responsive, flexible, and effective. Examples of this type of research include recent studies that examine the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) as a means of addressing and managing interethnic/interracial conflict. Walther (2009) found that CMC has the potential to reduce interethnic hostilities in ways that surpass face-to-face communication. This particular study encouraged interethnic CMC groups to focus on an external task as a means of reducing attention on divisive intergroup differences. Great possibility exists for the Internet to serve as an important vehicle for globalization and minimizing racial and cultural tensions between groups and nations (Mollov & Schwartz, 2010).

Field of Experience

Field of experience, according to co-cultural theory, is the sum total of a person's life occurrences (Orbe, 1998a). This factor encourages the exploration of past socialization on current conflict behaviors, something that could facilitate countless studies on race, ethnicity, and conflict. For instance, as a means to build on existing research on any one racial/ethnic group, scholars can explore how particular

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experiences related to gender, age, socioeconomic status, spirituality, sexuality, nation of origin, family type, and the like also influence how conflict is conceptualized and negotiated (Houston, 2002). Orbe and Allen (2008) refer to such efforts as reflective of multifocal-relational scholarship. In addition, research can begin to explore the effect of particular experiences (e.g., media exposure, integrated schooling, spiritual teachings) on current conflict practices. In this regard, exploring the field of experiences of different individuals' essentializing generalizations can be problematized by identifying intragroup differences.

Culture traditionally has been studied as if it were a static variable; a more effective means to capture its dynamic nature is to describe it as "culturing" (Rodriguez, 2003/2004). A similar perspective should be advanced in terms of studies exploring the field of experiences of individuals. Within this line of research, scholars can study how recent/current conflict experience—including the ways in which conflict styles are maintained or adapted—affect future preferences (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). For example, research studies can attempt to discern whether participation in a study on conflict influences individual awareness, or use, of alternative styles of conflict. In other words, does the experience of participation affect future preferences and behaviors? In a similar vein, conflict resolution practitioners can explore what lessons, exercises, or activities have the greatest influence toward reducing the negative consequences of interracial and interethnic conflict.

Communication Approach

Within co-cultural theory, "communication approach" refers to specific co-cultural practices that are regarded as nonassertive, assertive, or aggressive behaviors by the persons who enact them (Orbe, 1998a). Within a larger context, however, it can also be seen as a synonym for communication style. Of each of the co-cultural factors discussed in this section, communication approach/style is the one that has attracted the greatest attention from interracial and interethnic conflict scholars thus far. As described in our review of existing literature, a large body of work has been completed that delineates the particular communication approaches of different racial and ethnic groups. Future research, consequently, can continue to generate an understanding of how conflict styles are developed, challenged, and/or ultimately extended.

One potential avenue for research in this area is to investigate the complex ways in which intragroup and intergroup conflict can be seen as a site of identity negotiation (Hecht et al., 2003). According to Hecht's (1993) communication theory of identity, identity is co-created through four different frames (personal, enacted, relational, and communal). Existing research on communication approaches have typically focused on what occurs within the enacted frame (i.e., how identity is communicated to others). Additional research can begin to explore the negotiation of multiple frames simultaneously, or the "interpenetration of frames" (Hecht, 1993, p. 80), something that can enhance our understanding of race, ethnicity, and conflict on multiple levels (Golden, Niles, & Hecht, 2002). In particular, research can explore how identification with larger groups affects communication approaches to conflict situations (e.g., Ting-Toomey et al., 2000), or how intergroup interactions are negotiated around multiple dimensions of in-group/out-group positioning (e.g., Ramirez-Sanchez, 2008). Existing research on racial and ethnic communication approaches to conflict is highly regarded in terms of its depth and breadth, but more information is needed in terms of how conflict styles are a reflection of larger identity issues. As Hecht et al. (2003) stated, "If identities are negotiated in everyday conversations

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and if identity negotiation is a process, then we need much more information about the negotiation process itself" (pp. 253–254).

Abilities

According to co-cultural theory, another factor that influences the selection of communicative practices, including those enacted during conflict, are the abilities of individuals (Orbe, 1998b). Existing research has done some work to establish what is appropriate, expected, and satisfying within different cultures (Hecht et al., 1992; Hecht, Ribeau, et al., 1989; Martin et al., 1994). Additional research is needed, however, in terms of the abilities of different racial and ethnic group members to enact specific strategies. For instance, research can explore the range of abilities within and across different groups (Orbe, 1998a), as well as individuals' capability to enact conflict strategies that seemingly contradict in-group cultural norms. Existing studies on code-switching (e.g., Seymour & Seymour, 1979) could be used as a foundation for these efforts. Yet the focus, according to Ribeau (1995), should not be on universal, generalized definitions of what constitutes competence or incompetence, but instead on the ongoing abilities to manage interracial/interethnic conversations effectively in diverse settings. In this regard, what is seen as appropriate behavior should be consistent with intra- and interracial/interethnic norms, situational demands, and individual responses (Hecht et al., 2003; Ribeau, 1995).

A particularly interesting line of research within this topical focus could involve individuals who are bicultural or multicultural. According to M. -S. Kim and Leung (2000), "whether through immigration, sojourning, marriage, adoption, or birth, a wide range of people are actively carrying the frames of reference of two or more cultures" (p. 253). Adler (1987; see also Bennett, 1993) suggested that multicultural people can embrace all aspects of their multiple cultural experiences; such individuals may be capable of reconciling the conflicts posed by competing styles and, ultimately, achieve high levels of communication competence within different cultural contexts. Hence, future research can explore how the ability to enhance one's effectiveness during conflict situations is informed by a multicultural identity. For instance, Lindsley and Braithwaite (1996), in their research on U.S. managers in *maquiladoras* (U.S. American–owned assembly plants in Mexico), presented some evidence that continuous and everyday interracial/interethnic interactions can lead to a multicultural identity (Adler, 1987). In a similar vein, Hamby (2003/2004) explored the communication of biracial (Black/White) individuals in the African American community. Her assertion was that a fully integrated biracial identity, in this context, incorporated conflict styles traditionally associated with both European Americans and African Americans. While such research could look at the abilities of such persons, other potential studies could explore how individuals conceptualize varying perceived costs and rewards of interracial/interethnic interactions.

Perceived Costs and Rewards

Every communicative behavior, including those used during times of conflict, has potential costs and rewards. According to co-cultural theory, individuals who are marginalized in terms of societal power (e.g., people of color in the United States) give consciousness to the consequences of behaviors prior to enactment (Orbe, 1998a). Other scholars (Todd-Mancillas, 2000) have argued that the process of co-cultural communication applies to all persons, including those in the dominant group (e.g., European Americans). Research that examines the strategic selection of conflict strategies is important to advance

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existing research that primarily has relied on the assumption that culture and communicative behaviors during conflict are inextricably linked. A relevant line of research within this topical area is the identification of what, if any, correlations can be found between the perceived costs and rewards associated with different conflict strategies. In addition, scholars can explore the process by which different racial and ethnic group members negotiate these costs and rewards in different settings (see, e.g., social exchange theory research; Cox & Kramer, 1995; Welch-Cline, 1987).

In addition to exploring the perceived costs and rewards associated with different conflict strategies, future research can also focus on the positive and negative outcomes of conflict episodes themselves. A significant amount of literature has concentrated on the sources of conflict and the ways in which divergent styles have exacerbated interracial and interethnic conflict. Yet equal attention needs to be paid to the positive effects of conflict, especially those that appear to be unlikely in the absence of conflict (Hammond et al., 2003). For example, Hoffman (1990), in her research on Iranian immigrants in California, found that cultural conflicts between immigrants and U.S. Americans were seen as a significant source of learning. She concluded that "the dominant research orientation of the intercultural field, characterized by a concern with culture differences and culture conflict, has often obscured consideration for the dimensions of cultural learning that transcend the experience of conflict" (Hoffman, 1990, p. 275). Additional studies are needed that examine conflict within the context of intercultural learning.

Preferred Outcome

A major contribution of co-cultural theory to existing theoretical work on culture and communication is the recognition that not all traditionally marginalized group members strive toward assimilation into dominant group norms; other alternatives like accommodation and separation also exist (Orbe, 1996). Applying co-cultural theory to interracial and interethnic conflict facilitates an understanding that people of color can consciously choose conflict behaviors that lead to desired outcomes. In this regard, some consciousness is given to how particular communication practices during conflict affect immediate and ultimate relationships with others. While qualitative evidence exists on the association of different co-cultural practices with specific preferred outcomes (Orbe, 1998a), additional research can demonstrate patterns through content analyses (Camara & Orbe, 2010) and correlations via empirical studies (e.g., Lapinski & Orbe, 2007). One recent example of this is the examination of the use of an informal intermediary in intercultural conflict situations as a means of saving and giving face (S. Lee, 2008).

A contact hypothesis suggests that increased exposure to diverse groups will, over time, lead to better intergroup relations (Stephan & Stephan, 2001). Several conditions are necessary for this to occur, however, including equal-status interactions, common goals, and commitment to humanity. Given this, it is no surprise that existing research has established that when individuals have contact without these conditions, the result is increased negative perceptions of those from different racial and ethnic groups (Tzeng & Jackson, 1994). Co-cultural theory suggests that preferred outcome is informed by past experiences, direct or indirect, with those who are racially/ethnically different (Orbe, 1998a). Future research can explore the sense-making processes that result in rigid or flexible preferred outcomes for various contexts of interracial/interethnic conflict. In addition, it can also explore how particular conflict episodes affect the future

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preferred outcomes of different individuals (M. -S. Kim & Leung, 2000). In other words, what conflict or harmonious interactions with others ultimately can facilitate a shift in preferred outcome?

Conclusion

Given current and future demographic shifts of racially and ethnically diverse groups in the United States, the topic of interracial/interethnic conflict undoubtedly will continue to gain importance for both researchers and practitioners. While such conflict managed effectively can have positive effects on long-term interracial and interethnic relations (e.g., Hoffman, 1990), this is not the case when issues regarding race are not adequately addressed (Allen, 1995; Donahue, 1985). According to Waters (1992), "race-based conflicts undermine organizational unity, sap energy and motivation, create tensions, and, if not handled properly, lead to further feelings of hostility and resentment" (p. 439). Successfully negotiating racial and ethnic conflict and establishing peace in interracial encounters can be very challenging (Ross, 2000). This is especially the case when educational training approaches do not meet the needs of the population that is being served (see Stephan & Stephan, 2001, for a conceptualization of programmatic approaches). Within this final section, we discuss how this challenge can best be met by understanding the inseparable overlap between research and practice.

The most effective research informs, and is informed by, everyday practice (Orbe, 2003/2004). To avoid privileging research over practice, we must also acknowledge that the most effective everyday practices inform, and are informed by, research. In this regard, an important implication for the future of studies on race, ethnicity, and conflict revolves around the creation, implementation, and evaluation of projects that make a difference in communities outside of the academy. This concept is not a new one, as race and communication scholars have advocated for community-cognizant (Houston, 2000) and action-sensitive research (Orbe, 1995). An important consideration in these efforts is realizing that the lines between researcher and practitioner are blurred. According to Trujillo (2002/2003), "there is only a barely discernible demarcation between researcher and practitioner. . . . In truth, the worlds of the practitioner-scholar and the research-scholar mutually reinforce and sustain each other" (p. 3).

The most effective means to address conflict steeped in racial and ethnic tensions is at the grassroots level (Ross, 2000). Research consistently reveals that a sure avenue toward reducing interracial/interethnic conflict is through continuous, meaningful contact (Habke & Sept, 1993). This contact can lead to the breakdown of negative images and stereotypes that may be held by different racial and ethnic groups (Ross, 2000). Once authentic relationships can be formed, both parties need to be flexible in their communication along with realizing and acknowledging that there are differences, as well as similarities, between racial groups (Habke & Sept, 1993; Orbe, 2004). Recognizing that you might not understand characteristics of a certain group, resisting the tendency to impose your standards on another racial/ethnic group, respecting how others may interpret things, and not overemphasizing differences are all ways to improve interracial interaction (Houston & Wood, 1996).

In closing, we acknowledge that many individuals may regard the challenges inherent in both interracial/interethnic conflict and existing tensions between scholars and practitioners as insurmountable (Trujillo, 2002/2003). While we recognize such is the case for some of the barriers that must be overcome in the work that we advocate for within this chapter, we

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do so with three points in mind. First, conflict situated within racial and ethnic tensions will increase unless proactive, informed efforts are introduced at the community level. Second, the most effective means to address the issue of interracial and interethnic conflict is through the collaborative efforts of scholars and practitioners. Third, the base of knowledge cultivated through the field of human communication holds significant potential to assist in the transformation of our society. To meet our potential, we must recognize and address limitations within our own work, and in doing so, we generate tremendous opportunities for all.

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26

Intercultural and Intergroup Conflict Resolution

Nonviolence and Middle Way Approaches

Tenzin Dorjee

As long as humans exist on this planet, conflicts are inevitable in our relationships and interactions. We experience all kinds of conflicts from interpersonal to organizational, and from community to intercultural and international conflicts (see Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2006). Unlike interpersonal conflicts, intergroup and intercultural conflicts are based on sociocultural group memberships (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2010). Among these conflicts, ethnopolitical conflicts (e.g., Middle East Crisis and Sino-Tibetan Conflict) are the most challenging ones. These conflict types not only involve complex multiple issues such as status quo, identity, freedom, and human rights but also have an impact on bilateral and multilateral relationships between nations (e.g., Coleman, 2006; Fisher, 2006).

From a communication perspective, dialogue is the most reasonable approach to resolve intergroup conflicts. It is a communicative process that involves meaningful and constructive interaction and exchanges of ideas without polemics and polarization (Zediker & Stewart, 2005). Others have defined dialogue as a shared inquiry and reflection that you do with others (Isaacs, 1999), and a systematic process for "transforming conflictual, dysfunctional or destructive relationships" (Saunders, 2009, p. 376). According to the Dalai Lama, the 20th century was the century of bloodshed but this 21st century should be the century of dialogue. For his global peace leadership, nonviolence, and middle way approaches (MWA), the Dalai Lama received many distinguished awards. Some notable awards include the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, the 2007 United States Congressional Gold Medal, and the 2011 Mahatma Gandhi International Award for Reconciliation and Peace, among others.

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The purpose of this chapter is to discuss His Holiness the Dalai Lama's nonviolence and MWAs to further research on intergroup and intercultural conflicts and resolution. It is organized in several sections. The first section discusses the nonviolence approach, drawing largely from the Buddhist literature. The second section introduces and reviews the MWA and its philosophical underpinning. Third, an intergroup perspective on conflicts is proffered. Fourth, the intergroup perspective is applied to the Sino-Tibetan conflict issues largely missing in previous conflict studies. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of the core ideas and future theoretical directions.

Nonviolence Approach

Nonviolence is crucial to building a culture that promotes peaceful conflict resolution, dialogues, and consensus building (UNESCO, 2011). It is not a new idea because it has been theorized and discussed in at least three major world religious traditions: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. These traditions have existed over several thousands of years and use *Ahimsa* (nonviolence) as a core guiding principle for social interaction. Broadly stated, *Ahimsa* means not harming. Peace and nonviolence are the two sides of the same coin. However, *Ahimsa* or nonviolence is not simply an absence of war and violence. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian nation and a devout Hindu, adopted *Ahimsa* in his political leadership and activism to free India from the British rule. Following his footsteps, Dr. Martin Luther King and the Dalai Lama adopted nonviolence in civil rights and global peace leadership, respectively. The Dalai Lama argues that this century should be the century of dialogue and cooperation.

Today, the Dalai Lama has become the most visible symbol of peace and nonviolence around the world. For over 50 years in exile and even at his advanced age, the Dalai Lama travels around the world promoting three missions of his life: (1) *secular values* such as compassion and tolerance, (2) interreligious harmony, and (3) peaceful resolution of the Sino-Tibetan ethnopolitical conflicts (see www.dalailama.com). On September 17, 2011, in his public talk "Harmony Through Universal Responsibility" in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the Dalai Lama claimed,

> The concept of war and use of force is outdated. . . . In order to make the life in 21st century more peaceful, harmonious, and stable, we must learn to resolve all differences and problems through dialogue, and for that, younger people who are very much part of the 21st century should pay more attention to inner values or secular ethics and learn to respect others even if there are serious differences over the belief system and ideology. (www.tibet.net, September 18, 2011)

The Dalai Lama's core values, including respect and appreciation for other religious traditions, have largely been derived from and informed by his Buddhist learning, training, and practice.

Nonviolence Principles in Buddhism

Nonviolence (*Ahimsa*) is a cardinal guiding principle in Buddhism. Simply put, nonviolence in Buddhism means not to harm anyone through physical, verbal, and mental actions. Harmful or violent actions belong to the category of negative actions or negative karma. Physical actions (e.g., beating and torture), verbal actions (e.g., threat and hurtful speech), and mental actions (e.g., harmful intent and malicious thought) are violence. Nonviolence means not to indulge in physical, verbal, and mental harmful actions. A clear case of nonviolence involves positive/peaceful motivation and concomitant physical and/or verbal action. In a conflict situation, if one, out of respect, intentionally refrains from saying

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and/or doing anything (e.g., verbal or nonverbal emotional abuse) to hurt, the conflict partner is considered a nonviolent practitioner. A clear case of violence involves negative motivation and harmful physical and/or verbal action. Intentionally abusing someone physically and/or verbally is violence. If individuals act physically and verbally out of anger, hostility, malicious thought, and antagonism, their actions constitute violence. However, if they act physically and verbally out of the motivations of love, altruism, compassion, and kindness, their actions could be recognized as nonviolence practices. In light of these, individuals can choose to take a nonviolence stance, as Gandhi did and the Dalai Lama does, out of the motivation of compassion and kindness.

Violence and nonviolence are primarily defined in terms of negative or positive motivation of those who perform the actions (Gyatso, 1991, 1999; Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). According to Buddhism, the ultimate test of whether or not an action is violent can be judged by investigating the motivation/intention of the actors. A model is presented (see Figure 26.1) to describe four possibilities concerning nonviolent and violent practices. Quadrant 1 consists of nonviolence practice that is positive in terms of both motivation and action as in altruistically motivated peace talks. Quadrant 2 consists of nonviolence practice with positive motivation but perceived negative behavior such as altruistically motivated social activism and self-immolation (see later section). Quadrant 3 consists of pseudoviolence practice with negative motivation but perceived positive behavior. Finally, Quadrant 4 consists of violence practice with negative motivation and negative behavior such as discrimination and torture motivated by anger and hostility. Of these, Quadrants 2 and 3 challenge the notion—seeing is believing, but not necessarily so.

Regarding Quadrant 2, caring doctors may have to use invasive measure to help their patients, or caring teachers may admonish or whack students on their back or upper arms for their well-being and lessons in some cultural contexts (some Buddhist monasteries). Their behaviors may look violent, but they

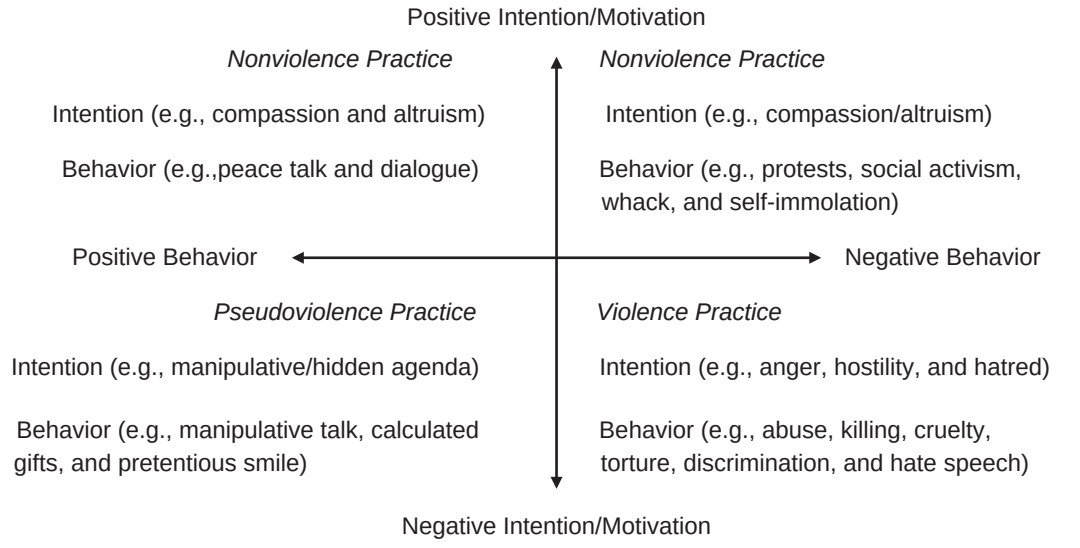

Figure 26.1 Nonviolent Practice Versus Violent Practice Model: Four Quadrants

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are not from positive motivational point of view. In the Nalanda Tradition of Buddhism, there are many meditational deities such as Yamantaka, Mahakala, and Shri Devi who look fierce and wrathful and hold weapon-like symbols (see Rhie, Thurman, & Taylor, 1996), but these deities are not considered angry or violent. These are regarded as wrathful manifestation of great compassion and enlightened wisdom to subdue negative afflictions such as anger and lust in human mind. Relatedly, Quadrant 3 also challenges our senses because *seemingly* peaceful physical and/or verbal action look and sound good, but due to negative motivation, they constitute violent practice as in manipulative sweet talk to hurt others. These cases indicate that the standards of violence or nonviolence in Buddhism are different from conventional understanding of such actions. Having the motivation of compassion does not require individuals to follow certain established religions. Compassion has a secular nature.

Secular Nature of Compassion

The Dalai Lama's global peace initiatives including dialogues for intergroup harmony are grounded in nonviolence from both Buddhism and Secular perspectives. Nonviolence is rooted in compassion. Bodhisattva literature (e.g., Gyatso, 1988, 1991, 1999; Shantideva, 1979) theorized about great compassion (*Mahakaruna*) and great love (*Mahamaitri*). While the former is defined as altruistic mind wishing all sentient beings to be free of suffering and its root causes, the latter is defined as altruistic mind wishing all sentient beings happiness and its root causes. Firmly believing in these and other altruistic values (e.g. tolerance, respect, and forgiveness), the Dalai Lama promotes them to finding intrapersonal peace and global peace and resolving intergroup issues. Importantly, the Dalai Lama argues that these values are *secular* in nature and, therefore, can be cultivated by both believers and nonbelievers. In his speech (April 14, 2011) on "the Power of Forgiveness" at the University of Limerick in Ireland, he applauded Richard Moore who befriended the British soldier, Charles Inness, who had blinded him at age 10 by a rubber bullet (www.dalailama.com). Moore never felt anger or grudge against the soldier, and the Dalai Lama calls him his hero and even invited him to speak about his life and forgiveness to the Tibetan children at the Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamsala, India. The Dalai Lama has inspired scientists from various fields of study, such as neuroscience, psychology, and psychiatry, to explore the importance of secular values for the betterment of humanity. Scientific investigations are, for example, conducted at famed universities such as University of Wisconsin, Emory University, and Stanford University in the United States to find correlation as well as causal relationships between compassion and brain and biological systems, and between secular ethics and human well-being (www.mindandlife.org).

The Dalai Lama often meets with scientists to exchange scholarship on mind and life matters. In such meetings, scientists and traditional scholars would exchange their radically different perspectives on understanding consciousness, cognition, and emotions to further the cause of human well-being (see Luisi & Houshmand, 2009). The Dalai Lama has explored parallels between Science of Mind in the Nalanda Tradition of Buddhism and science in his book *The Universe in a Single Atom* (Lama, 2005). The John Templeton Foundation presented the 2012 Templeton Award to His Holiness the Dalai Lama especially recognizing his "long-standing engagement with multiple dimensions of science and with people far beyond his own religious traditions" (see www.templetonprize.org/currentwinner.html, 2012, para. 1). He authored two important books on secular

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ethics for a better social world: *Ethics for New Millennium* (Lama, 1999) and *Beyond Religions* (Lama, 2011). In these books, he persuasively argues that despite material progress there are many social problems such as inequality and corruption across rich and poor countries, and these could be linked to neglecting moral ethics and inner values such as compassion and warm heartedness.

In essence, the nonviolence approach involves introspecting one's motivation. Introspection is defined as a secondary mental state that enables the mind to spy on itself and aid in generating mindfulness (Rinbochay & Napper, 1981). Meditation and training of the mind essentially requires employing introspection (Tibetan: *Shes zhin*) and mindfulness (Tibetan: *Dren pa*). It is contended that positive motivation (e.g., compassion, love, and respect) leads to positive physical and verbal actions including nonviolence, and negative motivation (e.g., antagonistic anger, hatred, and obsessive attachment) leads to negative actions including violence. Tibetan Buddhism discusses threefold approach—listening, contemplation, and meditation (Tibetan: *Thos Sam Gom Sum*)—for training one's mind to accomplish universal peace and enlightenment (Gyatso, 1991, 1999; Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). It is contended that nonviolent practice enables individuals to act out of compassion without anger and hostility. For example, Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan monk who had been tortured in the communist prison in Tibet for 33 years (see Gyatso, 1997), reported that he had nothing but compassion for his perpetrators and held no anger and hostility toward them. Nobel Peace Laureate Nelson Mandela established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa to bring social justice and peace through nonviolence principle and practice. The Dalai Lama admires and appreciates these peaceful nonviolent practices such as forgiveness, speaking power of truth, and reconciliation.

Inspired by the Dalai Lama's messages of nonviolence and secular ethnics, The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education was established at the Stanford University. It actively engages in scientific research and discussion on compassion and altruism and their effect on people's emotional and physiological well-being (see ccare.stanford.edu). A special class of teaching in Tibetan Buddhism called "Thought Transformation or Mind Training" (Tibetan: *Lo Jong*; see *Mind Training: The Great Collection*, Jinpa, 2006) presents a systematic and pragmatic approach and explanation on cultivating positive states of mind such as compassion, love, and altruism to counteract negative states of mind such as lack of empathy, hatred, and egoism. These core values of the Dalai Lama's personal practices, and public appearances can further the culture of peace, harmony, and dialogues as recognized by the UNESCO. As discussed below, the culture of peace and nonviolence are central to the Dalai Lama's MWA to resolve Sino-Tibetan conflict.

Middle Way Approach

We need multiple perspectives to understand and manage conflicts of all kinds. Conflict research offers insights into three approaches to conflict, namely, dispositional, situational, and systems approach (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012; Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001), and into a wide range of conflict management styles—dominating, avoiding, obliging, compromising, and integrating (Deutsch, Coleman, & Marcus, 2006), and emotional expression, passive aggression, and third-party help (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). Interculturally stated, individuals with individualistic cultural orientation are likely to attach most importance to self-face concern and use dominating and upfront conflict management style, whereas those with collectivistic cultural orientation

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are likely to use a wide range of conflict styles—avoiding, obliging, compromising, and integrating—due to other- and mutual-face concerns (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). The MWA is a mutually beneficial approach because it attaches much importance to the mutual-face concerns of both conflict parties and offers middle way solutions to address their main concerns.

MWA is profoundly informed by Arya Nagarjuna's Middle Way Approach Philosophy (MWA-P) and the law of interdependent origination. Subscribing firmly to these fundamental principles of Nalanda Tradition of Buddhism, the Dalai Lama strongly advocates them in his public teachings and talks. In light of this and for a deeper understanding and appreciation of MWA, the underlying MWA principles are briefly discussed first.

A Middle Way Approach Philosophy (MWA-P): Between Nihilism and Eternalism

According to the Nalanda Tradition of Buddhism, individuals who aspire for liberation (*Nirvana*) and Full Enlightenment (*Mahabodhi*) must realize emptiness (*Shunyata*) or ultimate reality, that is, the ontological status of how everything actually exists. The best approach to realize emptiness is through the reasoning of interdependent origination (*Pratitsamudpad*) and MWA (Gyatso, 1999; Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). Of all the Buddhist philosophical presentations, Arya Nagarjuna's elucidation of the middle way is regarded the most authentic presentation of emptiness or *shunyata* (see Komito, 1987; Napper, 1989). Its basic principles are precisely identifying and refuting the extreme views, establishing and affirming the middle way, and cultivating deep insight into it through the threefold approach: listening, contemplation, and meditation (*Thos Sam Gom Sum*). For Tibetan Buddhists, these are not just principles for intellectual exercise but actual practices leading to spiritual enlightenment.

Theoretically stated, MWA-P is free of the two extreme viewpoints referred to as nihilism and eternalism (Gyatso, 1999; Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). Nagarjuna has presented definitive commentary on understanding and refuting these extreme viewpoints and establishing emptiness. Nihilism refers to the denial of the conventional existence of phenomena including karmic actions and their outcomes such as asserting that it does not matter what one does—good or bad—because nothing really exists is an example of nihilism. According to the theory of Karma, positive actions produce positive results, and negative actions produce negative results (Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). Anyone who claims that phenomena are an illusion and nothing really exists has fallen into the extreme of nihilism. Karmic actions have real consequences.

In contrast, eternalism refers to the assertion that phenomena exist inherently, that is, in and of themselves (Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). For example, asserting that a beautiful flower exists from its own side without the need for its causes and conditions and label is an eternalistic view. Basically, this entails rejecting the law of causality and interdependent nature of phenomena (relativity). Precisely identifying these extreme views from subjective point of view and refuting them is essential to affirm the middle way (see Table 26.1). These views are mutually exclusive and antithetical. The middle view is free of nihilism and eternalism.

These principles can be applied to enjoying a cup of coffee. A cup of coffee is a result or product of many causes and conditions (e.g., coffee beans, coffee maker, electricity, water, coffee strainer, and coffee brewing). This means that a cup of coffee exists relatively or dependently, not inherently or independently. However, we do not necessarily see a cup of coffee as a result of so many interdependent causes and conditions. We innately perceive

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Table 26.1 Middle Way Approach Philosophy (MWA-P)

Different Perspectives	*Nihilism (Extreme Position)*	*Middle Way (Free of Extremes)*	*Eternalism (Extreme Position)*
Ontology	Nothing exists ultimately.	Phenomena exist relatively, not inherently (i.e., emptiness).	Phenomena exist inherently (inherent existence).
Epistemology	Nothing is found under ultimate analysis.	Inherent existence is not found under ultimate analysis.	Phenomena should be findable under ultimate analysis.
Axiology	Phenomena are illusion with no substance as with mirage. Ultimately, nothing matters—good or bad. There is no such thing as good and bad karmic actions.	Phenomena are like an illusion because there is a disparity between appearance and reality. They appear to exist inherently but they are empty of inherent existence (i.e., emptiness). Good and bad karmic actions produce their outcomes accordingly.	Phenomena are very real because they exist inherently. There is no disparity between appearance and reality. Good and bad karmic actions exist inherently, and they cannot be changed by any conditions.

that a cup of coffee exists inherently and independently to be enjoyed. Notably, there is a disparity between how a cup of coffee ontologically exists and how we perceive it to exist inherently via mental fabrication. In reality, a cup of coffee exists, but not inherently. This is referred to as its emptiness of inherent existence (*shunyata*). Ontologically, a cup of coffee exists depending on its causes and conditions and, epistemologically, it exists because we know it as a cup of coffee (labeled as such by terms and concepts). For the same reason, all phenomena exist conventionally, but not inherently. The middle way embodies these assertions.

From a conflict perspective, nihilists and eternalists hold radically different views with regard to the ontological existence of phenomena. The former regards *nonexistence* and *noninherent existence* as identical, whereas the latter regards *existence* and *inherent existence* as identical. According to Buddhism, these extreme viewpoints undergird negative emotions (e.g., antagonistic anger, hostility, resentment, jealousy, hatred, and obsessive attachment), which lead to interpersonal and intergroup conflicts. These emotions are destructive in nature and produce negative consequences (Jinpa, 2006; Rinbochay & Napper, 1981). Exploring these deep underlying causes of conflict can further our understanding of emotions in conflict situations (Fisher & Shapiro, 2005; Guerrero & La Valley, 2006; Jones, 2004). From the MWA-P point of view, until and unless the extreme views, described above, are uprooted from within one's mind, interpersonal and intergroup conflicts will emerge. The reason is simple, for as long as the root causes of conflict reside within individuals, conflicts will arise conditioned by external factors such as biased motivation and limited resources.

According to Buddhism, realizing the middle way (direct insight into emptiness), free

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of nihilism and eternalism (Komito, 1987; Napper, 1989), will set individuals free from internal turmoil and suffering and its root causes. Much of the theorizing about emptiness relates to how things appear to us in one way (i.e., inherently), but they exist in another way (interdependently; Gyatso, 1988, 1999; Gyeltsen, 2000; Komito, 1987; Thurman, 1984; Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). Inspired by these principles, MWA-based Dialogue (MWA-D) is discussed below.

Middle Way Approach–Based Dialogue (MWA-D) and Communication Approach

MWA-D contends that intergroup conflict can be resolved through productive dialogue if conflict parties show mutual concerns for the core conflict issues and let go of polarized hard-line positions or win–lose ethnocentric stance. In essence, the MWA-D consists of the following basic principles. First, dialogue is central to resolving intergroup conflict including core issues. Second, recognizing positive interdependent relationship in a conflict situation can lead to intergroup harmony. Third, advocating high mutual concerns is central to intergroup harmony. Fourth, creative thinking that transcends polarized hard-line position is essential to resolving intergroup issues. Last, middle way solution can resolve intergroup conflict amicably.

First of all, MWA-D firmly believes that intergroup conflicts can be resolved through substantive dialogue between the concerned parties. Dialogue promotes a culture of peace and recognizes human's capacity for understanding and conflict resolution (UNESCO, 2000, 2011). According to Boulding (2001), dialogue entails empathetic listening and creative ways of dealing with differences. It is a dynamic, transactional process that allows interactants to explore and become aware of different and shared interpretations of issues, but it does not preclude disagreement (see Broome, this volume). Saunders (1999) contends that dialogue is a process of genuine interaction that relationally changes the conflict parties in that they seriously take into account each other's concerns even when disagreement persists. Neither side has to give up his or her identity. The Dalai Lama calls for genuine interpersonal interaction and intergroup dialogues including Sino-Tibetan dialogues. He has genuinely reached out to the People's Republic of China (PRC) leadership as well as with the Chinese people, especially Chinese intellectuals and students, to resolve Sino-Tibetan issues.

Second, recognizing positive interdependent relationship in a conflict situation can lead to intergroup harmony. In conflict situations, concerned parties are usually bound in negative interdependence. From an intergroup perspective, dominant party maintains status quo by adopting win–lose approach that perpetuates the negative interdependence between the parties and intergroup hostility. According to MWA-D, conflict parties can cultivate positive interdependent relationships that lead to intergroup harmony. In dialogue, "the minds open to take in new ideas and perspectives, modify earlier assumptions, and rethink judgments" (Saunders, 2009, p. 378). Power is not an attribute of an individual or a group but a relational concept (Deutsch, 1973). Conflict parties can negotiate power based on power currencies (i.e., resource control, interpersonal linkages, communication skills, expertise, and others; see Wilmot & Hocker, 2011) to resolve issues. The relational perspective on power teaches us that it is possible to develop intergroup relationship in which power is not used against each other but is used for their mutual benefit. For example, in India, a multicultural and multilingual nation, both central and state governments share their power with people in that Indians, and even Tibetan diasporic members, enjoy freedom to practice their

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identities, faith, languages, and culture. This shared power promotes positive intergroup interdependence, and the rule of law facilitates intergroup conflict resolution (e.g., Hindu–Muslim conflict).

Third, advocating high mutual concerns is central to intergroup harmony. The importance of other- and mutual-face concerns to conflict management across cultures has been well established (Ting-Toomey, 2005). Dialogue allows conflict parties to express their mutual concerns respectfully even if disagreement persists (Saunders, 2009). It is central to building cultures of peace in intergroup setting (Broome, this volume). MWA-D advocates high mutual-face concerns for promoting intergroup harmony. Given the interdependent nature of intergroup relations, altruistic concerns are important to address common issues. According to Mahayana Buddhism, altruism (*Bodhicitta*) that is genuinely putting others before self is essential to becoming fully enlightened being to benefit all sentient beings (Shantideva, 1979; Tsong-Kha-pa, 2000). The Dalai Lama humorously stated that being altruistic is being selfish in an enlightened way. The rationale is simple in that altruistic happiness is all encompassing, and inclusive, but selfish happiness is all exclusive.

Fourth, creative thinking that transcends polarized hard-line positions is essential to resolving intergroup issues. Polemics and hard-line positions strongly reflect incompatible mind-set and values between the parties (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). For example, traditionalists and liberals hold incompatible mind-sets and values regarding marriage. Recently, these incompatible values were represented in the statements issued by President Obama and Republican Presidential Candidate Romney. While the former supported gay marriage, the latter advocated that marriage should be just between a man and a woman. To resolve intergroup issues with regard to marriage, both traditionalists and liberals need to think creatively outside the box to address the needs of both conflict parties for inclusive social world. Fundamentally, all humans share the same desires for happiness, respect, acceptance, and freedom to express their ideas and feelings. Given these, dialogic communication is vital to negotiate the symbolic meanings of different needs and positions in conflict situation. MWA-D advocates collaborative and creative thinking and social creative strategy addressing intergroup conflict issues (see later section).

Last, MWA can resolve intergroup issues. Perhaps, this is the most important element of the MWA-D approach. In the case of marriage, traditionalists and liberals, if willing, can explore ways to find some middle way solution, through dialogic communication, to address their conflict issue. This dialogic communication (Pearce & Pearce, 2000) takes into account respect for the institution of traditional marriage and respect for the institutional need of the liberals for union. Fundamentally, both traditionalists and liberals are seeking the same happiness through intimate interpersonal relationship and institutional recognition for lifelong partnership. One way that is gaining some recognition is civil union in some parts of the United States of America (e.g., Hawaii and Las Vegas and elsewhere). Possibly, legalizing civil union is a socially creative strategy to address the conflict issue between traditionalists and liberals. Cosmopolitan communication (see Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997) can enable finding a better institutional solution that is equal to the traditional marriage institution. Even in intractable conflicts such as Sino-Tibetan ethnopolitical conflict, middle way solution offers hopes for conflict resolution and intergroup harmony. In a nutshell, MWA-based solution (MWA-S), described below, addresses the main concerns of the PRC and the Tibetans within the framework of the PRC's constitution (see Table 26.2).

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Table 26.2 Middle Way Approach–Based Solution (MWA-S)

One Extreme	*The Middle Way*	*One Extreme*
Tibetan independence (Tibetan Youth Congress and Rangzen Alliance's position)	Genuine autonomy for Tibet within the federation of the PRC (the Dalai Lama and CTA's position)	Current status and condition of Tibet
		The PRC's position (domination and oppression)

NOTE: CTA = Central Tibetan Administration; PRC = People's Republic of China.

Middle Way Approach–Based Solution to Sino-Tibetan Conflict

Nonviolence and middle way philosophy are the core principles of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan diaspora's MWA to address Sino-Tibetan ethnopolitical conflict. Buddhism is one of the most important dimensions of Tibetan sociocultural identity (Dorjee & Giles, 2009; Gyatso, 1999), and their struggle overall has been grounded in nonviolence (Gerstein & Kirkpatrick, 2006). Even those who call for complete Tibetan independence (e.g., Tibetan Youth Congress and International Tibet Independence Movement) agree with the nonviolence approach adopted by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). CTA has adopted MWA to resolve Sino-Tibetan issues but not without critics (see J. Norbu, 2009; Smith, 2008). Sino-Tibetan relation is embedded in a complex and contested history over many centuries (Davis, 2008; Gerstein & Kirkpatrick, 2006; Goldstein, 1989; D. Norbu, 2001; Shakabpa, 1967; Smith, 2008), and differentiated social–cultural identities (Dorjee, 2006; Dorjee, Giles, & Barker, 2011).

The PRC's White Paper (2004) on Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet claims that Tibet has been an inalienable part of China since ancient times (mainly two historical periods: the 7th and the 13th centuries). According to Tibetan history (D. Norbu, 2001; Shakabpa, 1967), Tibet was a power in Central Asia in the 7th century, and the Tibetan Emperor Songtsen Gampo married Tang Princess Wen Cheng and Nepali Princess Bhrikuti. Tibet, China, and Nepal remained independent nations regardless of these matrimonial alliances.

In recent times, the PRC claimed Tibet based on Manchu rule over Tibet in the 13th century (see Davis, 2008; Shakabpa, 1967). Shakabpa (1967) and Smith (2008) described that Tibet established priest–patron relationship (Tibetan: *Chos yon gyi grel wa*) with the Mongol Empire in 1247 AD. Having proclaimed the Yuan Dynasty, Mongol King Kublai Khan administered China and Tibet separately and differently. Mongol Emperors honored leading Tibetan lamas, namely, Sakya Pandita and Chosgyal Phagpa, as their Royal Priests. The PRC has politicized this Priest–Patron relationship (which continued into later Ming and Qing Dynasties) into sovereignty over Tibet. Davis (2008) states, "A closer look at Sino-Tibetan history reveals a more nuanced story and hardly one that would justify such claim" (p. 7). Against these backdrops Sino-Tibetan dialogues have been conducted.

Sino-Tibetan Dialogue

The Dalai Lama has always believed that Sino-Tibetan issues can be addressed through dialogue. In the early 1970s, he had discussed

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the seed ideas of what is now called MWA with his cabinet and concerned officials of Tibetan administration. In 1979, PRC leader Deng Xiaoping invited Mr. Gyalo Dhondup, elder brother of the Dalai Lama, to visit him and told him that except for Tibetan Independence all Sino-Tibetan issues could be discussed and resolved through dialogue. Importantly, this message became the instrumental basis for Sino-Tibetan talks.

While there were some off and on Sino-Tibetan meetings in the 1980s (Smith, 2008), direct contact was renewed with the Central Government of the PRC in 2002. Since then, nine rounds of talks have been held between the envoys of the Dalai Lama and their counterparts from the Central United Front Work Department (CUFWD) of the PRC.

Importantly, on July 1 and 2, 2008, during the seventh round of talks in Beijing, Mr. Du Qinglin, the Vice Chairman of the Chinese Political Consultative Conference and the Minister of the CUFWD, and Mr. Zhu Weiqun, the Executive Vice Minister of the CUFWD, invited the Dalai Lama's suggestions for the stability and development of Tibet and also his and Tibetan peoples' aspirations. Guided by the MWA, Tibetan envoys presented to their counterparts a memorandum that spelled out Tibetan aspirations within the constitutional framework of the PRC and Law on Regional National Autonomy.

Middle Way Approach–Based Memorandum (MWA-M)

To date, there have been nine rounds of talks between the PRC and the Tibetan Envoys to resolve their conflict issues. At the eighth (October 31, 2008) and the ninth (January 30, 2010) rounds of talks, the envoys of the Dalai Lama presented Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People (MOGAFTP) and Note on the Memorandum to their PRC counterparts.

MOGAFTP consists of 7 main parts and 11 basic needs of the Tibetan people. Having introduced Sino-Tibetan talks, it clearly states the following:

> The essence of the Middle Way Approach is to secure genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the scope of the Constitution of the PRC. This is of mutual benefit and based on the long-term interest of both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples. We remain firmly committed not to seek separation or independence. We are seeking a solution to the Tibetan problem through genuine autonomy, which is compatible with the principles on autonomy in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The protection and development of the unique Tibetan identity in all its aspects serves the larger interest of humanity in general and those of the Tibetan and Chinese people in particular. (see MOGAFTP, www.tibet.net, 2012, para. 1, Sino-Tibetan Dialogue under Key Issues)

By and large, the memorandum delineates Tibetan aspirations to preserve their unique identity and civilization within the federation of the PRC. From a communication point of view, the memorandum has clearly identified and expressed the 11 basic needs of the Tibetans relating to language, culture, religion, education, environment protection, utilization of natural resources, economic development and trade, public health, public security, regulation of population migration, and cultural, educational, and religious exchanges with other countries (see details of memorandum under Sino-Tibetan Dialogue, Key Issues, at www.tibet.net). Overall, Tibetans have attached most importance to maintaining and furthering their distinctive social–cultural identity embedded in language, religion, and way of life. The memorandum states:

> Tibetans belong to one minority nationality regardless of the current administrative division. The integrity of the Tibetan nationality must be respected. That is the spirit, the intent

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> and the principle underlying the constitutional concept of national regional autonomy as well as the principle of equality of nationalities. There is no dispute about the fact that Tibetans share the same language, culture, spiritual tradition, core values and customs, that they belong to the same ethnic group and that they have a strong sense of common identity. Tibetans share a common history and despite periods of political or administrative divisions, Tibetans continuously remained united by their religion, culture, education, language, way of life and by their unique high plateau environment. (see MOGAFTP, www .tibet.net, 2012, paras. 6 and 7, Sino-Tibetan Dialogue under Key Issues)

The principles of MWA, as discussed previously, characterize the above memorandum. The Dalai Lama and CTA have pursued sincere dialogue with the PRC to resolve the conflict issues. The above statement unequivocally shows high mutual-face concerns to resolve Sino-Tibetan conflict (Ting-Toomey, 2005). The PRC's main concern is about her territorial integrity and security, whereas the Tibetans' main concern is about freedom and rights to preserve their unique identity and cultural heritage. Respecting PRC's main concern, the memorandum in no uncertain terms expresses its commitment not to seek Tibetan independence or separation from China. This is the greatest concession Tibetans could give to the PRC, and it signifies a 180° shift in Tibetan policy from the early years of Tibetan diaspora during which they had struggled for Tibetan independence. Instead of seeking Tibetan independence, MWA seeks a genuine autonomy for all of Tibet for the preservation of their unique identity and cultural civilization. It certainly took a great courage on the part of the Tibetan leadership and the people to make such a significant shift in their policy and stand.

The MWA has produced certain intergroup harmony between Chinese and Tibetan via Sino-Tibetan Friendship Associations and open dialogues between Chinese and Tibetan intellectuals. These actions have promoted positive interdependence between the two people. More and more Chinese intellectuals have voiced their concern and support for Tibetan aspirations. Recently, a Chinese Tibetan Support Group in Canada initiated signature campaigns among Chinese groups around the world, and 70 such groups have voiced against the PRC's repressive policy and action on Tibetans inside Tibet leading to many self-immolations (www.vot.org). On March 10, 2012, the 53rd anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day, several prominent Overseas Chinese such as Harry Wu and editors of four different websites in Chinese attended the official event in Dharamsala, India, to support the Tibetans. Given the complexity of Sino-Tibetan relations, the following section provides insights into their ethnopolitical conflict from an intergroup perspective.

An Intergroup Perspective on the MWA and Sino-Tibetan Conflict

An intergroup perspective has gained more prominence in recent years to investigate and explicate the dynamics of intergroup communication (see Giles, Reid, & Harwood, 2010; Harwood & Giles, 2005). Intergroup communication is concerned with interaction between members of different sociocultural groups. Tajfel's (1978) social identity theory (SIT) has largely contributed to the emergence of this perspective. Expectedly, much of Tajfel and colleagues' work primarily focused on social psychological processes but they also attended to linguistic and communicative issues from early on (e.g., Bourhis, Giles, & Tajfel, 1973; Giles, 1973). Arguably, an intergroup perspective is informed by several allied theories such as SIT, communication accommodation theory (CAT), and self-categorization theory (see Giles et al., 2010). The explanatory calculus of this perspective comes from investigating intergroup

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dynamics and interactions taking into account both social-psychological and communication processes embedded in them. It is contended that group membership (social identity) changes the dynamics of communication between individuals. They can converge or diverge in their communicative interaction or use social mobility, social creativity, and social competition strategies based on social identification, group vitality, and permeability of intergroup boundaries. These are discussed and applied to the Sino-Tibetan relations in the following sections.

Intergroup Communication Theories and Strategies

SIT and CAT are two prominent intergroup theories. According to SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), humans categorize the social world into us versus them or in-group versus out-group. Individual's social identity is defined by his or her group membership. In-group refers to the group(s) that individuals belong to, and out-group refers to the group(s) that they do not belong to. While individuals feel close to in-group members emotionally, they feel distant from out-group members. From motivational point of view, individuals desire to maintain a positive social identity, and it shapes how they perceive and relate to in-group and out-group members. "A Class Divided or the Blue Eyes and Brown Eyes" documentary on Frontline PBS (www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/) most excellently illustrates the influence of social identity on children's perceptions and treatment of each other. In a matter of minutes, the third graders perceived each other in terms of their group memberships based on just superficial eye color and treated in-group and out-group members very differently. They favored their in-group members (e.g., playing with each other) and discriminated against the out-group members (e.g., tease and bully) that included good friends prior to social categorization. These favorable and unfavorable intergroup interactions between the third graders were replicated by the adults at certain correctional facility. The follow-up open discussions in both situations revealed deeper insights into the processes of intergroup interaction.

Social identity is intimately related to group's social status. According to Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Giles & Johnson, 1987), groups may differ in terms of "group vitality." This vitality indicates the strength of a group, and it can be measured on three dimensions: demography, institutional support, and status (e.g., social and economic status). Clement, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) summarize the body of literature on ethnolinguistic vitality and willingness to communicate, which indicates the language of highest group vitality influenced interpersonal and intergroup interactions. Social identity is partly derived from the status of in-group membership (Giles et al., 2010). In intergroup context, groups with high vitality, especially social and economic status, are likely to have distinctive positive status (e.g., China as a rising economic giant) and wield power over groups with low vitality (e.g., Nepal, Pakistan, and South Africa). SIT advances three strategies that individuals can use to gain or maintain positive social identity in intergroup context. These are social mobility, social creativity, and social competition (see Giles et al., 2010). Social mobility refers to how individuals can move from one group to another given the permeability of intergroup boundary. For example, in the 1950s, African Americans with light skin color were able to pass as White, and this new group membership afforded them acceptance, respect, and favorable treatment from the Whites unlike fellow African Americans who suffered racial prejudice and discrimination. Notably, social mobility, in this case, has resulted in positive social identities for the concerned individuals but not for the African Americans as a group.

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Alternatively, groups with low vitality can use social creativity to upgrade their social identity. Social creativity can take many forms. One way can be through redefinition. For example, African Americans have claimed positive social identity by redefining beauty as in "Black is Beautiful." Another way can be choosing a different referent for social comparison. In intergroup context, ethnic minorities can upgrade their social identity by comparing themselves to each other rather than to the ethnic majority. For example, Hispanic Americans may find it counterproductive to compare themselves with the status of Euro-Americans, but a comparison with Native Americans can result in more positive distinctiveness and high vitality. To use another example, Bhutan—a small Himalayan Kingdom—can claim more positive social identity based on their membership in the United Nations as compared with Taiwan, but the latter can claim more positive social identity based on their economic status compared with Bhutan. Social creativity strategy could also include creating superordinate goal(s) and recategorization. For example, European Union and G-8 Nations have been formed with superordinate goals that member nations consent to, and memberships in these organizations represent recategorization that de-emphasize the social identity of each member nation. They are able to put together united efforts to address common issues such as European economic crisis.

Last, groups may be able to maintain and upgrade positive social identity through social competition. Social competition involves "advocating, protesting, and fighting for more positive ingroup conditions" (Giles et al., 2010, p. 6). Social change movements of civil rights, feminist rights, gay and lesbian rights, and indigenous rights are excellent examples of social competition for claiming positive social identity. Recent Occupy movements around the United States and the world calling to end corporate corruption also illustrate social competition (99% poor vs. 1% super rich) strategy to upgrade conditions of commoners and gain positive social identity. A couple of more examples of intergroup social competition strategy are India's effort to secure a permanent seat in the Security Council of the United Nations and Iran's recent application for membership in the United Nations. Most recently, the Arab Spring (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab Spring) and Jasmine Revolution (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jasmine Revolution) brought about unimaginable social changes in different regions of the world, and these are excellent examples of social competition strategy employed by people to upgrade their socioeconomic–political conditions and gain positive social identities.

In intergroup relations, especially intergroup conflicts, group vitality and social identification greatly affect what intergroup strategies' group members use to manage and resolve issues. Not surprisingly, dominant groups across the conflict situations tend to use their power (sociopolitical–economic and military power) and one-up social competition strategies and all available means such as assimilation policy and discriminatory and repressive policy to maintain their positive conditions and distinctive social identity from the subordinate groups (e.g., Sino-Tibetan conflict, Sino-Uighur conflict, and Sino-Mongolian conflict). In China, any form of protest (e.g., hunger strike, picketing, peaceful demonstration and even petition, Tibetan incense offering and prayer flag ceremony, and Falun Gong meditation) is crammed down hard, and protestors are put behind bars with no legal course.

In addition to the above examples of social competition strategy, the PRC also manipulates social creative strategy to maintain their power and image over the so-called national minorities. They have very carefully selected certain Mongolian, Tibetan, and Uighur nationalities and brainwashed them to the extent that they become trusted

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members of the Communist Political Party. These party comrades (in-group membership) are promoted to nominal high positions such as the former governor of Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), Jampa Phuntsok, and current governor of TAR, Pema Thinley, to maintain PRC's positive identity (image) of being nonprejudicial and discriminatory. Interestingly, even their names are Sinicized as in Qiangpa Puncog and Baima Chilin.

From an intergroup communication perspective, group members can use three kinds of strategy: convergence, divergence, and maintenance (Gallois, Ogay, & Giles, 2005; Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991). Convergence strategy involves accommodating verbal and nonverbal behaviors in communicative interaction such as code-switching between bilingual and multilingual individuals. In contrast, divergence strategy involves nonaccommodating verbal and nonverbal behaviors in interpersonal and intergroup interactions, such as insisting on speaking native language(s) and behaving distinctive nonverbally. Maintenance strategy is simply communicating verbally and nonverbally in one's usual style, and it is perceived as similar to divergence from the perspective of communication recipient. Studies have evidenced that social identity or group membership(s) influences the use of these communication strategies (Giles et al., 1977; Giles & Gasiorek, 2011; Giles, Willemyns, Gallois, & Anderson, 2007; Harwood & Giles, 2005).

MWA-based Memorandum (MWA-M) indicates that Tibetans have used convergence and maintenance strategies to resolve Sino-Tibetan conflict. While seeking Tibetan independence would be a divergence strategy, asking for genuine autonomy for Tibet within the federation of the PRC is a convergence strategy. Using this strategy, Tibetans are accommodating to the territorial and security needs of the PRC. Along with it, Tibetans are using maintenance strategy stating clearly their aspirations to preserve and practice their unique Tibetan culture and civilization. Basically, this means that Tibetans attach much importance to maintaining their belief system, writing and speaking their language, and managing their own affairs of life and national minority status within the PRC. In sharp contrast, the PRC has adamantly used a divergence strategy to maintain their power as evidenced by rejecting memorandum, demanding that no country allows the Dalai Lama to visit and meet with their leaders, denouncing the Dalai Lama, blaming any Tibet crisis on him and "the Dalai Clique" and continued repressive policy and measures, such as selecting reincarnations of the high Tibetan lamas including Panchen Lama and the future Dalai Lama and linking the self-immolators to terrorism (usa.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-03/24/content_14905553.htm).

Tibetan Intergroup Strategies: Social Competition and Social Creativity

Tibetans, as a subordinate and less powerful group, have employed all three intergroup strategies: social mobility, social competition, and social creativity. While many Tibetans have used the social mobility strategy (prominent Tibetan communists leaders such as Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, Baba Phuntsog Wangyal, Chamdo Phagpa Lha, Jampa Phuntsok, and Pema Thinley), most Tibetans have employed social competition and social creative strategies to deal with the PRC. Tibetan protests inside and outside Tibet (e.g., March 10, 1959, National Uprising, 2008 widespread protests across Tibet, a spate of recent self-immolations inside Tibet, No Losar [Tibetan New Year] Protests) are clear expression of the social competition strategy for their voice to be heard. Recently, there have been many young Tibetans (monks, nuns, and lay people) who have burned themselves to call for the PRC's and international attention to the Tibetan issues such as freedom in Tibet and return of

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the Dalai Lama to Tibet. These self-immolations may signify a new form of protest, given that the Sino-Tibetan conflict has continued more than five decades with no apparent end in sight. Presently, Tibetans inside Tibet have been under lockdown with heavy military presence and surveillance in response to a spate of the self-immolations (72+ self-immolated; 59 died to date, see www.tibet.net and www.phayul.com). These self-immolations possibly indicate both Tibetan desperation and determination to regain their freedom, rights, and return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

These self-immolators have engaged in nonviolent resistance to challenge the PRC to change its repressive policies such as religious persecution and patriotic education to denounce the Dalai Lama. Critics may question if self-immolation is a nonviolent action, but from Buddhist point of view, these self-immolators did not intend to hurt or kill anyone, including Chinese soldiers, but make their ultimate sacrifice for their country, belief, and freedom. Sopa Tulku, a well-known reincarnate Lama, is believed to have left a clear recorded message for his self-immolation: "I am giving away my body as an offering to chase away the darkness, to free all beings from suffering" (www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/03/26/tibetan-buddhist-self-immolation-suicides-go-viral.html; March 26, 2012, para. 4, p. 2). At least, in his case, the motivation is to bring greater benefit to others and, therefore, his self-immolation is nonviolent (see Table 26.1). The Most Venerable Thich Quang Do, Vietnam's Supreme Buddhist Patriarch, urging the world leaders to take urgent action, said in his open letter: "But there are moments when this ultimate gesture, that of offering one's body as a torch of Compassion to dissipate darkness and ignorance is the only possible recourse" (see www.phayul.com, February 17, 2012, para. 6, p. 1).

More than 50 years ago, Vietnamese Buddhist monks self-immolated themselves to protest against the Communist regime. Concerning this, in his open letter to Dr. King, dated June 1, 1965, Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh wrote,

> The self-burning of Vietnamese Buddhist monks . . . is somewhat difficult for Western . . . conscience to understand. The Press (speaks) of suicide, but in the essence, it is not. . . . To burn oneself by fire is to prove that what one is saying is of the utmost importance. There is nothing more painful than burning oneself. To say something while experiencing this kind of pain is to say it with the utmost of courage, frankness, determination and sincerity. . . . The monk who burns himself has lost neither courage nor hope; nor does he desire non-existence. On the contrary, he is very courageous and hopeful. (www.aavw.org/special_features/letters_thich_abstract02.html, *Letters*, Thich Nhat Hanh, n.d., para. 1)

In contrast, Tibetan Youth Congress's fight for Tibetan independence (not for genuine Tibetan autonomy) and burning PRC flag are hardcore social competition strategies.

However, the Dalai Lama and CTA's MWA exemplifies social creativity strategy because it engages conflict parties to work with each other instead of against each other. Specifically, it involves recategorization and superordinate goals to address and resolve Sino-Tibetan issues (see below). Both social competition and social creative strategy represent group-oriented strategies because their outcomes affect status of conflict parties (e.g., Tibetan nationality and the PRC). Next section discusses MWA-D as social creativity strategy.

MWA-Based Dialogue (MWA-D: Social Creativity Strategy

According to SIT (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), intergroup conflict and hostility are embedded in social categorization, that is, in-group versus out-group. Categorizations guide human perceptions and behaviors. Sino-Tibetan conflict is embedded in social categorization as in Communist China and Buddhist

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Tibet. In sharp contrast to the PRC's divergence and social competition strategy, the MWA-D represents a social creative strategy to resolve Sino-Tibetan conflict.

Social creativity can take many forms, including recategorization and creating superordinate goals (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011). According to classic experiments such as the Robber's Cave Experiment (Sherif, 1966), when conflicting groups were provided with superordinate goals, they were able to reduce intergroup hostility and foster intergroup harmony. The MWA provides superordinate goals for Tibet and China to work together harmoniously. Inspired by Nagarjuna's MWA-P, MWA-D seeks a genuine autonomy for all of Tibet within the federation of the PRC. It is a creative strategy of working with the PRC, not against it. This middle way solution is free of the two extremes or hard-line positions, namely, Tibetan independence and current status of Tibet (see Table 26.2). Explicitly stated, the superordinate goals concern the territorial integrity and security of the PRC and unique civilization of the Tibetan nationality. From a conflict resolution perspective, MWA-D has the elements of win–win approach because it is not based on intergroup categorization of us versus them. MWA-D does not seek Tibetan independence that perpetuates Sino-Tibetan intergroup hostility. Instead, it seeks genuine autonomy within the PRC that collapses intergroup boundaries to become one nation. Importantly, this recategorization can change the dynamics of Sino-Tibetan relationship and interaction. Both the PRC and Tibet can work in harmony to upgrade China's international image.

MWA-D has the potential to resolve Sino-Tibetan conflict that has persisted for several decades. From an intergroup perspective, both China and Tibet will gain much from resolving their conflict. Despite its economic power and military might, the PRC presently lacks legitimacy for their claim over Tibet in the international arena. Tibetans willingly joining the PRC will resolve their most important concerns relating to territorial integrity, national security, legitimacy of rule, and harmony. PRC will also gain high moral standing in the international arena that is crucial to becoming a super power nation. As for the Tibetans, by sacrificing their political requirements, they are expected to gain economic boost that matches their needs and freedom to preserve their unique civilization.

Culturally stated, Tibetans across the land of Tibet from Kham (Eastern Province) to Amdo (Northeastern Province) to U-Tsang (Central Province) speak Tibetan, wear Chuba (traditional dress), eat Tsampa (roasted barley flour), and largely follow Buddhism and Bon. Lhasa, the Capital City, is regarded as the spiritual apex of Tibetan Buddhists. From a social identity perspective, these deeply shared group characteristics define Tibetan identity and civilization (Dorjee, 2006; Dorjee & Giles, 2009). In light of this, the memorandum seeks a single Tibetan administrative unit that oversees all the provinces of Tibet to preserve and further their unique civilization (Laird, 2006; Shakabpa, 1967; Stein, 1972). As things stand now, unlike other major minority nationals (i.e., Uyghurs and Mongols), Tibet is administered by the PRC under the divide and rule policy—most of the eastern and northeastern Tibetan provinces are included in Chinese provinces such as Sichuan (Dorjee, 2006).

For the most part, the memorandum specifies Tibetan aspirations and competencies in maintaining and promoting various aspects of their culture and civilization such as Tibetan religious traditions, education, health, and environmental protection. Tibetans seek religious freedom to study and practice their faith without Central Government interference and restriction. The Tibetan diaspora in India, where they enjoy freedom to study and practice their faith, have been able to not only continue

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their Tibetan monastic education but also incorporate modern sciences into its study curriculum (Luisi & Houshmand, 2009). The Dalai Lama has participated in and encouraged monastics to participate in dialogues between modern scientists and contemplatives on mind and life issues. Emory University has presented to the Dalai Lama basic science texts in Tibetan to help Tibetan monks learn about modern science.

In collaboration with the PRC, Tibetans want to design and implement policies that serve their needs in different areas such as education and health. The Tibetan diaspora have tremendous experiences in developing and implementing comprehensive traditional and modern education and health systems (Dorjee, 2006; Dorjee, & Giles, 2009). In the area of education, Tibetan children in Indian diaspora receive both Tibetan and modern education. Most educated Tibetans in Indian diaspora could write in and speak three languages such as Tibetan, English, and Hindi. While respecting Chinese as the national language, Tibetans wanted to promote Tibetan language in Tibet. To further Tibetan language, CTA has recently developed a Tibetan system of education (Dorjee et al., 2011) that firmly grounds the young Tibetan generation in learning Tibetan language and culture. Genuine autonomy will enable Tibetans to design a comprehensive system, in collaboration with the PRC, responsive to the unique needs and conditions of the Tibetan people and region. For example, the Tibetan diaspora in India has set up both traditional (e.g., Tibetan-Astro Medical Institute) and modern hospitals (e.g., Delek Hospital) to care for Tibetan and other patients' medical needs. Tibetans can also use their traditional and modern methods to preserve their environment, especially water resources that are essential to the survival of millions of people in Tibet, India, China, Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia.

Despite the win–win approach of the MWA-M, the PRC simply rejected the Tibetan memorandum alleging that it called for Tibetan independence, semi-independence or independence, in disguised form. At the ninth round of talk, to alleviate their doubts and misunderstanding, Tibetan envoys presented to their counterparts the "Note on the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People." Its introduction reiterates that Tibetans are not seeking independence and separation but genuine autonomy within the federation of PRC following its principles on autonomy. Then, it clarifies the six competencies relating to the main concerns of the PRC and the Tibetans (see Sino-Tibetan dialogues at www.tibet.net).

From an intergroup perspective, the PRC's main concerns are focused on status quo maintenance, but the Tibetans' main concerns are focused on their sociocultural identity/ies maintenance (see Harwood & Giles, 2005). While acknowledging the PRC's leadership, socialist system, the hierarchical structure of the Central Government and its national defense capability, and Chinese as the national language, Tibetans want to be the "masters of their own affairs." Based on the PRC's constitutional principles on autonomy, Tibetans want a single administration for all of Tibet to exercise genuine autonomy to protect and promote their culture and spiritual values. Previously, Premier Zhou Enlai, Vice Premier Chen Yi, and Party Secretary Hu Yaobang supported such a consideration. As things stand now, Tibet is administered under many autonomous regions and prefectures. Given their specific competencies, Tibetans want to govern themselves in a wide range of areas such as education, health, religion, and environment in collaboration with the Central Government and its organs. The Tibetan diaspora in India, as discussed previously, has demonstrated exemplary achievements in many of these areas integrating both the

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Tibetan and modern fields of knowledge and practices. The PRC reacted negatively to the Note as they did with the MWA-M.

Historic Changes in Tibetan Diaspora: Social Creativity Strategies

Recently, the Dalai Lama has made two historic changes in the Tibetan diaspora to further Tibetan struggle and Tibetan culture preservation. In March 2011, the Dalai Lama devolved his centuries-old political power to the elected Tibetan leadership in diaspora. Just like his first four predecessors, now the Dalai Lama has become the undisputed spiritual leader of Tibet. He creatively separated the Church and the State that existed for more than four centuries in the case of Tibet. This change made it absolutely clear to the PRC that the Tibet issue is not about his personal issue but about the Tibetans who are capable of continuing their struggle in his absence. Following his footsteps, the newly elected secular Tibetan political leader Dr. Lobsang Sangay, a Harvard graduate, has promised to pursue the MWA-D to resolve Sino-Tibetan issues (see www.tibet.net).

The second historic change the Dalai Lama has made was about his future reincarnation or choosing his rebirth/successor. At the 11th Tibetan Religious Conference, from September 22 to 24, 2011, Dharamsala, India, attended by all the religious heads including Bon, the Dalai Lama made it absolutely clear that the PRC has no right to interfere in his reincarnation issue. He said he will decide later at an appropriate time if there is need for the institution of the Dalai Lama to continue. Should the need get expressed, he will leave clear instruction on finding the 15th Dalai Lama. His Gaden Phodrang Trust officials will be mainly responsible for finding his reincarnation consulting high lamas and centuries-old Protector Oracles of Tibet. Expecting a political candidate from the PRC for his next reincarnation as they did with the reincarnation of the last Panchen Lama, the Dalai Lama emphatically stated that no competing candidate endorsed for political reason, especially by the PRC, should be considered for his reincarnation (www.dalailama.com). Thus, he has preempted the PRC's interference into finding his reincarnation.

Summary and Future Directions

The Dalai Lama spearheaded nonviolence and MWAs to resolve Sino-Tibetan intergroup conflicts. This chapter discussed briefly the concepts of nonviolence, Nagarjuna's MWA-P, and MWA to resolve Sino-Tibetan issues. Nonviolence in Buddhism refers not only to the nonviolent physical and verbal actions but also, more importantly, to the nonviolent state of mind. MWA-D is firmly grounded in certain core principles of Buddhism: nonviolence, middle way, and law of interdependent origination. Politically stated, the middle way refers to genuine autonomy for all of Tibet that is free of the two extreme viewpoints—seeking Tibetan independence and continuing PRC's domination and repression in Tibet. In a nutshell, MWA-D safeguards the PRC's territorial integrity and security and enables Tibetans to fulfill their cultural and human aspirations.

This chapter has argued that MWA-D represents a social creative strategy. It is a pragmatic approach based on mutual respect and provides superordinate goals that require the PRC and Tibetans working together based on recategorization. However, the PRC flatly rejected both the MWA-M for genuine autonomy and the "Clarification Note" on it. Intercultural and intergroup insights can shine light on the status of MWA and Sino-Tibetan talks.

Culturally stated, both Tibetans and Chinese share collectivistic cultural orientation that emphasizes other- and mutual-face concerns.

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However, politically, the PRC adopted rigid institutional ethnocentrism and high status quo maintenance strategies such as social competition and even social creativity. It is characterized by power imbalance, aggressiveness, and win–lose orientation outcome. In contrast, Tibetans adopted high mutual-face concerns as well as compromising and integrating approaches. There is a mismatch of expression of face concerns and conflict management strategies in Sino-Tibetan relations. If the PRC is genuinely concerned to resolve Sino-Tibetan issues, they must approach the concept of power from a relational perspective and share *power with* the Tibetans at least in regard to the internal sociocultural affairs of the Tibetans inside Tibet. Presently, the PRC has adopted a hard-line approach to the Sino-Tibetan conflict embedded in intergroup hostility, prejudice, and discrimination.

Three evidences would suffice to support this claim. First, the PRC has granted autonomy to Hong Kong based on intragroup identification and approach (Yep, 2010), but not Tibet. The PRC has adopted integrative approach to Macau and Taiwan, but not Tibet. All of these indicate that the PRC treats Tibetans as out-group members. Second, the PRC does not seem to show genuine interest in settling conflicts. There are parallel stories between Sino-Tibetan dialogues and Sino-Indian border talks. As with Tibet, China claims Arunachal Pradesh, a northeastern Indian state, as an inalienable part of China because of its historic relationship with Tibet and call it South Tibet. Forget about the Tibetan envoys, India with all her power and status comparable to China, has not been able to secure any meaningful outcome engaging with China in border talks. The 15 rounds of Sino-Indian border talks have yielded no substantive outcome just like the 9 rounds of Sino-Tibetan talks. Recently, India's Defense Minister visited the northeastern Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh to which the PRC made a serious objection (see report on www.phayul.com).

Last, the PRC crammed down hard on peaceful Tibetan protests, but similar protests in certain parts of China were dealt with more leniently. Very recently, when Chinese residents in the Village of Wukan in Guangdong Province protested against corruption and ousted local officials and sought ballot for electing their local leaders, senior Communist Party officials from the provincial capital reached an agreement with Wukan's self-appointed leaders and even promised them free election and investigation into the corruption matters. In contrast, Tibetan protestors in Tibet were dealt with harsh treatment that included torture, threats, deaths, and military lockdown.

Concerning the MWA-D, it has produced mixed outcomes. From a diplomatic perspective, intergroup conflict management involves two tracks: Track One Diplomacy and Track Two Diplomacy (e.g., Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011; Fisher, 2005; Montville, 1987; Montville & Davidson, 1981). Track One is a formal and official peace-building initiative, whereas Track Two is an informal and unofficial peace-building initiative. As noted above, MWA-D has not yielded positive outcomes at Track One. Despite his best intention and effort to extend the olive branch, the PRC leadership has blamed things going wrong inside Tibet on the Dalai Lama and even labeled him a "wolf in a monk's robe" and a "devil," and the monks inside Tibet were forced into patriotic education primarily focused on two objectives: (1) love China and (2) hate the Dalai Lama. The PRC's main strategy is to do nothing and simply wait for the Dalai Lama's demise. The Dalai Lama has publicly stated that his faith in the PRC leadership to resolve Sino-Tibetan issues has thinned out. Tibetans have made their ultimate sacrifice—Tibetan independence. Tibetans are frustrated by the PRC's hard-line policy.

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Notably, MWA-D has produced some positive outcomes at Track Two level. Affirming his faith in the Chinese people, during his travels abroad, the Dalai Lama regularly meets with Chinese people, especially Chinese intellectuals and students, to discuss Sino-Tibetan issue. For example, in July 2011, during his Kalachakra (Wheel of Time) Teaching event in Washington, D.C., he discussed Sino-Tibetan issue with a large group of Chinese intellectuals. He feels encouraged that hundreds of Chinese intellectuals, including Liu Xiaobo, the 2010 Nobel Peace Laureate still captive in the PRC prison, and Wang Lixiong, support his MWA. Over a thousand articles were written in Chinese by them supporting his approach while criticizing the PRC's policies (e.g., Charter 08 manifesto) and harsh treatment of Tibetans. In January 2012, more than 1,500 Chinese, from mainland China, attended Kalachakra Empowerment and Teaching of the Dalai Lama in Bodhgaya, India.

Initiatives at the Track Two Diplomacy facilitate development of people to people empathy, understanding, and trust that could augment conflict resolution at the Track One Level (see Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011). Following the Dalai Lama's lead, Tibetan diasporas have also formed Sino-Tibetan Friendship Associations in the United States and Europe to promote intergroup understanding, collaboration, and harmony. These initiatives accord with the principles of MWA that Chinese and Tibetans can work together for common goals. Future researchers can investigate the efficacy of MWA and such initiatives at Track Two level for resolving Sino-Tibetan issues as well as similar interethnic conflicts.

Two particular areas of future research that can draw insights from Buddhism are emotions and forgiveness in intergroup conflicts. The Dalai Lama divides Buddhism into three parts: (1) Science of Mind, (2) Philosophy, and (3) Buddhist Practice. Of these, he said, while the last part is Buddhist religious domain, the other two could be adopted universally as any academic field of study. The Science of Mind (*Lo Rig*), in Buddhism, extensively describes positive/constructive emotions such as compassion and altruism and negative emotions such as anger and hatred. Metaphorically stated, negative emotions are the fuel to the fire of intergroup conflicts, but positive emotions can be used as fire prevention and extinguisher. In this regard, Buddhism may be referred to as Science of Mind, not religion. Mapping of emotions in Buddhism, according to the Dalai Lama, is an insightful and useful humanistic spiritual tool for bringing peace of mind, happiness, and harmony. The Dalai Lama argues that the basic human nature is peace loving, and he thinks we are biologically wired to receive and give warmth to each other (Lama, 2011). Scientific investigations into human emotions based on the Science of Mind (*Lo Rig*; e.g., Rinbochay & Napper, 1981) and Mind Training (*Lo Jong*; Jinpa, 2006) in the Nalanda Tradition of Buddhism can further intergroup peace and harmony.

The Dalai Lama has often stated that Tibetan culture, largely constituted by Buddhism, is a culture of peace, nonviolence, and compassion. Buddhism has inspired Tibetans to establish institutions of peace (e.g., monasteries, nunneries, schools, and hermitages) and peace-loving communities inside and outside Tibet. These have made significant contributions to building culture of peace (Rivera, 2009). MWA-D, extensively discussed in this chapter, is grounded in the Tibetan culture of peace and forgiveness. Forgiveness, according to Buddhism, is not seeking revenge but accepting others with the heart of compassion. MWA-D does not seek revenge of any kind against the PRC for all of its oppression, injustice, and human rights violation in Tibet. Tibetans are not speaking from the stance of victims in intergroup conflict but as agents of change. They are seeking to stay within the PRC parameter provided that they can enjoy a

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genuine autonomy to practice their culture of peace along with modern advancement. They are willing to accept the PRC into their culture of peace and justice. This does not mean that Tibetans should or can forget all the injustices done to them. Bishop Desmond Tutu said, "To be able to forgive one needs to know whom one is forgiving and why. That is why the truth is so central to this whole exercise" (Cose, 2004, p. 182). The Dalai Lama also said that forgiveness does not mean forgetting because there would be nothing to forgive then.

Integrating mind training (Jinpa, 2006) and MWA-P from the Nalanda Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism can further deeper understanding of forgiveness as both process and outcome. According to Shantideva (1979), the process of forgiveness involves separating injustice from the doer of injustice and understanding that the doer has done injustice influenced by deluded thoughts. While the injustice should be condemned, the doer should be accepted with the heart of compassion in understanding his or her predicament. Altruistically stated, the doer deserves compassionate help to overcome his or her delusion. From a classical example point of view, a sensible adolescent would not be reactive to her mother's crazy behavior. Rather, she would be proactive to help her mother get well given their relational interdependence. From an intergroup perspective, conflict partners should accept the interdependence of each other and work to resolve their issues through dialogue. Intergroup forgiveness can promote empathetic listening, truth telling, open discussion, collaboration, and sincere apology and liberate conflict partners from a vicious cycle of negativity. MWA-D is a mutually beneficial, hopeful, and pragmatic approach to address Sino-Tibetan conflict and other similar intergroup conflicts.

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27

Conflict in the Global Workplace

Cynthia Stohl, Robert M. McCann, and Hassan Abu Bakar

Globalization and the increased complexity and interdependence of contemporary issues have concomitantly created a greater need for organizational cooperation and a greater possibility for organizational conflict. Contemporary issues such as the global distribution of goods and the need for healthy work environments are so complex they require cooperation and new forms of partnerships among organizations from different sectors of society and cultural groups. Digitized technology and mobile media also enable participation of different cultural and organizational actors who had heretofore been denied access to organizational problem-solving arenas. In this chapter, we explore the dynamic relationship between global diversity and organizational conflict. *Diversity is not just something we strive for in contemporary organizations, it is a fact of life in all the joint ventures that are at the core of the globalized workplace.*

But it is not just the large global issues and joint collaborations that have changed the nature of organizational life. Technological and structural innovations affect our everyday experiences, our sense of self, and our relationship to our communities. Digital media have changed the nature of our work, how we accomplish our work, and with whom we work. Communication across time and space is less costly, boundaries are more permeable, interpersonal and group relations are more fluid, and networks are transformed. *Both long-term and short-term transnational teams are now a central feature of the global workplace and a major context for both conflict and cooperation.*

The changing face of the global workforce and substantial increases in participation by traditional minorities (e.g., women, Hispanic workers in the United States, Turkish workers in Scandinavia and Germany, South Asian workers in the Gulf States region) further facilitate increasing contact among diverse groups with diverse values, expectations, and norms. Traditional dominance by a particular cultural group is ending, and expectations for the less dominant are rising. *Perceptions of justice and fairness may vary greatly across populations and often become a major point of contention in both joint ventures and global teams.*

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Clearly, globalization has brought amazing opportunities to work smarter, faster, more creatively, and better with more people across time and space. Heterogeneous and flexible groups are more creative, increase the quality of ideas generated, and are more likely to reach high-quality decisions than homogeneous groups (Surowiecki, 2004). Globalization and heterogeneity go hand in hand. But as we shall see, heterogeneity also brings challenges and greater possibilities for conflict.

This chapter follows five central arguments that will help us better understand conflict in the global workplace: (1) definitions of globalization, culture, and cultural variability influence how we understand conflict; (2) conflict dynamics occur at the nexus of macrofeatures of the environment and the microcontext of the work group; (3) paradoxes of globalization create powerful tensions across organizations and groups; (4) transnational teams are a primary site of workplace conflict; and (5) global alliances mirror the conflict dynamics found in teams.

What is Globalization's Relationship to Workplace Conflict?

In general, globalization is "the widening, deepening, and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life" (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999, p. 5), although definitions can be (and often are) conceived more narrowly. How scholars perceive globalization affects their approach to conflict in the global workplace. For example, when viewed as an economic phenomenon, the means of production, exchange, distribution, and consumption are highlighted, and contested and transnational links transcend and may supplant nation-states. Conflict is approached as the clash of ideologies between the public and private sectors. When viewed as a political phenomenon, the exercise of power, coercion, surveillance, and control over people and territories is paramount. Here, conflict is typically studied between nation-states, ethnic minorities, and social movements, including workers' union movements. When conceived as a cultural phenomenon, symbolic exchange through rituals, everyday practices, mass and social media, face-to-face communication, and cultural performances raise issues of identity that become the focus for understanding conflict.

Studying conflict from a global communicative perspective integrates these approaches, addressing conflict quite broadly across multiple levels of the social system. We define *conflict as any situation in which incompatible goals, attitudes, emotions, or behaviors lead to disagreement between two or more entities, whether those entities be individuals, representatives of groups, organizations, or interorganizational alliances*. Conventionally, conflict in the workplace arises from two primary motivations: (1) the desire to obtain goals (concern for production) and (2) the desire to retain interpersonal relationships (concern for people) (Rubin, 1994). Rather than exploring intercultural or interpersonal communication dynamics in isolation of the historical, economic, and/or sociopolitical context, a global communication approach addresses the ways in which macroissues of convergence and the dynamics of globalization are entrenched in the microprocesses of divergence and cultural variability.

What is Culture's Relationship to Global Workplace Conflict?

But what do scholars mean by culture and cultural variability, and how are these related to macrolevel issues? By 1950, Kluckhohn (1951) had already collected more than 300 definitions of culture, ranging from "the total way of life," to a cognitive map. Today, most

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scholars agree that c*ulture embodies the societal patterns of beliefs, values, and practices that distinguish one group from another*.

Without question, the most dominant approach to organizational and national culture research has been that of Geert Hofstede. Culture, he argues, is "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes one group or category of people from another" (Hofstede, 1984, p. 89). Hofstede stresses *shared* cultural values as key differentiators among national groups, a view that is largely echoed by proponents of another popular approach—Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE). According to House and his GLOBE colleagues, culture consists of *shared* motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives that are transmitted across generations (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004, p. 15). Typically, nation-state is used as a proxy for culture, although national variation exists across geographic regions.

Cultural variability affects organizational conflict through multilevel mechanisms, including (a) differential political/legal prescriptions and prohibitions, legal requirements, and regulations; (b) variable constraints and opportunities of the institutional environment; (c) diverse preferences (values) and premises about what organizations can and should be; (d) unique rites, rituals, and other communicative practices; (e) varying ways in which individuals perform their roles and relate to one another; (f) different mind-sets of occupational communities; (g) various approaches to problem solving; and (h) multiple instantiations of spatio/temporal boundaries.

The effects of cultural differences in the global workplace are far ranging. Studies that utilize experimental designs (Weber & Camerer, 2003), survey methodologies (Ardichvili & Kuchinke, 2002), comparative case studies (Winkler, Dibbern, & Heinzl, 2008), and ethnographies (Moore, 2011) all find that conflict is manifest in emotional stress, behavioral disruptions, negative attitudes, and task interference. For example, Moore's (2011) ethnographic study of a car assembly work group in a joint venture between German car manufacturer BMW and the British Morris Mini found that culturally divergent interpretations of specific tasks influenced processes of integration and the ability to work together. Importantly, Moore's "holistic ethnography" did not isolate any particular cultural trait. Rather, Moore argued that national culture was less relevant as the embodiment of any specific inherent traits, but its importance was "as a set of 'native categories' through which the problems and successes of the integration were filtered and understood, and which colored the interactions of the two national groups of managers with each other" (p. 667). The Moore study stands out as an important contrast to more traditional studies of cultural differences in which researchers utilize "classic" dimensions of cultural differences to illustrate how variations may cause conflict. For example, a study by Hofstede, Pedersen, and Hofstede (2002) reports that members of low power distance cultures are often frustrated by the lack of participation by members of high power distance, and workers from collectivist cultures are often offended by the perceived selfishness and rudeness of those from individualist cultures.

Table 27.1 provides brief descriptions of the most commonly studied dimensions of cultural variability associated with conflict in the global workplace. A comprehensive review of leading management journals (Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007) found Hofstede's power distance and individualism collectivism dimensions to be the most commonly studied. Given that issues of control, leadership, and group identity are central to virtually all theories of organization, this is not surprising.

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Table 27.1 Dimensions of Cultural Variability

Social Orientation	*Dimensions of Variability*	*Description*
Orientation to nature	Control over/ harmony with/ subjugation to the natural environment	Cultures vary in the degree to which people believe they are efficacious and can control the environment.
Orientation to human nature	People are basically good/bad/ mixture; status is ascribed/ achieved	Social positions can be earned on the basis of merit, acquired from actual behavior, reflecting personal skills, abilities, efforts, or achievements. In contrast, ascribed social positions are assigned based on factors beyond a person's control, including sex, race, or familial social connections.
Orientation to time	Monochronic/ polychronic; past/present/ future	Time may be conceived as material, tangible, linear, and substantive or as intangible and nonlinear.
Orientation to decision making	Hypothetical/ experiential	Hypothetical or counterfactual thinking uses abstract mental representations of past or future events to consider alternative courses of action. For others, reasoning is highly contextualized and grounded in personal experience.
Orientation to communication	Low context/ high context	Meaning is determined by the context of culture. In low context, message is encoded in the explicit code, while in high context, the meaning of the message is in the psychical environment or already shared by people.
Orientation to space	Private/public	Cultures differ substantially in conceptualizations and use of private and public domains; separate and distinctly bounded for some, interconnected and permeable for others.
Orientation to authority	Power distance	Refers to a culture's preference for hierarchical relationships and differentiated interaction: High power distance cultures expect power to be unequally shared. Power differentials are viewed as natural and expected. Low power distance cultures are unlikely to accept relational power differentials unless they are perceived as legitimately earned.
Orientation to community	individualism/ collectivism	Reflects the degree to which people accentuate personal or group goals. Individualistic cultures tend to emphasize personal goals which are given precedence over relational and in-group oriented objectives. Collectivistic cultures emphasize group goals and will sacrifice personal objectives for in-group goals.
Orientation to goals	Feminine/ masculine; instrumental (competitive)/ expressive (cooperative)	Expressiveness is associated with the "feminine" pattern of humility, quality of life, equality of the sexes, relational harmony, and helpfulness. In contrast, the "masculine" pattern emphasizes achievement, assertiveness, aggression, exhibition, and conceit.

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Table 27.1 (Continued)

Orientation to structure	High uncertainty avoidance/low uncertainty avoidance	Refers to degree of reliance on social norms and procedures to alleviate the unpredictability of future events and the extent to which cultural group seek orderliness, structure, formalized procedures and laws to cover situations in their daily lives. Cultures high in uncertainty and avoidance are less comfortable with ambiguity, prefer structure, and resist change. Low uncertainty and avoidance suggests more ease with ambiguity, deviance, and change.

NOTE: This list was derived from the excellent overviews of the cultural constructs and conflict examined in cross-cultural organizational behavior research (see Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007; Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez, & Gibson, 2005; and frameworks by authors such as Earley, Singelis, Triandis, House, Hall, Schwartz, and others [Hall, 1976; House et al., 2004; Schwartz, 1994; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Triandis, 1995]).

But other variables become especially important in the uncertain, rapidly changing global context. For example, orientation to structure captures the degree to which individuals and groups respond to ambiguous and unstructured contexts with a high level of stress and a need to adopt and maintain rigid rules and strict codes of behavior. When one of our authors worked with a global engineering team in a time of international economic crisis, the unpredictable situation was exacerbated by a conflict between engineers from high uncertainty avoidance cultures, who wanted to develop a rigid set of responses and rules to cope with the volatility, and those with lower levels of uncertainty avoidance, who felt that the team should "go with the flow" and enjoy the freedom that the crisis engendered. The former group thought the latter were being reckless, and the latter thought the former were far too timid to cope with the crisis.

But just looking at one cultural dimension individually does not give us the full picture. Gomes, Cohen, and Mellahi's (2011) study of conflict between South African and Congolese managers illustrates the importance of considering both *context* and *cultural variability* for understanding conflict. In a strategic alliance between Vodacom and Congolese Wireless Networks, the legacy of the apartheid era magnified cross-cultural differences as well as differential perceptions of procedural and interactional justice. The context also exacerbated interpersonal conflicts among the managers based on cultural differences (e.g., South Africans tend to be far more individualistic in their approach to task issues than natives of Central Africa). The case study shows how the effectiveness of structural actions taken to address conflicts rooted in procedural injustices (i.e., the creation of new management policies and procedures to reduce disparities between South African and Congolese managers in order to enable equal access to key managerial positions for all managers) was circumscribed "by the continued presence of perceived interactional injustice (the feeling of not being treated with respect and dignity during interactions with managers from the other partner in the alliance)" (Gomes et al., 2011, p. 5). Resolving the conflicts required multiple, iterative, and radical structural, personnel, and interactive changes that transcended traditional internal and microlevel solutions.

Overall, globalization *creates a work context in which social identities, normative expectations, and societal institutions must continually be negotiated as they can no longer remain spatially or communicatively distinct*. Creating new opportunities and unheralded cooperation between different

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types of organizations and groups of people, also means greater potential for conflict.

In the remainder of this chapter, we see how bringing people with diverse cultural experiences together in face-to-face and/or cyber settings to solve problems, make decisions, and complete interdependent tasks often magnifies the importance of differences in laws, norms, personality, values, beliefs, attitudes, sense of responsibility, perceptions, and languages. We limit our focus to conflict in transnational teams and global alliances, two constitutive domains of the global workplace. Given the importance, however, of understanding the macrocontext for understanding microconflict dynamics, the next section further unpacks the context in which transnational teams and global alliances exist, a context of emergent paradox.

Emerging Paradoxes in the Global Workplace

Organizational scholars and practitioners agree that contemporary organizations need difference and alternative views to develop creative ideas to succeed. But as we have seen, bringing people with culturally diverse perspectives and experiences together makes conflict more likely, often hampering organizational effectiveness. This tension gives rise to three paradoxes of globalization.

The Paradox of Diversity

The very differences that help make organizations more innovative and responsive to global demands make it more likely to have conflict and constrain organizations' abilities to address the issues that face them.

We need to look no further than the many failed and troubled global joint ventures over the past 20 years to see the tensions and conflicts that may emerge as organizations join together for strategic purposes. In reporting a well-known and very costly unsuccessful venture, *The New York Times* described the 1993 Corning (U.S.) Vitro (Mexican) merger as a "marriage made in hell" (DePalma, 1994). Interviews with managers from both corporations suggested that Mexican managers were insulted by Americans' directness, and American managers were frustrated by the politeness of the Mexicans. Americans perceived the politeness and lack of confrontation as an evidence of Mexican managers' unwillingness to address problems and faults. The problems, however, were rooted not only in interpersonal differences but also in the structural and economic dynamics (e.g., different marketing strategies, increasing competition, and a stronger peso). Indeed, an essential point to consider when studying any conflict in the global workplace is that individual cognitions, values, experiences, and attitudes (the basis of most studies of conflict and cultural variability) are always grounded in the political/economic/historical context of nation-states.

> The 25-month union was hurt by constant cultural clashes. Corning managers were sometimes left waiting for important decisions about marketing and sales because in Mexican culture only the top management could make them. . . . Vitro's sales approach was less aggressive, the remnant of years in a closed economy, and this sometimes clashed with the pragmatic approach Corning had developed over decades of cooperation. (DePalma, 1994, p. A16)

Similarly, in 2008, Daimler-Benz's (German) chief executive officer, Dieter Zetsch, described the disastrous 10-year merger with Chrysler Corporation (U.S.) as a "practical lesson about the limits of globalization" (Strieber, 2008, n.p.). Several analyses suggest that although strategically the merger made sense, the contrasting cultures,

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conflicting management styles, histories of the two companies, and government regulations thwarted many opportunities for success (Mateja, 2007).

There are, of course, studies of international mergers that are successful. When Ciba and Sandoz (both multinational corporations [MNCs] headquartered in Switzerland but with very different corporate cultures and international locations) joined together to form the pharmaceutical giant Novartis, initially there were serious problems and conflicts. Through close attention to sociocultural elements at the interpersonal/group levels (improving cultural awareness, developing culturally competent leaders, and increasing sensitivity of team members) and the structural level (selection, reward, and career systems that were modified to take into account diverse societal expectations and norms), the merger became a long-standing success (Valentine, 1998). Nonetheless, despite greater scholarly and practitioner attention being paid to conflict and global competence at both the micro- and macrolevels of global collaborations, it is still the case that post-merger profits tend to be smaller than the joint profits of the firms prior to the merger, what economists describe as the "merger paradox" (Heywood & McGinty, 2007).

The Paradox of Convergence

Globalizing processes of convergence call forth localizing dynamics of divergence

Friedman's (1999) *The Lexus and The Olive Tree* references humankind's coterminous drives for sustenance, improvement, prosperity, modernization, and financial security (the Lexus) while capturing our need for roots (linguistic, geographic, and historical) and community (the olive tree). These simultaneous pressures for convergence and divergence within and among global organizations produce conflict across multiple levels of interaction (Stohl, 2001). Mechanisms reinforcing organizational similarity are rooted in the increased competitiveness of the global market and the institutional mechanisms related to legitimacy (coercive mechanisms), modeling behavior (mimetic mechanisms), and the increasing professionalism and standardization of professional norms (normative mechanisms).

An example of convergence and its relation to workplace conflict can be seen at the end of 2000, as East Asian countries (South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia) were facing the financial crises that had affected business worldwide. Prior to this, organizations within each of these countries were independent centers for international investors doing things their own way. The crisis brought about local conflict and change (e.g., leadership transition in Indonesia and beginning liberalization of Malaysian economic policies) and created new organizing processes that brought several countries together in closer interactions in which pressures for conformity and adherence to institutional norms were manifest. ASEAN countries (Association of South East Asian Nation), China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States jointly formed the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) to facilitate business in the Asia-Pacific region through the institutionalization of organizational norms and activities. Not only were many of the business practices of countries such as Malaysia being forced to change to conform to Western ways of doing business, but also the basic clash between Western-based conceptions of liberal economic regionalism and the East Asian value of mercantilism created conflicts that resulted in a new form of East Asian identity, making future cooperation far more difficult (Yu, 2003).

Mechanisms of convergence also create conflicts in the ever-increasing number of corporate/nongovernmental collaborations. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are nonprofit entities that address social challenges

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through advocacy, education, resource allocation, and/or direct services and include groups like Amnesty International and Greenpeace. In studies of cross-sector collaborations in the United Kingdom, Canada, Europe, and Asia, scholars have found that conflicts over values, missions, strategic goals, and governance structures are common (Yaziji & Doh, 2009). In June 2003, John Elkington, chair of SustainAbility, and one of the authors of a United Nation (UN) report that predicted a huge rise in the numbers of NGOs collaborating with business to bring about positive societal change (Elkington, 2003), alluded to potential organizational conflicts that may arise when NGOs are forced to conform to global standards.

> The good news for NGOs is that they are emerging as vital ingredients in the health and vitality of markets. . . . They are also highly trusted, far more so than business or governments. The bad news is that unless they recognise and address growing financial, competitive and accountability pressures, their impact will be significantly reduced . . . and conflict increased. (Mertus, 2008, p. 205)

Across disciplines, conflict and contradiction are well documented in institutional change efforts (Seo & Creed, 2002). When organizations first begin to transform themselves from hierarchical top-down structures to less hierarchical and emergent networks cultural norms regarding channels of communication, unity of command, power dynamics, information sharing, and so on are challenged. Such organizational transformations create conflicts at the interpersonal, group, and organizational levels (L. Lewis, 2011).

The Paradox of Global Identity

Emerging global consciousness simultaneously gives rise to a strong sense of individual identity. Conflict, survival, and effectiveness associated with globalization are not rooted solely in pressures for conformity and convergence. They are simultaneously grounded in the struggle to maintain identity. As the head of Toyota suggested more than 25 years ago, "Management is the same 95% of the time—it is the other 5% that makes a difference" (Takeo Fujisawa, cited in Adler, Doktor & Redding, 1986, p. 295). The simultaneous push of isomorphism and the pull of cultural/national create enormous paradoxical tensions. As information, capital and goods are transferred electronically around the world, and people are transported great distances with incredible speed, traditional national boundaries mean less and less, but awareness of and sensitivity to national differentiation becomes more and more important.

In summary, studying conflict in the global workplace demands that scholars and practitioners pay special attention to the economic, political, and sociocultural context in which interaction takes place. While there are myriad avenues from which to study conflict in the global workplace, we cast special attention on two domains—teams and joint ventures. The next section explores the underlying cultural dynamics of transnational teams leading to a discussion of two major theoretical frameworks commonly used to understand intercultural conflicts. This is followed by a discussion of strategies for making the conflict productive.

Understanding Conflict in Transnational Teams

Teams, our first domain of analysis, are being utilized in global commerce at unprecedented levels to address demands created by rapid change. New organizational and operational paradigms are emerging, whereby companies use skilled, globally dispersed groups to develop products in a collaborative manner. Teams are integral to organizational

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strategies to be flatter and more responsive through reliance on emergent connectivity rather than on hierarchically structured network linkages. Moreover, their increasing number is concomitant with the emergence of new media cutting the costs associated with coordination, information processing, and synchronous as well as asynchronous interaction across time and space (Marquardt & Horvath, 2001).

Given their prevalence and importance, it is not surprising that multicultural transnational teams, whether colocated, distributed, or virtual, have been the focus of a great deal of research (Gibson & McDaniel, 2010). And the picture is not all rosy. Cultural diversity has been found to increase oppositional processes and raise barriers to unifying processes, creating a "process loss" of increased conflict (Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt, & Jonsen, 2010). At the *microlevel* of analysis, transnational teams are often at the epicenter of a storm of personality clashes, frustrations between team members, linguistic inequities, decision making dissimilarities, unanticipated obstacles, and managerial dilemmas. Conflict stems from (a) a lack of awareness of important cultural differences, (b) stereotypic views of the other, (c) and the inability/unwillingness of team members to acknowledge, respect, or develop strategies for working with difference. These issues are often exacerbated by the larger context in which inequalities related to opportunities, reward systems, and normative expectations are rampant.

Interrole Conflict

A traditional area of organizational conflict research focuses on the competing demands and expectations that a person experiences when tying to fulfill different roles. Interrole conflict is negatively associated with several critical dimensions of employee experience such as satisfaction and balance (Broome, DeTurk, Kristjansdottir, Kanata, & Ganesan, 2002). Interrole conflict may arise, for example, when there are competing cultural definitions of what it means to be a "good" team player, different values or ways of approaching ethical decision making, and different norms and national laws regarding what represents appropriate sexual behavior or what comprises a hostile work team.

The description of a festering conflict between Japanese nationals and the multicultural American members of a San Francisco–based Nomizu sake–making team highlights the many types of cultural differences that simultaneously emerge in multinational teams.

> The Americans had no cultural or artistic connection to sake making and saw their job as a basic nine to five commitment of wage labor. They were characterized by their sense of individual identity, equal sense of status, informal style and direct assertiveness. In comparison, the Japanese nationals were characterized by a sense of group identity, respect for hierarchical status, formal style and indirect expression. Consequently, the American portion of the workforce, though initially intrigued by the novelty of Kawate's management techniques, soon grew tired of having to work past five o'clock p.m. to meet daily production quotas, as did their Japanese counterparts. (G. Morgan, 1989, p. 311)

After serious work disruption and the inability to bridge the basic differences in team members' ideas of what "work" meant, management decided "it was much more cost effective for the company to allow the Japanese to work overtime until production quotas were met and let the Americans go home at five o'clock as they wished" (G. Morgan, 1989, p. 313). In this case, the cultural gap remained, and the conflict cycles continued.

Work–Family Tensions

Another type of conflict often magnified in the global team context is work–family conflict. Work–family conflicts arise when the expectations for doing one's job well clash with expectations of one's family (Bellavia & Frone,

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2005). National differences in legislation (e.g., the length of the work week, child labor laws, holidays, and overtime) often reflect society's values and set up different expectations for what is reasonable to expect of a team member. In the Corning Vitro merger, for example, differential expectations regarding attendance at evening meetings and taking family days after holidays caused several conflicts between American and Mexican team mmbers.

Linguistic Issues

Team conflict in global settings may also develop and be exacerbated by linguistic, interpretive, and semantic distances among participants from different countries. In the United States, for example, there have been a number of court cases that have addressed language issues in the workplace. A recent case before the California courts addresses Filipino nurses' right to speak Tagalog to one another during breaks and to patients who are from the Philippines (Chavez, 2010). The hospital had initiated a no-exception English Only policy in the workplace, and those members of the health team (doctors and nurses) who only spoke English were accused of continually stopping Filipino nurses from speaking to one another, thereby creating a hostile work climate.

In all types of work groups, it is common for team members from a dominant group to report that they feel threatened, distrustful, and suspicious when other members speak to one another in a language other than the dominant one (Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2009). Nonnative speakers of the dominant language, on the other hand, often perceive that their voices are not counted and they are not seen as adding sufficient value to the transnational team. And although virtual teams may mitigate these issues somewhat since traditional mediated communication sometimes reduces the extent to which team members' cultures are salient in an interaction (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976), the relational dynamism of new social media may further increase the challenges to teams operating across national borders (Kanter, 2003).

Interpretive Differences

But even when translation and language differences are normative and accepted, interpretive differences may cause conflict in groups. For example, in the 1990s under the agreed on "social contract" of the European Union, workplace conflict erupted as German workers saw the contract as a mandate for workplace participation while Spanish government interpreted it as a call for ending the minimum wage. Using semantic network analysis, Stohl (1993) found that although all the European managers in her study agreed that participation was a critical part of organizing, there were significant differences across regions. Meanings of participation ranged from legalistic, society-wide structures such as German codetermination to locating participation in the reorganization of work systems at the ground level. When multinational companies try to implement participation programs and work teams, semantic incompatibility often produces conflicts between management and workers as some expect to actually have a greater say in workplace routines and decisions, whereas others are only interested in efficiency and effectiveness (Stohl & Cheney, 2001).

Employees in different national cultures may also view teamwork via different *metaphors* (e.g., sports, family, war, etc.), which can lead to divergent expectations of team roles, objectives, and membership (Stohl, 2005). For example, if Ecuadorean members of a multicultural workgroup view a project team in terms of a familial metaphor, relational concerns may well be prominent. On the other hand, American team members may be focused on the battle to "beat the competition at all costs." What constitutes a "successful

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work group" can also differ culturally. In some cultures and/or situations, success may be partially (or even largely) gauged by the degree to which a team task can be achieved while best preserving existing relational networks; while in others, conflict (and perhaps the diminishing of a relationship) is a minor price to pay for a desired team outcome.

Interpretive differences may also be rooted in professional culture. In a study of a global software development team, Damian and Zowghi (2003) report that overt conflicts emerged when the engineers on the team (mostly Australians) said they needed to know why a particular strategy was suggested for the project. As professionals (occupational culture) and members of a low power distance culture (national culture, Australia), they felt this was their right, and that they should be able to voice their opinions and give their own assessment of the strategy. However, the American (national culture) managers (professional culture) (whose PDI score was only slightly higher on Hofstede's power distance scale) saw the situation differently and did not see any need to involve the engineers in the initial decision making for the team. In their view, the engineers should only participate in determining the requirements of the technology and have no say in more strategic decisions. The conflict arose here not because there were necessarily large differences in power distance among the groups' members but rather because there were differences in the assessment of what was appropriate in a particular context.

Identity Issues

Given the complexity of these types of global interactions, it is not surprising that conflict and negative outcomes often seem inevitable in transnational teams. Shapiro, Furst, Spreitzer, and Von Glinow (2002) even argue that the inherent nature of transnational teams puts performance-effectiveness at risk. The authors theorize that members of these groups may be at risk for engaging in effort-withholding behaviors because of the difficulty of establishing a salient team identity in the wake of the members' national/cultural value diversity, global dispersion, and general tendency to not see each other.

The inability for transnational teams to develop a *salient team identity* is complicated by the fact that so many groups are distributed (members are in various locations throughout the world where only some of the group may interact face-to-face) or virtual (where no one shares a location). While colocated teams may build trust through formal and informal face-to-face interactions, distance is an impediment to building trusting relationships (Kanter, 2003). To address these complexities, several theories have been utilized to help scholars and practitioners better understand and manage team conflict.

Explanatory Paradigms

A variety of mechanisms are associated with multicultural conflict. Transnational teams may be plagued by *in-group biases* (Salk & Brannen, 2000) and high levels of *ethnocentrism* (Makilouko, 2004). We will look at two of the most common explanatory mechanisms (i.e., social identity theory and similarity attraction theory [SAT]).

Social Identity Theory. Given that national culture identification is one of the most common social categories to which people identify (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000), in-group and out-group social categorization can be swift and long-lasting in transnational teams. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) posits that the existence of diverse groups can lead to "us versus them" comparisons along group lines. Individuals often focus on differences rather than similarities, mistrust the other, and develop a bias in favor of one's own group (McCann & Giles, 2006, 2007). These differences are particularly

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salient in organizations, where negative stereotypical evaluations are frequently cited as an outgrowth of intergroup comparisons (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Firms need to be sensitive to the potential that embedded cultural perceptions may have a destructive influence on team performance (Davison & Ekelund, 2004).

To illustrate this point, consider the example of a Thai subsidiary of a well-known Japanese manufacturing company operating in Thailand in the mid-1990s. The Japanese management team was widely known to hold (and openly express) their strong preconceived negative attitudes about the abilities and behavior of the local staff (e.g., Thai staff as having minimal ability to solve problems, etc.). When a major, new account was landed in the firm, there was great excitement among the local staff about new opportunities that could emerge. However, when transnational teams were formed and role allocation decided, minimal responsibility was allocated to the local (Thai) members of the team. Tensions and dissatisfactions were heightened. Such culturally bound stereotypic tensions are mirrored in a study by Sriussadaporn (2006), who found that Thai local employees felt that

> expatriates tended to stereotype all Thais as being lazy, to underestimate local staff's work ability, and to act as though they knew everything even though they had been in Thailand for only a short period of time. (p. 333)

Thais commented that "expatriates tended to be bossy and sometimes jumped to conclusions without thinking about the local cultural and environmental differences" (p. 336). Without question, in the scenario above, the cultural stereotypes of the Thai workforce permeated Japanese managerial decisions in this firm, and the "us versus them" categorization that social identity theory describes was salient.

Similarity Attraction Theory. A second theory with implications for conflict at the team level is SAT. According to SAT, people like and are attracted to others who are similar (rather than dissimilar) to themselves in terms of values, beliefs, and attitudes (Baskett, 1973). As the composition of a group varies in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, education, culture, and a variety of other demographic variables, perceptions of similarity and difference become more and more salient, influencing interpersonal and organizational processes and outcomes including communication, cooperation, performance, and conflict (J. B. Smith, 1998).

An example taken from a large beverage company in Thailand that employed significant numbers of (a) in-country educated local staff and management, (b) internationally educated local staff and management (e.g., Thais educated in Australia, the United Kingdom, or the United States), and (c) expatriate management (often Americans or Britons posted to Thailand) helps us see how the attraction/similarity mechanism works and may mediate national identity. In the above beverage company, if one looks only at the national cultural variables associated with each group of workers, there would be little reason to suspect greater "cultural" conflict among the two Thai groups as compared with the expatriate managers. But as one of this chapter's authors experienced when working in Thailand, it was not uncommon in multicultural team meetings for internationally educated local staff and managers (many of whom spoke imperfect Thai) to conflict with locally educated/raised employees over issues such as decision-making styles and speed of project implementation while interaction between the (at some level "more similar") internationally educated local staff and management and the expatriate employees often went quite smoothly. It seems that perceived similarity based on training and education

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superseded many of the national cultural differences that existed between the groups.

Making Conflict Productive

Given these theoretical frameworks and empirical examples, how can organizations enhance the likelihood that diverse teams can experience "process gains including increased creativity, a productive blend of local and global know-how, the ability to make high stakes decisions under considerable uncertainty, and the capacity to create a richer range of options?" (McGrath, 1984). How do teams facilitate the long-term gains associated with effective conflict management, including cultural awareness, respect, and synergy?

Research suggests that these process gains happen not when there isn't any conflict but rather when it is constructive. In constructive conflict, team members develop a better awareness of themselves and others, learn about what differences make a difference between and among cultures and nation-states, and how often similar things are expressed differently (Behfar, Peterson, Mannix, & Trochim, 2008). In such cases, cultural differences are brought to the surface without rancor.

Productive conflicts enable team members to learn about, learn from, and most important learn with others from other cultures. Constructive conflict can develop more positive working relationships. When people accomplish something together, tensions are reduced and future interactions are positively anticipated. Morale is improved, satisfaction is increased, and productivity may improve based on greater motivation and knowledge about the other. Table 27.2 shows both the positive and negative effects.

Strategies for Dealing With Conflict in Transnational Teams

Addressing the many types of global tensions presented in this chapter, Brett, Behfar, and Kern (2006) identify four distinct types of *intervention strategies*. These strategies are

Table 27.2 Potential Outcomes of Conflict

Positive	*Negative*
Generation of new ideas	Divert energy
Stimulate creativity	Waste resources
Motivate change	Threaten psychological well-being
Promote vitality	Create negative climate that transcends issue at hand
Help group establish its own identity in relation to out-groups	Break down cohesion
Serve as safety valve by identifying underlying problems and unspoken conflict	Destroy group identity and reinforces cliques
Develop cooperative behavior	Magnify differences
Create trust	Increase hostility
Enable efficacy	Increase domination and reinforces marginalization
Promote cultural/global awareness and sensitivity	Reinforce stereotypes
Develop cultural competence	Engender resentment and isolation
Transcend historical fissures	Reproduce historical tensions
New structures of equality	Reproduce perceptions of injustice

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(1) adaption, (2) structural intervention, (3) managerial intervention, and (4) exit. *Adaption* is the least disruptive approach, where members make adjustments to accommodate one another. These types of interventions typically include developmental training in which intercultural competences are addressed (Gudykunst, 2003). More intrusive *structural interventions* tend to change the shape and boundaries of the team, while *managerial interventions* include norm development and personal engagement to address norm violations. Finally, with *exit,* a team member(s) is literally removed from the group. Brett et al. (2006) argue that emotional issues may best be alleviated by structural intervention (i.e., a deliberate reorganization or reassignment to reduce friction), while violations of hierarchy that have resulted in loss of face or feelings of threat optimally may be solved by managerial intervention (i.e., bringing in a higher level manager). *Exit* (i.e., removing a team member when all other options have failed) would be an extreme (and last choice) strategy to initiate.

The locus of conflict clearly influences which strategies are most effective. When conflict arises from communication differences, *adaption* (i.e., acknowledging and accommodating difference) is a preferred strategy to overcome differences. Team members may try to collaborate more, make verbal and/or nonverbal modifications to their communication (e.g., talk slower), and accommodate to others' needs. If conflict results from differences in time orientation (e.g., polychronic members are perpetually late, and hence are perceived by others as lazy or uncaring; monochromic members are on time, and hence are perceived as being "compulsively on time"), accommodation to these differences is possible. For example, meetings may officially begin at 9:00 a.m. with coffee or tea, but the expectation is set that business begins promptly half an hour later, at 9:30 a.m.

Being able to suspend judgment and use one's senses to register all the ways that the team personalities are different from those in one's home culture (yet are also similar to one another) can also be an important component of adapting and mitigating multicultural team conflict (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004). This heightened sense of adaptation represents a crucial component of *cultural intelligence* (CI). Team members (or managers) with high CI are able to understand how to encounter new cultural situations and judge what goes on in them. They can thus make appropriate adjustments to understand and behave effectively, and potentially can lead teams to constructive (vs. destructive) conflict (Earley & Ang, 2003). Developing a *global mind-set* represents another way to approach leadership and teamwork in a more culturally sensitive manner. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses indicate three components of the global mind-set: (1) intellectual capital, (2) social capital, and (3) psychological capital (Javidan & Teagarden, 2011).

In the case when clear subgroups within the team are supported by negative stereotypes that dominate the interaction, Brett and her colleagues (2006) recommend a *structural intervention*, perhaps a deliberate reorganization that removes the source of conflict that overly disrupts or misdirects the interaction. This is especially common when conflict arises from status differences. However, when the conflict is associated with high levels of negative emotion, *managerial intervention* is often needed. Finally, when the problems become intractable either for personal or structural reasons and too much has been lost, *exit* may be the only appropriate response. In this case, face or ego may have been irreparably damaged (e.g., a manager was publicly and especially harshly criticized in front of the team), and exit is the only means available to salvage the situation.

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Successful managers report using all four strategies to manage conflict, though there is general agreement that adaption is more likely to have long-term as well as short-term payoffs. Choosing appropriate strategies for addressing conflict, however, is further complicated by differences in procedural preferences and perceptions of *justice* in the workplace (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988).

Research indicates that high power distance participants display a greater preference for court and mediation procedures than low power distance participants (Sivasubramaniam & Goodman-Delahunty, 2008). For many in Asian cultures, justice is achieved via compromise as opposed to some of the more adversarial procedures frequently reported in the West (Gulliver, 1979). Chinese participants prefer mediation more than American participants (Leung, 1987), the same difference is found when Japanese are compared with Spanish, Dutch, and Canadian employees (French & Weis, 2000).

Workers in low power distance countries also rely on and prefer their own training and experiences to resolve a work group conflict to intervention by a supervisor (P. B. Smith, Dugan, Peterson, & Leung, 1998), while Chinese executives are more likely than Canadian executives to consult their superiors when facing a conflict situation (Tse, Francis, & Walls, 1994). These different cultural preferences are clearly important when choosing the appropriate intervention at the team level, but as we shall see in the next section, preferential differences in procedural and operational justice also have important implications as conflict moves to the macro-interorganizational level.

Understanding Conflict in Global Alliances and Joint Ventures

Our second focal domain of global organizing, international collaborations, has burgeoned in the past 20 years. International organizational alliances have become an essential part of corporate growth and strategy. Cross-national alliances expand geographical market participation, facilitate resource sharing, create economies of scale, enable responsivity, reduce a wide variety of risks, and create opportunities for companies and staff to access and learn new skills and technologies. Despite this, joint ventures can entail serious competitive risks and managerial obstacles as companies attempt to incorporate cooperative rather than conflictual relationships (Park & Ungson, 2001). Statistics regarding the numbers of cross-national alliances that ultimately attain smooth integration and collaboration are varied, but researchers suggest that between 50% to 80% of mergers fail in some way, often due to cultural conflicts at the interpersonal, group, organizational, and interorganizational levels (Bleeke & Ernst, 1995; Inkpen & Ross, 2001). A McKinsey study of 150 large-scale companies in the United States, Europe, and Japan found that the median life span for international joint ventures (IJV) is generally 7 years, and it is only 5 years in developing nations (Meschi & Riccio, 2008). In more than 80% of the cases, one partner ends up selling its share to the other (Bleeke & Ernst, 1995). In the case of collaborations between MNCs and NGOs, the statistics are just as daunting. Brugmann and Prahalad (2007) identify several points of potential conflict in these partnerships ranging from differing attitudes toward deregulation, divergent definitions of social responsibility, and alternative views of accountability metrics.

Overall, joint ventures often become enmeshed in both structural and relational conflict. Empirical studies identify operational complexities associated with organizational and national cultural differences and differential perceptions based on the level of economic development to be two of the most powerful drivers of conflict (Babiak

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& Thibault, 2008; Provan, Veazie, Staten, & Teufel-Shone, 2004).

Operational Complexity

Scholars advise foreign firms to seek local partners to reduce their *"liability of foreignness"*—their risk of misstep, or even government expropriation, due to unfamiliarity with local institutions (Henisz, 2000). Yet conflict in IJVs is rooted in the very complexity and uncertainty of the entire enterprise. Divergent goals, operational methods, styles of governance, and organizational climates are reflected at both the micro- and macrolevels of interaction (Hyder & Ghauri, 2000).

For Daimler and Chrysler, whose "cross-cultural marriage" ended in 2007, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that "there are those who say the merger, which faced significant cultural differences, was doomed from the start." Dave Healy, analyst with Burnham Securities suggests, "You had two companies from different countries with different languages and different styles come together yet there were no synergies. It was simply an exercise in empire-building" (Mateja, 2007, n.p.).

Level of Economic Development

Often the most salient mechanisms of conflict are magnified in importance when the partners come from differing economically developed contexts. Not only do differences of value (e.g., perceptions and/or realities of the worth or value of the contribution made by the partners) change over time, but the types of perceptions depend on level of national economic development. Tensions may arise from differential technology utilization and purchasing (e.g., the joint venture least developed country [LDC] partner may be obliged to purchase all or a very significant part of its technology from the MNC). Other points of conflict reflect export rights (e.g., MNCs may not want the joint venture partner to export into their own markets, whereas these rights may be the main reason for LDC partner to enter into the joint venture), tax issues (e.g., MNCs may attempt to show less profit in the joint venture if taxes in the home/domestic country are high), investment policies (e.g., MNCs may wish to reinvest in the joint venture itself), and ownership and control problems (e.g., initial contract may involve sourcing from the MNC partner) (for more detail, see Chowdhury & Chowdhury, 2001).

The pervasiveness of these features can help explain why global interorganizational partnerships are fraught with difficulty and potential conflict (Mehta, Anderson, Dubinsky, Polsa, & Mazur, 2010). Just as several researchers say it is in the nature of multicultural teams for conflict to arise, Schoenberg, Denuelle, and Norburn (1995) go so far as to say that in cross-national partnerships, "the potential for conflict may well be *inherent*" (p. 8).

Explanatory Paradigms

If we examine conflict through the lens of Fey and Beamish's (1999) definition of global joint venture conflict, "where the actions of one partner prevent or compel some outcome against the resistance of another partner" (p. 100), it is hard to imagine a long-lasting successful global alliance where partners are continuously engaged in a cycle of conflict episodes across different dimensions (Anderson, 1990). Consider the results of a study of 25 American joint ventures in Japan. Partner conflicts were attributed to differences between Japanese and Canadian cultures and were manifest in differing management styles and approaches to management issues (e.g., decision-making styles [individual vs. group consensus], views on of contracts [working document vs. symbolic understanding], sales methods [short-term vs. long-term], and personnel policies [short-term vs. lifetime employment]; Wright, 1979). A 1993 KLM (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij) and Northwest Airlines alliance

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(see Tully, 1996) also illustrates the cumulative and cascading nature of conflict in joint ventures. Despite the then profitable nature of the alliance, the personal chemistry and cultural differences among the top-level Dutch and American executives were poor and plagued with conflict. The President of KLM bluntly noted, "The European way of doing business is very different from the American way" (cited in Das & Kumar, 2009). According to Das and Kumar (2009), "There is, after all, no one objective reality; there are multiple realities with each reality being constructed from the standpoint of a particular alliance partner" (p. 155). No matter what theoretical framework one operates within, for example, resource dependency, institutional, population ecology, coevolutionary theory, or network theory, the quality of the alliance relationship (both at an organizational and interpersonal level) is an important mechanism that plays a profound role in the success (or lack thereof) of cross-national joint venture alliances (Geyskens, Steenkamp, & Kumar, 2006; Hardy, Phillips, & Lawrence, 2003).

Relational Orientation. Research confirms that there are downward spirals of joint ventures when relational conflict occurs within the organizational partnership (Buckley & Casson, 1998; Hambrick, Li, Xin, & Tsui, 2001). Incompatible management styles and approaches, differences in organizational culture of the partners, differences about roles in power sharing, task interdependence, or perceived inequality in distribution of costs and benefits (Chua & Kin-Man, 1993; J. D. Lewis, 1990; Wright, 1979) all contribute to a cycle of relational conflict that moves up and down the levels of interaction, each level mirroring the other.

Relationship building, therefore, is a primary mechanism for addressing interorganizational conflict. Extended relationships and partner cooperation have been found to diffuse conflict and induce further cooperation over time (Ring & van de Ven, 1994) and mutual exchange between alliance partners improved performance (Luo & Park, 2004). Joint ventures' performance and trust were also improved by a "relationship orientation" between manufacturers and foreign distributors (Zhang, Cavusgil, & Roath, 2003).

Affective interpersonal relationships orient competitors to manage their interpersonal conflicts cooperatively. For example, Wong and Tjosvold (2010) found that positive relationships between key stakeholders in competing Chinese firms led to mutually beneficial interaction and a sense that major goals were in synchrony. Managers with positive personal connections were found to avoid discussing their various conflicts in a competitive, win–lose manner. Low level "competitive" conflict predicted effective partnerships. On the other hand, distant low quality relationships meant the companies were more competitive in their approach to managing conflict and thereby collaborated ineffectively, and conflicts were more difficult to resolve, if at all.

Trust. The development of *trust* between global partners (Ariño & Torre, 1996) is often cited as primary relational mechanism improving IJV performance (e.g., Gabarro, 1978; Ring & van de Ven, 1994). Research, for example, details the role of trust in importer–supplier relationships, where suppliers may be hesitant to depend on each other without a reciprocated trust and commitment in their relationship (e.g., Li, 2003). Trust is "when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity" (R. M. Morgan & Hunt, 1994, p. 23), and commitment is "the extent to which a firm is dedicated to a close and enduring relationship with its channel member, is of extreme importance in the relational exchange paradigm" (Kim & Oh, 2002, p. 72). Trusting relationships are a vital component for mitigating inevitable conflicts especially when the partners represent different levels of economic

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development (Lui & Ngo, 2004; Nguyen, Weinstein, & Meyer, 2005).

Cooperation. A central concept in the study of conflict in transnational alliances is that of partner cooperation. In cooperative arrangements, partners attempt to strive for a collective outcome that exceeds the sum of each of the participants' opportunity costs. Finding an appropriate balance between individual motives and cooperation is paramount to serving the collective interest. As Luo and Park (2004) note,

> The joint venture is an intermediate form of governance designed to mitigate the hazards in market and hierarchy, but it is subject to other hazards attributable to both ends of that governance—that is, partner conflicts and managerial complexities. (p. 143)

Indeed, incentives to cheat and pursue one's own group or individual (vs. the partnership's) goals is always a possibility as alliance partners walk the delicate tightrope between individual contributions and collective benefit in a competitive market (Spekman, Kamauff, & Myhr, 1998). Cooperation in the face of self-interest and competitive uncertainty remains difficult, and possible conflict lurks around every corner (Park & Ungson, 2001); but without cooperation, mutual forbearance and structural adjustments become less appealing to the partners (Luo & Park, 2004).

Strategies for Dealing With Conflict

As we look at joint ventures and ways to mitigate conflict, transparency, trust, and truthfulness among alliance partners are central factors (Das & Teng, 1998). The opportunity and mechanisms for learning about and from each other are also critical aspects of conflict management. When a firm increases its operational connection and embeddedness with its partners, suppliers, and distributors abroad, conflict can be minimized through openness and access to information about each other's resources (Hyder & Ghauri, 2000). Enhanced knowledge about each firm's competencies and desires brings opportunities to develop new understandings (Tsang, 1998).

Guttman's (2007) strategies for addressing conflict focus on three core areas of the partnership that require common agreement and macroalignment. These are (1) aligning strategic and operational goals, (2) aligning roles and responsibilities, and (3) aligning around decision-making protocols. Without question, disagreement around corporate strategy (i.e., an organization's definition of its future) is at the heart of a multitude of cross-border organizational conflict. Differences in views about timelines, product lines, territory, and growth targets, to name a few, can undercut even the most culturally sensitive teams and organizations.

To alleviate these concerns, Guttman (2007; who interviewed groups from numerous Fortune 100 companies) suggests that new ventures first and foremost ensure that their global group is fully aligned with the company strategy and are clear about what implications that strategy will have on operations. Second, Guttman argues that the proper alignment of roles and responsibilities is a key factor in avoiding conflict. Representatives from a global parent and regional partner often conflict when decision-making roles overlap in areas such as decisions regarding time investment and product development. Finally, Guttman views decision-making type (i.e., decisions made unilaterally, consultatively, or by consensus) as a core issue that organizations must resolve to mitigate conflict. Unilateral decisions are made by one person with no input from others, consultative decisions are made by one person after getting input from the fewest number of players to add value, and in consensus-style decisions,

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everyone has input and everyone must agree to live with the decision. In weighing choices of decision-making styles for global ventures, one goal is to ensure shared clarity over which mode applies to a specific decision. Without this shared clarity, confusion and possibly destructive conflict may occur. Broadly speaking, the alignment features that Guttman discusses are grounded in the overarching strategies and mission of the larger organizational venture. Moreover, both microlevel and macrolevel conflict management strategies must work in tandem if the global joint venture is to be successful.

Conclusion

Meeting the demands of globalization requires cooperation and new forms of partnerships from organizations and teams of employees across several sectors of society and different cultural groups. But as our review has indicated, meeting these challenges is very difficult. Most organizations and teams are not able to choose only collaborators whose relations and cultures are closely aligned. Participants in the global workplace operate in environments comprising others unlike themselves. But it is not simply enough to be aware of cultural differences in isolation of the larger context. A major conclusion of this review is that it is impossible to address conflict in the global workplace without taking into account the dynamic interplay between internal, structural, and the socio/political/economic external environments.

The responsibility for managing conflict lies with every member of the organization. Whether someone is in a senior management position, a new employee, or an experienced supervisor, organizational communication at both the microlevel of teams and the macrolevel of organizational strategy constitutes the organizing structures that are the building blocks of global organizations. It is important that partners develop a set of shared principles and work platforms that transcend cultural differences. Globalizing an organization while localizing the experience, fostering a common universal culture but also respecting individual differences, and seeking inclusion and diversity while finding points of similarity are the challenges of the global workplace. The processes of globalization are too complex, too intertwined, and too wide-ranging to manage the inevitable conflicts via isolated, independent acts. Both researchers and practitioners, alike, need to continue to develop rich theoretical formulations, new research tools, and larger knowledge bases in order to understand better the global processes in which communication plays such a pivotal role (Monge, 1998). Overall, globalization *creates a work context in which social identities, normative expectations, and societal institutions must continually be negotiated as they can no longer remain spatially or communicatively distinct*.

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28

Building Cultures of Peace

The Role of Intergroup Dialogue

Benjamin J. Broome

In her influential book *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History*, Elise Boulding (2000) suggests that humans have an inherent capacity for "peaceableness." She points out that our daily lives are possible because we are able to cooperate with one another and deal with day-to-day conflict without resorting to violence. She notes that notwithstanding our somewhat competing needs for bonding (closeness and acceptance by other human beings) and autonomy (the need to differentiate ourselves from others), we have an inherent capacity for cooperation and living peaceably with our neighbors.

Seemingly at odds with Boulding's assertion is the nearly constant stream of news we receive reporting wars and violent conflicts. Harbom and Wallensteen (2010) report in their Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) that a total of 244 armed conflicts, in 151 locations worldwide, have taken place since the end of World War II.[1] For 2009, there were 36 ongoing armed conflicts. While this figure is lower than the totals from the early 1990s, the figure has risen by 24% since the early 2000s. Although in a number of these conflicts one or both of the warring parties received support in the form of troops from an external state, all were classified as intrastate conflicts, occurring in places such as Afghanistan, Angola, Burma/Myanmar, Burundi, Central African Republic, the Congo, India (Bodoland), Indonesia, Israel/Palestine, Kashmir, Liberia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Rwanda, Sudan, and Uganda. For many other conflicts where violence may have subsided, it often remains a latent possibility.

Most of these conflicts belong to a special class known as *protracted* (Azar, 1990) or *intractable* (Kriesberg, 1998) social conflicts. They are often embedded in a context of long-standing differences and inequalities stemming from colonialism, ethnocentrism, and human rights abuses. They are exceptionally complex, usually involving issues of identity, meaning, justice, and power, often resisting even the most determined attempts at resolution (Coleman, 2003).

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The frequency of wars and their consequences can easily deflate the hopes of those seeking to build a more peaceful world, and they call into question the capacity of humans to refrain from violence and destruction. Boulding (2000), however, argues that a society tends to be war prone only when it is built around *separateness*. Power struggles, domination of the strong over the weak and of men over women, physical violence, and constant competition usually lead to war, but if we can create the appropriate conditions, a peaceful society can prevail. Creating the conditions for a peace culture is no simple task, however, requiring political leadership that advocates peace, a strong economic safety net, education curricula that instill peaceful attitudes from an early age, laws that protect human rights and help prevent discrimination, and community, religious, and corporate institutions that actively promote cooperative practices.

Integral to realizing many of these elements for creating a culture of peace is *dialogue*, one of the key human activities for dealing meaningfully with differences and minimizing separateness. Broadly viewed as a communication process in which participants are able to exchange ideas in a constructive manner, dialogue is characterized by nonpolarized discourse in which individuals and groups trapped in conflict have an opportunity for enhanced understanding and healthier relationships. Dialogue offers the possibility for changing some of the damaging communication patterns that perpetuate conflict and lead to violence, while at the same time developing norms and structures for more effective responses to conflict. Significantly, dialogue allows the possibility of approaching problems without resorting to violence, helping conflicting groups deal peacefully with issues that divide them.

This chapter focuses on ways in which dialogue can promote a culture of peace in situations of protracted conflict. The next section elaborates further on the notion of a culture of peace, a concept that has received attention from numerous scholars in recent years. This is followed by a brief overview of dialogue as a communication process, with a look at some of the dialogic approaches that have emerged in response to the challenge of building peace in protracted intergroup conflict situations. Subsequently, the potential contributions of dialogue toward building a culture of peace are described. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the many challenges and limitations to using dialogic processes in protracted and intractable conflicts.

Culture of Peace

The term *culture of peace* was originally introduced in 1986 by Peruvian educator Felipe MacGregor, who advocated an educational initiative to help promote cultural values of nonviolence (de Rivera, 2009). In the same year, a group of scientists from around the world developed and adopted the Seville Statement on Violence (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1986), which stated that war is not a human tendency or instinct but rather a social invention, and therefore, "the same species that invented war is capable of inventing peace." Influenced by both MacGregor's proposal and the Seville Statement, the 1989 UNESCO International Congress recommended that UNESCO "help construct a new vision of peace by developing a peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights, and equality between men and women" (UNESCO, 1989).

UNESCO's recommendation became the basis for United Nations (UN) resolution A/RES/52/13, which defines a culture of peace as one that consists of

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> values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society. (UN, 1997)

Following this resolution, the UN gradually extended its traditional focus on peacekeeping to include peacebuilding and conflict prevention, allowing more concern with building a culture of peace that would remove the conditions leading to war.

Although it is important to recognize that conflict is an unavoidable part of the highly complex and diverse world in which we live today (Cromwell & Vogele, 2009), peace is quite different from its semantic opposite, war, which is all too real. Tuzin (1996) sees peace as a set of ideas that act in the sense of Karl Popper's "regulative" principles (Keuth, 2004), meaning they function as ideals or values that are unattainable in the material form but which have consequences for behavior. Even though some may not believe that peaceful societies are feasible, anthropologists have documented the existence of several small communities characterized by egalitarian social structures that emphasize cooperation, decision making through group consensus, and nonviolent methods of conflict resolution. Examples include the Paliyan population of Southern India, Buid in the highlands of Mindoro Island in the Philippines, and La Paz Zapotec in the state of Oaxaca, in southern Mexico (Fry, Bonta, & Baszarkiewicz, 2009).

Sponsel (1996) provides an anthropological review of the evidence for an optimistic and positive view of human potential for peaceful relations. He points out that there are civilizations that have experienced centuries or even millennia of relative peace, and he notes that there is relatively little systematic evidence of organized violence in human prehistory. He shows that war is most frequent and intense at the state level of sociopolitical organization, which is a relatively recent and short phase of cultural evolution. Similarly, Eisler (1987), in her feminist interpretation of cultural evolution, believes that our current emphasis on aggression and violence is somewhat an anomaly in human history. She proposes two general models of society: the *partnership model*, which characterizes egalitarian societies where differences are not evaluated hierarchically, and the *dominator model*, which characterizes societies structured around various hierarchies backed by authoritarian threat and force. She argues that the partnership model, which generates an affiliative, cooperative, and nurturing society and a relatively nonviolent and peaceful social life, was characteristic of human cultures until about 7,000 years ago, when external threats led to the adoption of the dominator model, primarily in Europe.

Joseph de Rivera (2009), in his recent *Handbook on Building Cultures of Peace*, argues that we are gradually developing the norms and institutions that will make it possible to build cultures of peace. As evidence, he points to social movements, such as those for women's rights, human rights, and economic justice that have been mostly nonviolent in nature and have led to significant changes in how society responds to basic human needs. He also notes the existence of numerous peace research institutes and academic journals, as well as the large number of peace education programs in universities throughout the world. In addition, there are occupationally based peace groups, national peace groups, unarmed peace teams working in areas of civil strife, regional peace organizations, and many nongovernmental organizations working on various global social issues that are important

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for building cultures of peace. Even in the business world, there are increasing numbers of executives who are working to introduce corporate practices that promote both peaceful individual behaviors and greater corporate responsibility for social peace.[2] Of course, in comparison to the forces that promote violent responses to conflict, the overall numbers of individuals and organizations working to build peace are still small. Nevertheless, they can help create an "emotional climate of hope" (de Rivera, 2009, p. 8) that could make it possible to develop the norms and institutions that will make possible a culture of peace.

A crucial component of UNESCO's Culture of Peace project (UNESCO, 2000), and a common theme among those who write about culture of peace, is an emphasis on building relationships based on tolerance and solidarity between peoples distanced by cultural differences. Echoing this theme, Boulding (2001) urges the creation of a society that reflects "peaceable diversity" (p. 56). She believes that the key to creating and sustaining a culture of peace is what she calls "ceaseless culture-creating activity" (Boulding, 2000, p. 1) at every level of society. This entails acts of tolerance and kindness by individuals in their interactions with others, healthy patterns of communication within families, supportive work teams in organizations, programs that bring communities together for enhancing their living space, and governments, at every level, providing services that support the needs of their citizens. Interaction between the various levels means that the overall societal capacity for aggression or peacebuilding will depend on patterns that develop at each level, and it also implies that changes at one level can positively affect other levels. It is thus possible to build a culture of peace when individual, interpersonal, group, and societal behaviors promote mutual caring and well-being, and when these are supported by institutional arrangements reflecting corresponding norms, values, and behaviors (de Rivera, 2009).

As noted previously, peace is not something that simply happens in the absence of violence. Rather, it must be consciously constructed, and how long it will last often depends on how well it is made (Vasquez, 1996). As Galtung (2005) and others have argued, peace requires taking steps to create relationships in which individuals and groups can disagree about issues while maintaining strong connections with one another. Just as individuals, groups, and nations must be well prepared to be successful in war, they also must actively prepare for peace and not hope that it will happen on its own. To build and maintain peace, we must learn productive ways to handle disagreements, and we must develop norms, mechanisms, and institutions that will guide us toward resolving divisive issues without violence. A central means through which such actions can unfold is *dialogue*. The following sections examine this crucial form of human interaction and suggest ways in which dialogue can contribute to a culture of peace.

Dialogue

A vital aspect of a culture of peace is *dialogue*, integral to UNESCO's efforts, the UN's resolution on culture of peace, and Boulding's culture-creating activity. The UN resolution calls for efforts "to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations" (UN, 1997). In the UN's Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (A/RES/53/243), it points out that for peace and nonviolence to prevail, we must begin by "revising the educational curricula to promote qualitative values, attitudes and behaviours of a culture of peace, including peaceful conflict-resolution, dialogue, consensus-building and active non-violence"

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(UNESCO, 2011). UNESCO's (2000) Culture of Peace Project aims at "arming peoples not with guns, but with capacity for dialogue and understanding." Boulding (2001) believes that dealing creatively with difference and conflict requires establishing a "listening culture," with "lots of space for problem-solving" (p. 56). She points to several sustained dialogues that brought about positive results, such as those by the Oxford Research Group founded by Scilla Elworthy, which for many years held organized dialogues around key decisions involving both major and minor nuclear powers (Elworthy, 1989); the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which was the result of 9 years of intensive dialogue by a small group of experts from across the globe (Levering & Levering, 1999); and the Dartmouth Dialogues, an example of second-track diplomacy that continued for 30 years, and which many credit with helping to bring about the end of the Cold War (Voorhees, 2002).

Although the term *dialogue* has widespread usage, and its importance is broadly accepted, there is not always a clear understanding about its meaning.[3] The word *dialogue* is from the ancient Greek word *dialogos*, composed of the prefix *dia* ("through" or "across") and *logos* ("words" or "reason"). Drawing from its linguistic roots, dialogue refers to a process of creating meaning through talking and reasoning together. Implied in the concept of dialogue is the notion that meaning emerges from interaction; it is not something that already exists, waiting to be discovered. Meaning is co-constituted through communication, reflecting both the form of message exchange and the relationship between individuals. From a communication perspective, dialogue represents a form of discourse that emphasizes listening and inquiry, with the aims of fostering mutual respect and understanding. Dialogue allows communicators to become aware of the different ways that individuals interpret and give meaning to similar experiences. It is viewed as a dynamic, transactional process, with a special focus on the quality of the relationship between participants. Dialogue does not preclude disagreement; indeed, it allows participants to explore complexities of their own perspectives as well as those of others. Scholars advocate dialogue as a constructive way for individuals to navigate their differences in interpersonal, organizational, community, and public realms.

The modern emphasis on dialogue is often traced to Martin Buber, a Jewish philosopher who was also a theologian, playwright, educator, and advocate for peace and cooperation between Jews and Arabs in Palestine (and thus one of the first to bring together dialogue and peacebuilding). His seminal work *I and Thou*, first published in 1926, led to a shift in our thinking about communication, relationships, and the possibility for genuine human interaction (Buber, 1958). In his conceptualization of the "I–It" encounter, people are treated as if they are objects to be manipulated or changed in some way; while in the "I–Thou" relationship, people are viewed as having unique histories that shape their beliefs, attitudes, and values. An "I–Thou" encounter is characterized by curiosity, discovery, and learning, rather than the persuasion, positioning, and argument that is typical of "I–It" encounters. In Buber's view, dialogue is a way of being with others, one that acknowledges the complexity of other people's experience and seeks understanding. Pearce and Littlejohn (1997) refer to this type of discourse as transformative, making it possible for participants to work through differences (see Littlejohn & Cole, this volume).

In addition to Buber, other influential theorists include Bohm (1996), whose work was applied in the "learning organization" concepts espoused by Senge (1990), Isaacs (1993), and Schein (1993). The concept of dialogue has gained attention in a multiplicity of disciplines in recent years, including

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anthropology, education, psychology and psychotherapy, sociology, management, political theory, philosophy, linguistics, and religion (Cissna & Anderson, 1998). In communication, dialogue has been a focus in a number of areas, including the study of rhetoric (Arnett, 1981; Johannesen, 1971; Poulakos, 1974), philosophy and communication (Stewart, 1978), interpersonal communication (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996), performance studies (Conquergood, 1988), organizational communication (Deetz, 1992; Eisenberg & Goodall, 1997), health communication (Geist & Dreyer, 1994), culture and communication (Philipsen, 1992), and conflict communication (Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997).

Buber (1958) introduced the concept of the "between" as a metaphor for viewing dialogue as rooted in the space that exists between persons in a relationship. This common center of discourse brings people together in conversation, allowing meaning to be co-constituted during dialogue. In this way, dialogue enables collective thinking, collaboration, and what Bohm (1996) calls "collective intelligence" (p. 2), in which people create new understandings through their exchange.[4] Such a focus gives recognition to the *interdependence* of self and other, the *intersubjectivity* of meaning, and the *emergent* nature of understandings (Stewart, 1978, 1983).

Dialogue, while it has potential for transforming human relationships, does not happen easily. To engage in meaningful dialogue, we must be willing to take risks, particularly the possibility that our perspective might be amended or even completely altered. Change is often threatening, especially when we have become comfortable with the current state of affairs, sometimes consisting of a status quo that is dysfunctional. Dialogue can shape us in ways that affect our identity, and there is constant tension between the view of ourselves that we carry into dialogue and the views of self that emerge during the interaction. The possibility for change happens because we are interacting with others whose perspectives may be radically different from our own. Although it is natural to resist and even reject such differences, dialogue depends on such risk taking.

Not only is dialogue risky, it is also unpredictable. Because it is a nonlinear, emergent process, it remains fluid throughout, always fluctuating, with meanings constantly revised and remade. This creates tension between participants, as ideas, values, and interests bump against each other. Such tension is not only unavoidable but integral to the process of dialogue itself. Because of the tension, and the struggle to cope with it, individuals in dialogue often develop creative ideas or new ways of approaching problems. The process of dealing with tension can push toward a synthesis of positions that serves the needs and interests of participants much better than any of their initial positions were capable of handling.

On a very practical level, transforming intractable conflicts necessitates bringing together individuals from opposing sides in a setting where both mutual understanding and joint action can be realized. Several interactive methodologies have been developed for this purpose, with applications in a large number of conflict situations. Dialogue lies at the core of these approaches, serving as the foundation for collaborative problem solving and action. The following section will briefly discuss three broad categories of approaches to intergroup dialogue.

Approaches to Intergroup Dialogue

Dialogic methods applicable to intergroup conflict can be broadly grouped into three general categories: (1) rational/problem-solving approaches, (2) psychodynamic approaches, and (3) dialogue-based transformative approaches. The initial development of the *rational/problem-solving approach* to intergroup dialogue came in the 1960s, when

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a number of scholar-practitioners and former diplomats sought ways of creating a setting where political leaders, opinion leaders, and ordinary citizens could engage in discussions that focused on learning from each other through respectful inquiry. The earliest example of such dialogue sessions were organized at the height of the Cold War, with a stated purpose of improving relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, hopefully preventing the nuclear Armageddon that many feared at the time. A group of leading Americans and Soviets from the arts, sciences, and politics (nonofficials) were brought together at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, giving rise to a type of meeting that came to be called the "Dartmouth Conference" (see Voorhees, 2002). Over the next 50 years, a wide range of individuals, many of whom were in close contact with top officials, came together in a set of meetings where discussion, unencumbered by the restrictions of official diplomacy, led to mutual understanding, personal relationships, exchange of information, and creative ideas that filtered into policy-making circles both directly through personal contacts and indirectly through the media.

In the years after the initial Dartmouth meetings, the term *problem-solving workshops* came into the conflict resolution lexicon. In general, these intergroup dialogue sessions bring together unofficial representatives of groups from conflict zones with a third-party "panel," which typically includes conflict scholars, usually from different disciplines within academic institutions. Panelists, who come together with the participants for intensive discussions over a period of several days, seek to help the group analyze the sources of the conflict and develop possible solutions. These approaches are highly structured and could be considered predominantly analytical or rational (Burton, 1969; Sandole, 2001), dealing primarily with the substance of the conflict. The primary purpose of problem-solving workshops is to open unofficial communication channels between the parties in preparation for and/or as a complement to official negotiations.

Providing a low-risk, low-profile forum in which representatives of opposing parties can analyze their conflict and engage in problem solving, intergroup dialogue workshops such as those described above attempted to shift the focus away from presenting and defending entrenched positions, and toward encouraging new ways of thinking about the conflict that induce the participants to approach it as a shared problem. The hope is that dialogue can affect the "climate of opinion" (Voorhees, 2002, p. 351) in which policymakers operate and in which policy is made. In this way, although it is difficult to measure its direct effect, dialogue can have a profound effect on the outcomes of conflict.

The *psychodynamic approach* to intergroup dialogue is typically less structured, often consisting of more informal efforts to ease tensions and improve relations in international conflicts. Taking a psychodynamic approach, these sessions are primarily oriented toward helping participants learn about each other, developing better communication across the divide, and establishing working relationships conflicts (Doob, 1981; Volkan, 1998; Wedge, 1967). Attempting to humanize the "enemy," build confidence, and overcome hatred, such workshops are viewed as precursors to negotiations, helping to uncover emotional issues that might otherwise affect the negotiations negatively.

Falling somewhere between the rational and psychodynamic approaches are those that give *equal emphasis to both substance and relationship* (Azar, 1990; Fisher, 1997, 2005; Kelman, 1978, 1982, 1985, 1987). They seek to help the parties overcome the psychological barriers for negotiations, particularly with the early stages of a peace process: monolithic views of the enemy, lack of empathy, mutual

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denial and nonrecognition, and so on. These approaches typically emphasize equally the educational and the political aspects of the workshop, working to produce changes in the attitudes and perceptions of the participants (and ultimately also their behavior), while simultaneously transferring these changes to the political arena. Emphasis is placed on developing a more differentiated view of the enemy by helping the participants understand that there are different groupings or political forces within each community (e.g., hawks and doves). Significantly, such workshops help each side understand that there is someone on the other side with whom to engage in dialogue. Finally, in later stages of the peace process, after the onset of negotiations, workshops can provide a forum for working out certain details during negotiations or for discussing problems having to do with the implementation of an agreement and long-term issues that have to be addressed once a political settlement has been reached.

The *transformative approach* to peacebuilding (Lederach, 1995b, 1997, 2003) emphasizes a search for the values of peace and justice, truth and mercy. This search leads to the long-term transformation of a "war system" into a "peace system" characterized by political and economic participation, peaceful relationships, and social harmony (Lederach, 1999, 2003). Lederach (1995a) presents a comprehensive framework that integrates peace initiatives at different levels with the aim of creating what he calls an *infrastructure for peace*. A peace process, he argues, must simultaneously address—and involve—all the different levels of a society that have been affected by conflict: from the grassroots level (the vast majority) to national leaders (ethnic/religious leaders, leaders of nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], academics/intellectuals, among others) and to the top level of military and political leadership (Lederach, 1997, 2001).

An important aspect of transformative approaches is *sustainability*. Making any kind of headway in situations with a long history of division requires a systematic, prolonged set of dialogues committed to the transformation of conflictual relationships. Decades, or even centuries, of enmity cannot be overcome overnight, and there are many forces in the society and larger context of the conflict that can quickly undo any progress from dialogue sessions.

Although most of the intergroup dialogue approaches are not grounded specifically in the culture of peace concept, it is clear that their purposes are highly compatible and overlapping. With their emphasis on listening, nonpolarized discourse, and the creation of new understandings, these approaches to intergroup dialogue contribute in significant ways toward the goal of building a culture of peace. While recognizing that the establishment of a culture of peace within a particular society or within the overall global system depends on many system-level factors, dialogue can play a critical role in shaping these factors. Through dialogue, impetus for necessary changes at the societal level can be cultivated, new ideas can emerge for reaching effective agreements at the political level, increased levels of understanding can be achieved, and new relationships can be formed that will promote the cooperation that is required for changes to be implemented successfully both before and after a political settlement. The larger question is how this can happen, and the next section examines some of the specific ways that dialogue can help create a culture of peace in protracted conflict situations.

Contributions of Dialogue in Building a Culture of Peace

Building a culture of peace is a gradual process, one that requires a sustained effort in finding ways to tackle many complex challenges.

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If a culture of peace is to evolve from a situation where hostility, aggression, and violence predominate, the core beliefs of the society must shift toward "values of justice, respect of human rights, sensitivity, acceptance and respect for cultural differences, values and practices conducive to nonviolent conflict resolution, and above all recognition of the superiority and importance of peace as a value and practice" (Bar-Tal, 2009, p. 370). This shift cannot happen by decree or by wishful thinking, and while dialogue is not the single magic key to unlocking the path toward a culture of peace, it is unlikely that society can overcome the trauma of violence without bringing people together from all sides of the conflict to exchange views in a forum that fosters trust and cooperation. In this section, we explore ways in which dialogue makes possible movement toward building a culture that embraces productive ways to handle conflict.

Promoting Sustained Contact

In many cases, a culture of conflict is maintained because there is little if any contact between the conflicting groups. Sometimes, the lack of contact is because of restrictions put in place by official or unofficial borders, internationally created buffer zones, or other intentionally placed barriers to separate parties. At other times, the lack of contact is because of in-group and out-group differences, prejudice, institutional discrimination, or simply class-based segregation of neighborhoods. Whatever the reason, lack of contact further reinforces and promotes bias and prejudice and, over time, tends to become institutionalized, which further solidifies the boundaries between the parties in the conflict (Hewstone & Greenland, 2000).

In protracted conflicts, contact does not necessarily happen naturally; it is well understood that mere contact alone is insufficient to guarantee that dialogue will take place. But the first step is bringing participants together from the opposing sides, where they can meet and have the possibility to encounter each other as fellow human beings, hopefully breaking down some of the bias and prejudice that exists between them. Although intergroup contact theory has been extended by, among others, Amir (1969), Cook (1978), Hewstone and Greenland (2000), and Pettigrew (1998, 2008, 2011), the contact hypothesis that Gordon Allport (1954) originally described in his book *The Nature of Prejudice* is still relevant to our examination of dialogue.[5] He proposes that under the following conditions, intergroup contact can be effective in reducing prejudice: (a) equal status of the contact groups, at least within the contact situation; (b) personal and sustained interactions between individuals from the two groups; (c) cooperative interdependence, where members of the contact groups engage in cooperative activities where they depend on one another's efforts to achieve superordinate goals; and (d) social norms favoring equality.

The contact hypothesis is not an unqualified prescription for *more* contact; rather, it suggests that contact should be encouraged when it can be expected to have positive effects but minimized when it is likely to have negative effects; or, alternatively, that conditions should be created so that contact, when it occurs, will have positive effects. This can occur because of several reasons: individuals learn things about the other side that calls into question their existing stereotypes and attitudes; the act of meeting with the "enemy" is a behavioral step that creates dissonance with previous prejudices of individuals and could lead to a revision of those attitudes to bring them more in line with the individual's behavior; strong affective ties are formed with individuals from the other party, leading to intergroup friendships; and a more differentiated view of the other side develops as each

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party learns that they are not homogeneous (see Pettigrew, 1998, 2008).

If these conditions of the contact hypothesis are met, dialogue can play a role in building a peace culture, provided the contact is continuous. Salomon (2009) suggests that contact changes relational dynamics by placing participants in a position where they can reexamine the way they perceive and relate to one another. However, it is not enough to meet only once or even several times. Cromwell and Vogele (2009) note that for dialogue to lead to cooperation, interaction must occur over and over, partly because by establishing a strong set of past positive interactions, it will be possible for participants to recall these exchanges when times are more difficult (see also Axelrod, 1984). A sustained set of productive interactions also help participants recognize each other as potential allies or partners in cooperative ventures (discussed in more detail below).

Coming together in dialogue requires a serious commitment on the part of participants. Events are likely to take place that make continued contact very difficult, and it is easy for dialogue to stop in response to negative external developments. Yet when groups meet for an extended period, commitment serves a reinforcing purpose, which drives future interaction. In a way, they can become caught in a positive dynamic, with the forces pushing toward continued contact becoming stronger, and hopefully able to resist the inevitable attempts to stop it. By creating a positive present with the other, dialogue can help parties to a conflict look toward a shared future.

Reducing Deep-Seated Hostility

Intractable conflicts frequently are characterized by ethnic victimization, unaddressed historical grievances and traumas, economic asymmetries, unequal distribution of resources, and structural inequalities (see, e.g., Azar, 1983, 1990; Azar & Farah, 1981; Bar-Tal, 2003, 2007; Burgess & Burgess, 2003; Coleman, 2003; Coleman, Vallacher, Nowak, & Bui-Wrzosinska, 2007; Crocker, Hampson, & Aall, 2005; Kriesberg, 1998, 2003). Many have a long history, not infrequently going back 25 years or more (Marshall & Gurr, 2003). Especially, when conflict has brought assault, torture, murder, and other heinous crimes, the result is a deep-rooted hostility that is not easy to overcome, even with the best of intentions. The grievances that residents of conflict zones accumulate, especially when violence continues over a number of years, leave deep scars of anger, grief, a sense of victimhood, and a will for revenge (Bar-Tal, 2009).

One only needs to consider cases such as the massacres in Rwanda, apartheid in South Africa, the decades of bombings and targeted killings in Northern Ireland, the killing fields of Cambodia, and countless other violent conflicts to wonder how it might be possible to move beyond the enmity that results. Clearly, events of this kind cannot be forgotten by those who experienced them, and it's unlikely that all traces of resentment can be erased from the hearts and minds of those who personally experienced great losses. Nor should the acts themselves be condoned or left free from punishment. But nursing hate and a sense of victimhood keeps the hostility in the present and projects it toward the future instead of allowing it to occupy a more appropriate place in the past. By holding on to the hostility, it becomes impossible to work creatively toward peace.

To build a culture of peace, a way must be found to break loose from the confining emotions of fear, anger, and hatred that shackle those who have experienced violent conflict. The opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue can help reduce this hostility in consequential ways (Albeck, Adwan, & Bar-On, 2002; Burgess & Burgess, 1996; Ellis, 2005; Ramsbotham, 2010; Saunders, 2003). Dialogue offers individuals and groups the possibility to move beyond the past while still acknowledging the events that frame the

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conflict. The pain from past events cannot be erased, but perhaps it can be dealt with in a healthier manner by meeting individuals from the other community as fellow human beings and co-residents of the land. Participants have an opportunity to describe to the other the harm they have suffered and the pain they have experienced because of actions by the other side. As Kelman (2008) notes, it is not enough to simplistically say that each side has its own equally valid truth, but we must find a way of "admitting the other's truth into [our] own narrative" (p. 29). Through frank and honest exchange, they often move to a point where they can recognize and acknowledge the responsibility of their own side in the conflict. By engaging in such dialogue, they create an awareness of shared humanity, an important building block for improving relations in conflict situations.

In general, the culture of safety that often emerges through dialogue can allow the group to validate the pain and grief of its members, create feelings of empathy for the suffering many have experienced, collectively mourn for the losses all have incurred, and offer support for everyone's constant struggle to deal with the psychological (and often physical) wounds inflicted by the conflict. Through this shared dealing with the past, participants can move toward collective healing and restoration of neighborly relations. Dialogue opens up a space for *forgiveness* (Kalayjian & Paloutzian, 2009), although this is an act that requires a significant degree of courage and moral development on the part of the victim, and it is not something that is easy to document (Murithi, 2008). Nevertheless, it can be a major step toward healing and reconciliation (Lederach, 1997), which are significant aspects of a culture of peace.

Nurturing Respect for the Other

In deeply divided societies, limited freedom of movement creates an environment in which a culture of conflict, mistrust, and suspicion, as well as a flourishing of "enemy images," is reinforced. The hatred, fear, and atrocities committed by parties against each other create a tendency for individuals in violent conflicts to demonize those on the other side, attributing the causes of their suffering and experiences of injustice exclusively to the other. By excluding situational factors, all the blame for the current situation can be placed on the "enemy." This easily leads to a view that "our side" is righteous and justified in its actions, while the "other side" by nature is aggressive, acting the way it does because of inherent evil tendencies.

Humans have a deep-rooted psychological tendency, at both individual and group levels, to dichotomize by creating "enemies" and "allies." According to *enemy system theory* (Mack, 1990; Montville, 1990; Volkan, 1990), primitive and unconscious impulses often result in former neighbours harming and killing each other simply because they belong to different national/ethnic groups. As events unfold, each side adopts a partisan, skewed, and unilateral declaration of grievances and becomes fiercely preoccupied with asserting its rights, making it blind to the need for attending to and mending interethnic relations. Giving so much attention to one's own grievances and rights simply deepens the estrangement of the communities in conflict, and there is little concrete engagement between the two sides of each other in seeking solutions to the issues that divide them.

Intergroup dialogue provides participants the experience of sitting in the same room with the enemy. Members of the group can come to understand each other's culture and everyday concerns, and learn about their history and personal experiences. By exchanging personal stories and engaging in mutual analysis of the conflict and its effects, the other can be legitimized and humanized. Kriesberg (2004) suggests that a regard for the other takes hold in dialogue groups, in which there is eventually acceptance of the other's way of

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life, allowing for the possibility of different ways of life existing side by side.

By listening to what the other has to say, and allowing for its authenticity, *respect* can slowly emerge, with mutual recognition of each other's humanity and legitimacy. Respect does not necessitate our agreement with the other, nor does it suggest sympathy for their aims, but it simply requires that we hear and acknowledge the other's perspective without overreacting or disparaging it, engaging in "attributional generosity in interpreting the words and intentions of others" (Janoff-Bulman & Werther, 2008, p. 159). Respect enables accommodation and may eventually allow participants to come to see their adversaries as worthy of the respect they have been affording the other through the listening process. Such respect, and the corresponding trust that often accompanies it, develops gradually, usually in small increments (Blase & Blase, 1994), as participants slowly and carefully reveal their own hurt and pain and find a positive reception from the other.

Through dialogue, the rival can become a legitimate partner in peace and deserving of humane treatment (Bar-Tal, 2009). Without dialogue, however, it is much more difficult, if not unlikely, for respect and trust to develop. As Francis Fukuyama (1995) argues, "trust cannot be achieved by individual actors acting alone, but must be done as a societal venture" (p. 23).

Developing a Narrative of Hope and Peace

Memories of episodes that took place during periods of violent confrontation can easily dominate the minds of the majority of people in the affected society. Those who lost family members; had to leave their homes and means of livelihood; witnessed massacres, bombings, rapes, and other acts of violence; or lived as refugees cannot easily lay aside mental images of these horrors. Even those of the younger generation who did not directly experience such incidents are confronted with them on a daily basis through stories from their parents, lessons in school, and constant renditions in the newspapers, radio programs, and television specials. The psychological burden imposed by images of the past weighs heavily on the minds of those in the conflict, creating a pathology that permeates society (Duran, Duran, & Brave Heart, 1998; Whitbeck, Adams, Hoyt, & Chen, 2004). The weight rarely lessens with time, although it may take different forms. In cases where the conflict results in a shifting of physical borders, meaning that many people have to resettle, a sense of loss and incompleteness, associated with the tear in the social fabric caused by the separation, weighs heavily on the minds of societal members.

Against the background of such burdens, it is easy to understand why protracted conflicts are so often characterized by a climate of negativity, ranging from collective emotional orientations of fear, anger, and hatred to low expectations about the possibility for resolving the conflict. A sense of pessimism about the future can easily prevail across society. In such a climate, it is difficult to promote the changes that are necessary to improve relations and establish the infrastructure for peace. As Salomon (2009) suggests, it is critical to cultivate more positive attitudes toward the other side and more positive attitudes toward peace. Bar-Tal (2009) agrees, writing "it is necessary to develop an emotional orientation of hope that reflects the desire for the positive goal of maintaining peaceful and cooperative relations with the other party" (p. 369).

To the extent that dialogue can be harnessed appropriately, it can pave the way toward reducing the mental and emotional burdens of the past. Dialogue offers the possibility for developing more positive emotional orientations, particularly the hope

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that is necessary for peaceful coexistence and joint action to build and maintain a healthy society. Dialogue can aid in creating what Staub (1996) calls a "positive vision based on humanistic and inclusive ideals without an inherent destructive potential. . . [with a] focus on the possibility of, and satisfactions inherent in connection to, community and peace" (p. 147). It accomplishes this by allowing individuals from conflicting groups to turn toward each other, gaining an awareness of their interconnectedness, common humanity, and shared interests. By allowing participants to engage in exploration of those beliefs that were fueling the conflict, they can be effectively neutralized, no longer playing such a dominating role in the discourse. And if spread widely, it is possible that the dialogue that takes place in the workshop settings can become part of the public consciousness and play a role in "developing an awareness that there may be alternative paths out of the conflict" (Richmond, 2004, p. 210).

As the game theorist Robert Axelrod (1984) insightfully points out, "Mutual cooperation can be made stable if the future is sufficiently important relative to the present" (p. 126). Dialogue can help participants develop a new narrative that will carry them from the present into the future, rather than trapping them in the past. Indeed, the opportunity to visualize a different (and more positive) future is a key in transforming conflict. By critically examining collective memories, in which all participants can revise their account of the past, creating a synchronized view of what led to the conflict and how it unfolded, a new narrative can emerge (Bar-Tal, 2009). In this narrative, it is important that all sides come to view peace as both a desirable and important goal, one that promotes common interests. A narrative framework that places peace at its center will serve as the basis for both interpreting events and making choices about the future. When this happens, a culture of peace is not only possible but perhaps even likely.

Establishing a Basis for Cooperation

Scholars often point to the critical importance of cooperation in building a culture of peace. Cromwell and Vogele (2009) suggest that the foundation for a peaceful community is based in part on "the emergence of mutually beneficial cooperation based on strategic reciprocity" (p. 235). Similarly, Bar-Tal's (2009) view of reconciliation emphasizes the "formation of new societal beliefs about the relations between the two rival groups that emphasize the importance of cooperation and friendly relationships" (p. 369). Kelman (1999) proposes that cooperative activities "can help stabilize and cement a new peaceful relationship and create commitments, habits, and expectations" (p. 201) that are conducive to building peace. Osgood (1966) suggests that one of the best ways to gradually lower tensions during conflict situations is for the opposing groups to undertake a series of small but meaningful initiatives. Confidence-building measures are often used to promote a move away from competitive actions and a turn toward working together peacefully.

Unfortunately, one of earliest casualties of protracted conflict is cooperation between the parties. As trust breaks down and relations deteriorate, the disputing sides quickly stop working together. On the individual level, without regular task-oriented interaction, individuals on opposite sides of a conflict no longer have a way to experience the give-and-take that comes with working on a project together. The practice that one usually has in compromising while working out the small details of daily problem solving no longer occurs, making it even more difficult to consider compromise on larger issues that divide them. And from a very practical

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standpoint, the many issues that require close cooperation are left unattended, causing losses for both sides.

Morton Deutsch (1973), in his classic book, *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes*, describes constructive processes as similar to a cooperative process of solving a mutual problem, whereas a destructive process is like a competitive struggle to win the conflict. In his view, cooperative relations have characteristics such as effective communication, respect, fair treatment, enhancement of one another's knowledge and skill, and recognition of the legitimacy of each other's interests. Such actions, which must be based on mutual trust, do not come easily, but they must be cultivated gradually.

Deutsch (2008) notes that it takes repeated experience of successful and mutually beneficial cooperation, in a variety of settings, to build trust between former warring parties. We believe that the key to accomplishing this challenging task is carefully run dialogue sessions. Through experience in intergroup dialogues over a number of years, individuals put themselves in a good position to promote true cooperative partnerships. They gain the necessary contacts with the other community, and they become at least minimally sensitive to the concerns of the other community. In addition, they also become aware of some of the issues that might cause misunderstanding and conflict, while learning some of the skills for dealing with it. In addition, intergroup dialogue initiatives can provide opportunities to learn to talk about divisive issues in ways that avoid unintentional provocation, thus making more likely the success of cooperative initiatives. Although cooperation in the business sector will probably be driven primarily by perceived potential for profit, many of the cooperative ventures across community lines will require determined initiative by individuals who understand their importance, who are aware of the potential difficulties, and who are committed to their success.

Sustained dialogue can not only help build the communication links that are necessary for cooperation on even the simplest of tasks, but it is through the dialogue sessions that suitable tasks can be identified for restarting cooperation after a period of conflict. As Deutsch (2008) notes, it is important, especially in the early stages of rebuilding trust, that cooperative endeavors are successful. The careful selection of opportunities for working together can occur in dialogue groups with a much better chance for success than if they are selected by outsiders.

One of the positive outcomes of cooperation is that it leads to potentially expanded cooperative behavior. Staub (1996) suggests that when groups work together in a cooperative manner, they tend to generate positive reciprocity, and in addition, they effect changes in themselves that might lead to even more cooperative behavior. Staub provides as an example the Cuban missile crisis, where the United States and the USSR engaged in cooperative behavior to de-escalate a potential catastrophe, and following this event took a number of positive, reciprocal actions (e.g., limiting nuclear testing). Experimental evidence for such reciprocity is found in a recent study by Fowler and Christakis (2010) on contributions to the public good. They found that individuals are influenced by fellow group members' behavior in their own future interactions with others who were not part of the initial contribution setting. Furthermore, they found that this influence persists and even spreads up to three degrees of separation (from person to person to person to person). Their results provide experimental evidence that cooperative behavior can easily cascade in human social networks.

An Integrative Model

Dialogue is not a miraculous cure for the pathology of a violence-based approach to conflict; however, it is a vital component of

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the culture-building process that is required for societies to develop productive ways to deal with differences and disagreements. And dialogue does not directly, in and of itself, produce a culture of peace; rather, it provides a primary method for promoting sustained contact, reducing deep-seated hostility, promoting respect for the other, developing a narrative of hope, and establishing a basis for cooperation. In turn, these elements have a supportive influence on one another, such that each one creates the appropriate conditions for the steps that follow. Sustained contact helps create a space in which hostility can be reduced; this in turn can incrementally lead to greater humanization and respect of the other. Steps such as cross-community collaborative projects are more likely to take place (and succeed) if a narrative of hope and peace has begun to replace the fear and negativity that previously characterized the mentality of participants. Taken together, these elements, and their supportive interactions, provide the building blocks of a culture of peace. In this way, dialogue can serve as a catalyst for establishing the values and practices conducive to meaningful and sustainable peace. Figure 28.1 depicts this flow of influence from dialogue to a culture of peace, showing how dialogue is channeled through a mutually supportive set of conditions that act as a conduit through which a culture of peace can develop. Of course, there are many forces that can stymie the transformation from a culture of violence to a culture of peace, and the next section examines some of the potential difficulties that stand in the way of realizing the potential of dialogue.

Challenges to Dialogue

In the previous sections, the argument was made that dialogue is an important means for promoting a culture of peace, and the contributions it can make toward this goal were explicated. But building a culture of peace is a lengthy and difficult road, requiring the societal infrastructure to evolve from an "ethos of conflict" toward an "ethos of peace"

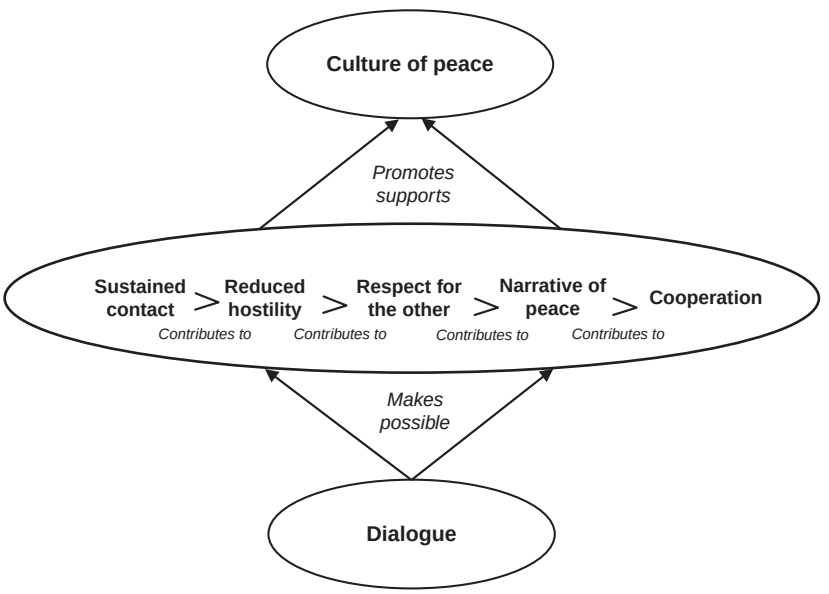

Figure 28.1 Building a Culture of Peace Through Dialogue

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(Bar-Tal, 2009). It takes a long time to penetrate the underlying social fabric and infuse it with a new set of guiding beliefs and ideals, and there are many obstacles that confront those who take up this journey. This section focuses on those challenges that specifically relate to the impact of intergroup dialogue initiatives.

First, it is important to keep in mind that, as desirable as it might seem, dialogue may not always be possible. Unequal social, economic, and symbolic conditions give rise to inequities, and the resulting social asymmetries alter the dynamics of dialogue. They can prevent people from coming together in the first place, and they can make it very difficult for either side to move past their preconceptions and unhealthy communication patterns that resulted from so many years of differences. Those at the top of the power hierarchy may even believe that entering into dialogue with lower status individuals is a threat to their privilege and position. Additionally, we must remember that dialogue depends on reciprocity. Dialogue is a cyclic process, and when one side is still trapped in the vicious cycle of conflict and not ready for meeting the other, dialogue is not possible.

Second, even after bringing participants together in the same physical space, the willingness, or even a strong desire, to engage in dialogue is insufficient for it to actually happen. It requires both a strong commitment and a particular attention to the design of the dialogue. Without a concerted, steadfast effort to continue the dialogue when difficulties arise, and a corresponding commitment to embrace the other as a partner in the process, dialogue might not happen. Even if dialogue sessions are started, they might not continue. Special care must be taken to select the suitable forum as well as design the appropriate structures for dialogue, ensuring that all voices can enter the discussion in a meaningful way. If the proper circumstances exist, however, and if the interaction setting can be correctly designed, then dialogue has the capacity to change the very conditions that made it unlikely in the first place.[6]

Third, dialogue groups are susceptible to the changing context of the conflict. While the ultimate aim of dialogue is to change the conflict dynamics, dialogue is certainly not isolated from them. Instead, the dynamics of the conflict will act as constraints and impose limitations on what is realistically feasible. Societal, regional, and even international events can significantly alter the course of dialogue. It is much easier for individuals and groups engaged in dialogue to succumb to the fear, hostility, and hate brought on by renewed violence than it is to safeguard and protect the trust, cooperation, and respect they have developed in the group. Even if they manage to keep their own group intact and on a positive course after new events have raised the level of hostility in the larger society, participants will face increased pressure from neighbors, colleagues, the media, and others who were probably already skeptical or antagonistic to their involvement in peace efforts. If their dialogue group does not fall apart because of the blow to their perceived legitimacy, it is certain that their discussions will be much more difficult and may take months to get back on track after traumatic events outside the group. Although this danger is greater during the earlier stages of the group's work, it remains a threat always, and it is only through a strong commitment and determination that most individuals and groups are able to get past the occurrence of new tragedies.

Fourth, one of the more difficult, yet highly important, challenges for the overall success of intergroup dialogue is to expand its positive impact to affect a larger segment of society. Of course, large-scale social change almost always begins with a small minority, but the attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral changes that occur in the dialogue groups do not automatically transfer to those outside the

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small circle of dialogue groups, and there is no clear path to ensuring that this happens. It is not necessary for everyone in the larger society to participate in a dialogue group, but it is important to recognize that a culture of peace will not be established until there is large-scale support for the goals of dialogue. Crucially, peace-building efforts need support from both top and bottom simultaneously. Within civil society, there is a need to cultivate credibility and minimize negative perceptions against dialogue by the general public, who may be still ingrained in the hostility and hatred that developed during the violent stages of the conflict. At the top level, dialogue groups need connections and even allies with policymakers. Unfortunately, officials are not always supportive of dialogue efforts. In fact, unofficial intergroup dialogue initiatives often provoke opposition from officials who, unwilling to discard the right to control the agenda for managing the conflict, fear that their positions will be undermined by civil society dialogue groups. Additionally, the ability of dialogue groups to sustain their discussions over a long period of time is tied, at least in part, to a sense of progress on the political level. If there are no positive developments to encourage the group, it is easy to become discouraged and lose enthusiasm for the effort. Overall, in the absence of acceptance by the larger society, including support from the top, and without noticeable progress in the official arena, civil society dialogue initiatives may have only limited impact on the conflict situation, perhaps restricted to the changes experienced by participants themselves.

Fifth, even in cases where dialogue groups have achieved legitimacy in the larger society, or more rarely, when they actually receive support from officials, there are limitations to the impact that dialogue can have in the face of institutionalized inequities and discrimination. Structural inequality may have been one of the drivers of the conflict in the first place, and sometimes the existence of dialogue groups can be used by officials to create a false sense of normalcy, while structural barriers are still in place. In some cases, one of the parties in the conflict may actively discourage participation in dialogue groups precisely because they fear that these groups will be used by the other (more dominant) side to further the status quo and delay the structural changes that are necessary to truly address the underlying reasons for the conflict. Even with the best of intentions, dialogue groups may be unwittingly "used" by more powerful interests, and thus may actually work against the aims of reducing prejudice and promoting equality. Hopefully, this is not often the case, but it is a danger that should be given attention by anyone promoting dialogue in the face of intractable conflict.

Sixth, dialogue must confront the question of how cultural differences, widely recognized as a significant factor in conflict (see other chapters in this section), can have an impact on interaction and perception during the dialogue process. Historically, there was surprisingly little attention given to questions of culture by those who pioneered the problem-solving approaches to dialogue. Even though culture is dealt with more explicitly by contemporary scholars and practitioners, there is still insufficient in-depth discussion of culture and dialogue.[7] Cultural assumptions of current practice need to be examined, as does the applicability of the transfer of approaches across different cultural contexts. Three of the main issues that need to be addressed in relation to culture and dialogue are the following:

1. Dialogue methodologies are generally consensual in their assumptions and prescriptions, opening questions about their appropriateness in societies with more authority-based or hierarchical cultural forms of communication.
2. Most approaches to dialogue are based on the Western notion of an "active dialogue"

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open forum "talk" approach, which may be more appropriate in some cultural settings than in others.[8]

3. Dialogue groups facilitated by Western academics usually use English as the language of discussion, posing potential limitations in expression for participants for whom English is a second language, or when an interpreter is employed, translation can lead to misunderstanding (or a false sense that understanding has actually occurred when it has not).

Additionally, there is a need to examine a wider range of cultural approaches to dialogue. Most societies have developed methods of dialogue that were used traditionally for resolving disputes at the local level, and while changing times and conditions have affected their direct application to contemporary problems, there is much that can be learned from studying traditional techniques for conflict resolution. Even though it may not be appropriate to simply apply, uncritically, local or traditional dialogue techniques in the context of more complex conflict situations, there is more that can be done to integrate them within contemporary approaches to dialogue.

Seventh, and perhaps the greatest challenge for dialogue initiatives, is the question of how the dialogic process itself, as well the practical measures that may have resulted from the discussions, can be institutionally anchored. Without adequate incorporation of dialogue in everyday practices, there is the very real danger that dialogue groups will remain on the fringe of the playing field, or that they will eventually run out of steam, discontinuing or significantly diminishing efforts to change the culture of conflict. Institutionalization of dialogue can take many different forms, including steps such as the following: making curricular changes in the education system; appointing semigovernmental commissions and joint task forces; founding multiethnic NGOs; developing community-based dialogue groups; building academic degrees and certificates; setting up cooperative exchanges; encouraging cultural mechanisms for promoting peace, such as literature, films, and theater; changing the mission and focus of mass media so that it is less adversarial; and even designing, within some of the government departments and ministries, official units for the application of dialogue to designated situations.[9] Whatever the form, the primary purpose of institutionally anchoring dialogue is to shape and solidify peaceful relations so that dialogue will happen naturally in response to conflict and that dialogue will be used as the means to design an appropriate infrastructure for peace.

In summary, it is difficult to control both the possibilities for dialogue to happen and how it will unfold as it takes place. Even when it is possible to bring people together, the group may not be able to get past the initial suspicions or overcome disruptions or events that stop progress. If the dialogue groups themselves are successful, questions arise about how to expand the scope of impact and how to achieve legitimacy in the larger society. Insufficient attention to cultural variables can easily derail dialogue, and it is a constant struggle to find the appropriate balance of local and imported dialogic methods. And until dialogue practices become firmly part of the infrastructure of society, questions will naturally arise about the extent to which dialogue has contributed toward the ultimate goal of building a culture of peace.

For the countless thousands of individuals who have dedicated their lives and made great personal and professional sacrifices toward promoting dialogue, it is not always necessary to have definitive proof about the impact of dialogue on the larger society. It is the process of working toward that ultimate goal that provides the impetus to continue, sometimes in the face of seemingly impossible odds toward what some would view as unattainable ends. Fortunately, in addition to the

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challenges and the setbacks that are likely to occur along the way, there are usually meaningful steps forward as well, and sometimes it is these small indications of progress that keep alive the hope for eventually reaching that seemingly elusive goal of building a culture of peace.

Conclusion

Although war and violence can be demoralizing, conflict is an unavoidable, and even necessary, part of all societies. Difference is a basic characteristic of all life forms, and it is how we deal with these differences that determines the peacefulness of society. Clearly, groups are capable of inflicting unimaginable harm on fellow human beings, but there is also plenty of evidence for our capacity to live in peace. This chapter has examined the role that intergroup dialogue can play in creating this capacity. Even though it was noted previously that cultures of peace cannot be built on dialogue alone, it bears repeating that realizing the characteristics of a culture of peace—respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights, and equality between men and women (UNESCO, 1989)—requires profound changes at the system level, including political, economic, educational, legal, and societal systems. While dialogue cannot, by itself, produce these changes, it can serve as the means through which some of the necessary changes can occur. It lies at the heart of Boulding's (2000) culture-creating activity, helping to overcome the separateness that keeps a society locked into cycles of psychological, physical, and structural violence. Dialogue is both the mechanism through which participants in dialogue groups create a peace culture within their own group, and it is the primary instrument for transforming their society into a peace system that values dialogue as a means to settle disputes.

The historian Jonathan Spence (1985) tells the story of the Jesuit Priest Matteo Ricci, who set out from Italy in 1577 to bring Christianity to the Ming dynasty in China. As part of his mission to spread Christianity in the largely Confucian country, the priest teaches young Confucian scholars tricks to increase their memory skills. In one of his lessons, Ricci dissects the Chinese ideograph for war, pronounced "wu," creating two sections on a diagonal axis, yielding two separate ideographs (Spence, 1985). The upper represents the word for spear, the lower a word with the sense of "to stop" or "to prevent." Dividing the ideograph in this way "allowed one to see, buried inside the word for war, the possibilities, however frail, of peace" (Spence, 1985, p. 24).[10] Though it may be taking the interpretation of "wu" beyond its intended meaning, it is possible that one of the outcomes of war is a call for dialogue. The divisiveness, distrust, and hatred that result from war may actually create a yearning for their opposites. From this perspective, perhaps war offers the possibility, "however frail," of creating a culture that will prevent its recurrence. The hope is that dialogue will be able to contribute to that process in meaningful and significant ways, helping to weave into the fabric of society a recognition of the desirability and the power of peace as the alternative to violence. If this can happen, then a culture of peace will become more than an ideal, making our world a place where respect, empathy, hope, and justice will prevail.

Notes

1. The data are based on information from the UCDP at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Sweden. The project monitors the development of armed conflicts globally and presents its findings annually. The project only registers conflicts in which at least one party is the government of a state and where the use of force has resulted

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in at least 25 battle-related deaths in any single year. For recent reports, see Harbom and Wallensteen (2010). The data are also available at www.pcr.uu.se.

2. See, for example, the Foundation for the Global Compact, a UN call to companies around the world to voluntarily align their operations and strategies with principles associated with a culture of peace, www.globalcompactfoundation.org/about-ungc.php. A list of businesses and business associations associated with the Global Compact can be found at http://www.unglobalcompact.org/ParticipantsAndStakeholders/business_associations.html. Other groups rank business organizations on qualities strongly related to a culture of peace. For example, Ethisphere (http://www.ethisphere.com/worlds-most-ethical-companies-rankings/) produces a yearly ranking of companies characterized by a strong "culture of ethics."

3. This section on dialogue draws from Broome (2009b).

4. In an earlier work, I refer to this process as "relational empathy" (Broome, 2009a), which allows the creation of a "third culture" that draws on aspects of each participant's world view to create new understandings and ways of relating.

5. The contact hypothesis was developed within the context of race relations in the United States in the 1940s and 1950s, where it played an important role in shaping desegregation policies (Brewer & Miller, 1984), but it also has informed policies in other multiethnic societies, among them are Israel (Amir, 1969) and Northern Ireland (Knox & Hughes, 1996) as well as numerous international exchange programs.

6. See Broome, Anastasiou, Hadjipavlou, and Kanol (2012) for a case study about how dialogue can serve as a positive response to tragic events.

7. The question of culture and conflict resolution has been examined by a number of scholars. An excellent summary is found in a recent book by Kevin Avruch (2012). Also, in a chapter from the first edition of this book, my colleague Ann-Sofi Jakobsson-Hatay and I take a more detailed look at the relations between culture and dialogue (see Broome & Jakobsson-Hatay, 2006).

8. See Lederach's (1995b) work on using cultural indigenous approaches (e.g., dance, drawings, music, poems, and opening and closing cultural rituals) for alternatives to talk-infused dialogue. See also LeBaron's (2003) discussion of culture and conflict in the Beyond Intractability Database in the Conflict Research Consortium at the University of Colorado, Boulder (www.beyondintractability.org).

9. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive list of groups and organizations around the world working to promote a culture of peace through dialogue, but a few examples will help illustrate some of the many ways in which dialogue and peace can be institutionally anchored.

    a. Examples of organizations with a primary charter to promote peace through dialogue: Conciliation Resources (http://www.c-r.org/), The National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (http://ncdd.org/), International Association for Public Participation (http://www.iap2.org/), International Institute for Sustained Dialogue (http://www.sustaineddialogue.org/iisd.htm), Seeds of Peace (http://www.seedsofpeace.org/), Public Dialogue Consortium (publicdialogue.org/), Network for Peace Through Dialogue (http://www.networkforpeace.com/index.html).

    b. There are more than 100 undergraduate and advanced degree programs in peace and conflict at universities around the world. A few examples include the following: American University, USA (http://www.american.edu/sis/ipcr/); George Mason University, USA (scar.gmu.edu/); University of San Diego, USA (http://www.sandiego.edu/peacestudies/ipj/); University of Otago, New Zealand (http://www.otago.ac.nz/ncpacs); Uppsala University, Sweden (http://www.pcr.uu.se/); Sabanci Univeristy, Turkey (http://conf.sabanciuniv.edu/); University for Peace Africa Programme (http://www.africa.upeace.org); The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland (graduateinstitute.

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ch/ccdp); University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa (http://www.ukzn.ac.za); University of Haifa, Israel (http://www.peace-and-conflict-studies.org/); and Kyung Hee University, South Korea (http://www.kyunghee.edu/academics05_04.php).

c. Peace education has been introduced into school systems worldwide. The Peace Education produces materials that are used by schools around the world (http://www.peace-ed.org/). Also see Education for Peace (http://efpinternational.org/) and Teachers Without Borders (http://teacherswithoutborders.org/).

d. Peace media has become an important means of institutionalizing dialogue. A compilation of a variety of peace media is located at http://peacemedia.usip.org/. A set of short films that deal with peace issues related to human rights can be found at http://www.youtube.com/user/artfortheworld001. One of these films that is particularly relevant to this essay is "The Accordion" by Jafar Panahi: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0qDkHB6XCI&list=UUj1hvr-47x4i9Ddnfj1OnMQ&index=7&feature=plcp.

e. There are a number of knowledge databases with articles, case studies, interviews, and other materials on peace and dialogue. See, for example, http://www.beyondintractability.org/.

f. Two important government-mandated peace programs are the U.S. Congress-mandated United States Institute for Peace (http://www.usip.org/), and the UN-mandated University for Peace (http://www.upeace.org/).

10. I learned about the story of Ricci and the Chinese ideograph for war from the anthropologist Donald Tuzin in his discussion of the ontology of peace (Tuzin, 1996). It is a powerful metaphor, and for me, it provides optimism for those times when peace seems most distant, pointing to the possibility that dialogue might be possible even in the most distressing of times.

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29

Culture-Based Situational Conflict Model

An Update and Expansion

Stella Ting-Toomey and John G. Oetzel

With rapid changes in the global economy, technology, transportation systems, and immigration policies, the world is becoming a small, intersecting community. We find ourselves having increased contact with people who are culturally different. In a global workforce, people bring with them different work habits and cultural practices. For example, cultural strangers may approach problem-solving tasks or developing friendships and romantic relationships with different expectations and rhythms. They may also have different communication desires, end goals, and emphases in an intercultural encounter. In this 21st century global world, people are constantly moving across borders, into and out of a country. Neighborhoods and communities are changing. In what was once a homogeneous community, we may now find more diversity and cultural values in flux.

The study of intercultural conflict communication involves, at least in part, cultural group membership differences. Intercultural conflict is the perceived or actual incompatibility of cultural values, situational norms, goals, face orientations, scarce resources, styles/processes, and/or outcomes in a face-to-face (or mediated) context within a sociohistorical embedded system. To be a competent conflict communicator in the 21st century, both the appropriateness and effectiveness features, together with the productivity, satisfaction, and ethical choice features are part of the intercultural conflict competence criteria (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). If inappropriate or ineffective conflict behaviors continue, the miscommunication can very easily spiral into a complex, polarized intercultural conflict situation.

Culture, from this backdrop context, is defined as a learned system of traditions, symbolic patterns, and accumulative meanings that fosters a particular sense of shared identity-hood, community-hood, and interaction rituals among the aggregate of its group members. Both cultural and individual conditioning

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factors in conjunction with multilayered situational factors shape intercultural conflict competence antecedent factors, process, and outcome. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: (1) to offer a synoptic review and critique of our original conflict model, namely, the culture-based situational conflict model (CBSCM) published in 2001 in our book *Managing Intercultural Conflict Effectively* (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001), and (2) to propose an update model, the culture-based social ecological conflict model (CBSECM), to capture the dynamic change and the accelerated research growth in the area of intercultural conflict communication. The updated model is based on a merging of the classic model, CBSCM, with the social ecological framework as proposed in our concluding chapter in the first edition of *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Communication* (Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, & Rinderle, 2006). We also believe that the study of contemporary intercultural conflict cases in this global, intersecting world should emphasize the importance of a multilevel, multicontextual analysis perspective.

A multilevel perspective in analyzing an intercultural conflict case provides the opportunity to understand (and possibly challenge) what are the deeply held assumptions of a particular cultural conflict worldview or practice on multiple levels of influence. A multilevel theorizing process may illustrate that a particular intercultural conflict case history contains both consistencies and inconsistencies at multiple levels of analysis. Additionally, a multilevel perspective helps illustrate the multitude of factors that shape macrosystem-level, institutional membership-level, immediate community-level, workplace-level, or family socialization-level influence, and also individual- and interpersonal-level conflict interpretations within and across the nested units of emphasis.

More specifically, the chapter is organized in four sections. The first section briefly reviews the original CBSCM. The section ends with a critique of the limitations of the model. The second section explains the core principles and the analytical concepts of the social ecological model as a precursor discussion to our updated model in the next section. The third section discusses in depth the new model, the CBSECM, and the new elements in this model. The section ends with an application of an intercultural conflict case study in illustrating the utility and the versatility of the CBSECM. The last section ends with a call for directions for future theorizing and researching in testing and further fine-tuning the CBSECM and its related conflict competence practice.

A Synoptic Review of the Original CBSCM

The goal of the original CBSCM proposed by Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) was to use the model as a tentative map to organize and explain the various research concepts in the growing intercultural conflict field. With the proposed culture-based situational model in 2001, we envisioned that researchers and practitioners could collaborate in an integrative manner and locate concepts and linkage of ideas between the factors and test them in a systematic manner.

The original CBSCM basically consists of four components: (1) primary orientation factors (e.g., value patterns and personal attributes), (2) situational and relational boundary features (e.g., in-group-out-group boundary, interpersonal relationship boundary, and conflict goals' assessment), (3) conflict communication process factors (e.g., conflict styles and facework behaviors), and (4) conflict competence features (e.g., appropriates and effectiveness, productivity and satisfaction) (see Figure 29.1). In brief, people's primary orientation factors lead to certain perceptions and interpretations about the conflict episode, and thus their preference for certain conflict behaviors. They bring these orientations

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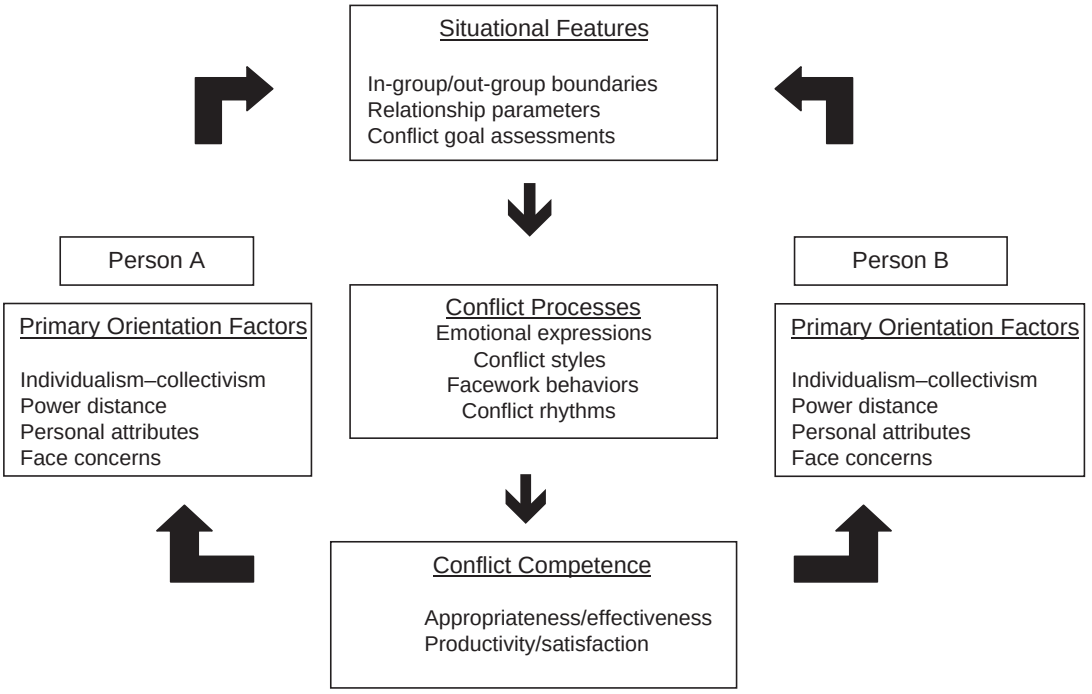

Figure 29.1 Original Culture-Based Situational Conflict Model

SOURCE: Adapted from Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001).

into a particular conflict case that has situational filters and relational boundaries. These boundaries and orientations shape specific conflict styles and strategies, which, in turn, result in conflict competence features. The following is a brief recap of the specific components and some update issues in the past several years and end with a self-critique of our own classical model.

Primary Orientation Factors

Cultural Value Patterns. The cultural socialization patterns can include the study of the value patterns of individualism-collectivism and small-large power distance (Hofstede, 2001). Indeed, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behiavor Effectiveness research project (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004) provided additional evidence that the foundational constructs of individualism-collectivism and small-large power distance permeate 62 countries (and with a sample size of 17,370 middle managers from three industries) at the societal, organizational, and individual levels of analysis.

Basically, *individualism* refers to the broad value tendencies of a culture in emphasizing the importance of the "I" identity over the "we" identity, individual rights over group interests, and individuated-focused emotions over social-focused emotions. In comparison, *collectivism* refers to the broad value tendencies of a culture in emphasizing the importance of the "we" identity over the "I" identity, in-group interests over individual wants, and other-face concerns over self-face concerns. Both Hofstede's (2001) and House et al.'s (2004) international research studies have been critiqued as using overgeneralized value dimensions to superimpose on an entire

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national group and treating national culture as a homogeneous entity (D. Thomas, 2008; Ting-Toomey, 2009, 2010; Triandis, 2002). For example, cross-cultural family researchers Tamis-LeMonda et al. (2008) challenged the bifurcation of individualism and collectivism into two contrastive camps. They advanced the position of a dynamic coexistence of individualism and collectivism on both the culture level and individual level of analysis. By viewing individualism and collectivism as existing on a dynamic continuum with conflicting and complementary elements and with multiple layers, cultural and ethnic identity diversity within a culture can be accounted for (Orbe & Everett, 2006; Ting-Toomey, 2010; Ting-Toomey et al., 2000).

Beyond individualism-collectivism, another important value dimension that is critical in understanding workplace conflict competence is the dimension of power distance (Carl, Gupta, & Javidan, 2004). *Power distance*, from the workplace values analysis standpoint, refers to the way in which a corporate culture approaches and deals with status differences and social hierarchies. People in *small power distance* corporate cultures tend to value equal power distributions, symmetrical relations, a mixture of positive and negative messages in feedback sessions, and equitable reward and cost distributions based on individual merits. People in *large power distance* corporate cultures tend to accept unequal power distributions, asymmetrical relations, authoritative feedback from the experts or high-status individuals, and rewards and sanctions based on rank, role, status, age, and perhaps even gender identity.

In combining both individualism-collectivism and small/large power distance value patterns, four predominant corporate value dimension approaches and related conflict styles have been identified: impartial, status-achievement, benevolent, and communal (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). The *impartial approach* reflects a combination of an individualistic and small power distance value orientation; the *status-achievement approach* consists of a combination of an individualistic and large power distance value orientation; the *benevolent approach* reflects a combination of a collectivistic and large power distance value orientation; and the *communal approach* consists of a combination of collectivistic and small power distance value orientation.

Individual Socialization Patterns. The individual socialization patterns can include the study of the personality tendencies of independent self and interdependent self. Self-construal is one of the major individual factors that focuses on individual variation within and between cultures. *Self-construal* is one's self-image and is composed of an independent and an interdependent self (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Markus & Kitayama, 1991, 1998).

The independent construal of self involves the view that an individual is a unique entity with an individuated repertoire of feelings, cognitions, and motivations. In contrast, the interdependent construal of self involves an emphasis on the importance of relational or in-group connectedness. Self-construal is the individual-level equivalent of the cultural variability dimension of individualism-collectivism. However, both dimensions of self exist within each individual, regardless of cultural identity. The manner in which individuals conceive of their self-images—independent versus interdependent selves or both—should have a profound influence on the expectancies of what constitute appropriate or inappropriate conflict communication responses in a wide variety of situations across a diverse range of cultures (Zhang, Ting-Toomey, Dorjee, & Lee, 2012). For example, in a cross-national conflict study in four nations, Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2003) found that independent self-construal

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is associated positively with self-face concern and the use of dominating/competing conflict strategies. Interdependent self-construal, on the other hand, is associated positively with other-face concern and the use of avoiding and integrating conflict tactics.

Situational and Relational Boundary Features

The culture-sensitive situational model also emphasizes the importance of understanding the expectancy features of each communication domain such as school/university, organizational/business, community or neighborhood, family or intimate relationship domain. For example, three of the possible factors that moderate the activation of an independent versus an interdependent self in a conflict communication episode can include a situational appraisal process, a relationship appraisal process, and an interactional appraisal analysis.

A situational appraisal process can include an assessment of the degree of formality of the conflict negotiation setting, the perceived mood/climate of the situation, and the placement or arrangement of seatings and spatial/architectural layouts. A relationship appraisal process can include an assessment of the role expectancies and role relationship between the participants, in-group-out-group distance features, salient cultural/ethnic identity issues, gender and other personal identity emphases, and degrees of familiarity, intimacy, verticality, and trust issues (Ting-Toomey & Takai, 2006). An interactional appraisal analysis includes anticipated rewards/costs and alternative conflict options' assessment, the conflict interaction channel or mediation mode, the conflict resolution agenda-setting plan, and the interpretation of various conflict goals from all parties.

In sum, the intersections between situational settings and the perceived framing of the conflict as an in-group versus out-group conflict episode, the assumed horizontal versus vertical role status, the perceived degree of relational interdependence and systems' power dynamics can either exacerbate the ongoing conflict situation or facilitate productive intergroup dialogue. All these interpretive and complex situational features frame how conflict opponents approach and engage in the actual conflict communication process.

Conflict Communication Process Factors

Intercultural conflict interaction process features can include the study of the meaning construction and the verbal/nonverbal behavioral repertoires of what constitute appropriate versus inappropriate and effective versus ineffective conflict management styles in particular situational domain. Due to space limitation, we focus our discussion on some of the key research findings on cross-cultural face negotiation theory and conflict communication styles (Ting-Toomey, 1988, 2005b; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). For a thorough review of research findings in testing the conflict face negotiation theory, readers can consult Oetzel, Garcia, and Ting-Toomey (2008) and Ting-Toomey and Takai (2006).

More specifically, for example, in a direct empirical test of the theory (Oetzel et al., 2001; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003), the research program tested the underlying assumption of the face negotiation theory that face is an explanatory mechanism for cultural membership's influence on conflict behavior. A questionnaire was administered to 768 participants in four national cultures (China, Germany, Japan, and the United States) in their respective languages asking them to recall and describe a recent interpersonal conflict. The major findings of the study

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are as follows: First, cultural individualism-collectivism had direct effects on conflict styles, as well as mediated effects through self-construal and face concerns. Second, *self-face concern* was associated positively with dominating style, and *other-face concern* was associated positively with avoiding and integrating styles. Third, German respondents reported the frequent use of direct-confrontive facework strategies and did not care much for avoidance facework tactics; Japanese reported the use of different pretending strategies to act as if the conflict situation does not exist; Chinese engaged in a variety of avoiding, obliging, and also passive aggressive facework tactics; and U.S. Americans reported the use of upfront expression of feelings and remaining calm as facework strategies to handle problematic conflict situations.

While previous research studies have focused on testing the relationship between the value orientations of culture-based individualism-collectivism to conflict styles and facework strategies, recent research effort has focused more on unpacking the value spectrums of small and large power distance value dimensions in an effort to relate these value dimensions to facework expectancies and actual social practices. For example, Merkin (2006) integrated the small-large power distance value dimension to the individualism-collectivism value dimension in explaining face-threatening response messages and conflict styles in multiple cultures. She found that high-status individuals from large power distance cultures tend to use both direct and indirect facework strategies to deal with face-threatening situations—depending on whether they were delivering positive or negative messages. Furthermore, Kaushal and Kwantes (2006) uncovered that the dominating conflict style of "high concern for self/low concern for others" was positively associated with both vertical individualism and vertical collectivism.

Drawing from this line of research, the interpretation of "positive or negative messages" or the interpretation of the "dominating/controlling" conflict style (i.e., as reflective of "high concern for self/low concern for others") carries strong cross-cultural connotative meanings. For some cultural participants, the dominating style is viewed as a culture-based constructive motivational strategy or even positive coaching tactic. For other cultural/ethnic participants, the dominating conflict style is viewed as an oppressive one-up/one-down demotivational conflict strategy. Likewise, from the Western models of interpreting the avoidance conflict style, avoidance has been consistently viewed as an indifferent or passive "flee the scene" conflict strategy that reflects the "low concern for self/low concern for others" phenomenon (K. W. Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). The Western, individualistic-oriented conceptualization of "avoidance" has been continuously challenged by cross-cultural conflict style researchers (Cai & Fink, 2002; M.-S. Kim & Leung, 2000; Ting-Toomey, 1988, 1999). From the Asian collectivistic lens, for example, the conflict style of avoidance can be regarded as an intentional "high concern for self/high concern for others" tactic pending on situational and relational factors. The notion of "face" or "claimed communicative identity" is considered one key domain out of the several domains of the larger intercultural or intergroup conflict negotiation process.

Conflict Competence Features

Finally, the criteria of communication appropriateness, effectiveness, productivity, and satisfaction can serve as evaluative yardsticks of whether an intercultural communicator has been perceived as behaving competently or incompetently (Canary & Lakey, 2013; Cupach, Canary, & Spitzberg, 2010; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). "Appropriateness" refers to the degree to which the exchanged

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behaviors are regarded as proper and match the expectations generated by the insiders of the culture. "Effectiveness" refers to the degree to which communicators achieve mutually shared meaning and integrative goal-related outcomes in the interaction situation. Effective encoding and decoding processes lead to mutually shared meanings. Mutually shared meanings lead to perceived intercultural conflict understanding. Communication interaction effectiveness has been achieved when multiple meanings are attended to with accuracy and mutually desired interaction goals have been conjointly reached.

"Productivity" refers to the generation of new ideas, new plans, new momentum, and new directions in resolving the conflict problem. Finally, "communication satisfaction" can refer to the overall satisfaction or emotional fulfillment reported by both parties about the interactive negotiation process and the outcome. Dynamic conflict communicators can use culture-sensitive, adaptive communication skills to manage the process appropriately and integrate divergent interaction goals effectively to foster interdependent productivity and team satisfaction within the embedded macro- and microconflict system. The intricate relationship among these various conflict process and outcome criteria—appropriateness, effectiveness, productivity, and satisfaction await to be further explored and flushed out from a multilevel analysis. In two recent update versions on the theme of intercultural conflict competence, Ting-Toomey (2009) defines intercultural conflict competence as the mindful capacity in managing emotional frustrations with the process-outcome goal of transforming ingrained conflict habits and trying to see things from the other cultural premise. Furthermore, mindful conflict competence also emphasizes the importance of intentional transformational changes in the mind-set and the heart-set of the communicators in understanding the conflict case from both an ethnorelative standpoint and a universalistic-humanistic angle (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Fisher-Yoshida, 2005; Mezirow, 2000; Ting-Toomey, 2012; Worthington, 2005).

Critique of the CBSCM

While the original CBSCM worked well as a starting point to capture the interrelationship among the various components of explaining intercultural conflict, this chapter aims to update our original conceptualization of the "big picture" of the intercultural conflict map—from the primary conflict orientation factors to the conflict competence features. Based on recent research in the intercultural conflict literature in the past several years, we have identified several limitations and the potential for constructive change to our original CBSCM of 2001.

First, the classical conflict model emphasizes only a limited range of primary orientation factors such as value dimensions and personal attributes. Given the multilayered complexity of studying intercultural conflict, we would like to deepen the explanation of the layered complexity of the primary orientation factors of the old model via the consideration of multilevel analysis. The added social ecological primary factors of culture-based conflict histories, worldviews and globalization issues, institutional-intergroup membership dynamics, community and family socialization features, and additional individual factors should enrich our understanding of the embedded systems of a polarized, intergroup conflict case.

Second, nations, institutions, group memberships, and individuals come together from divergent perspectives and appraise the conflict situation at multiple levels. Thus, the "situational and relational parameter" component in our classic model appears to be context-thin to a certain extent. In this chapter, we update the old model to include a strong

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version of the social ecological lens that takes into account the situational appraisal process at multiple levels of contextual complexity. We also offer conflict researchers some analytical tools from the social ecological framework to reflect about upward-downward conflict effect, sideway effect, or interactive effect of such appraisal and conflict arousal process. All these appraisals are connected in myriad ways with interdependent reciprocal causations. The situational and relational appraisal features place certain constraints and, at the same time, create multiple openings as to how individuals can frame or reframe the conflict situation, position self and others' in the mediated or interactive conflict space, and time their conflict rhythms in approaching or even delaying their conflict responses in the intergroup conflict negotiation process.

Third, in our classic model, the model did not emphasize enough the interdependent twin role of how sociocultural membership (e.g., religious/spiritual identity) and individual personal attributes interact together to form a holistic conflict identity package in influencing the process and outcome of intercultural or intergroup conflict. The proposed new model, CBSECM, remedies this shortcoming and emphasizes the importance of the enactment and the importance of perceived identity respect and approval in intergroup-interpersonal conflict situations.

Fourth, regardless of how conflict approaches are categorized, the dynamic and interactive nature of the conflict process cannot be underestimated. The original CBSCM did not emphasize the interlocked, fluid nature of the give-and-take conflict bargaining process. In one sense, it is difficult to capture a dynamic process of intricate conflict negotiation on a two-dimensional piece of paper. However, we believe that by using the social ecological framework and its analytical tools of bottom-up/top-down and interactive effects, we can get conflict researchers one-step closer to the dynamic flow and the embedded nature of understanding a complex conflict case in situ. While the original primary orientation factors and situational features in the classic CBSCM provide a starting point for our intercultural conflict approach investigation, the added social ecological framework in the next section can provide further depth and breadth of explanation concerning a multifaceted conflict case history.

Fifth, while the original model CBSCM has identified four key criteria in evaluating conflict competence, the concept of communicating ethically in various conflict situations and the struggle between the various ethical choices and standpoints have not been adequately addressed. In our updated model, CBSECM, ethics plays a prominent role in the intercultural conflict competence outcome feature.

Social Ecological Framework

Overview of Social Ecological Model

Intercultural conflict is a multilevel and multicontextual phenomenon. While past intercultural studies tend to use either a macrolevel lens or a microlevel view to analyze intercultural conflict, the social ecological perspective pays particular attention to multiple levels of analysis of a complex intercultural conflict case. A multilevel, contextual perspective in analyzing an intercultural conflict case provides the opportunity to understand (and possibly challenge) what are the deeply held assumptions of a particular cultural conflict worldview or practice (Y. Y. Kim, 2009; Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, & Rinderle, 2006).

A multilevel theorizing process may illustrate that a particular intercultural conflict case contains both consistencies and inconsistencies at multiple levels of analysis. Additionally, a multilevel perspective helps illustrate the multitude of factors that shape cultural worldview level, institutional level,

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immediate community level, and individual level concerning conflict decoding process within and across distinct levels (Oetzel, Arcos, Mabizela, Weinman, & Zhang, 2006; Oetzel, Dahr, & Kirschbaum, 2007). The social ecological framework is an interdisciplinary approach that gained momentum in the mid-1960s and early 1970s to better address the influences of cultural and social contexts on human behavior and development (Brofenbrenner, 1977; Klein, Tosi, & Cannella, 1999; Stokols, 1996).

On a broad level, Stokols (1996) explains that the social ecological perspective consists of five core principles. First, communication outcomes are influenced by the cumulative effects of multiple physical, cultural, social, and temporal factors. Second, communication outcomes are also affected by individual attributes and specific situations. Third, social ecology incorporates concepts from systems theory, such as interdependence and homeostasis, to further understand the relationship between individuals and their broader contexts. Fourth, social ecology recognizes not only the interconnections among multiple settings but also the interdependence of conditions within particular settings. Fifth, the social ecological perspective is interdisciplinary, involves multilevel domain analysis, and incorporates diverse methodologies.

Social Ecological Layers: Analytical Levels

More specifically, in utilizing a social ecological multilevel theoretical framework, there are four levels of research analytical units: macro-, exo-, meso-, and microlevel analysis. Brofenbrenner (1979) viewed these four social ecological contexts as nested Russian dolls with reciprocal causal effects influencing each sphere (see Figure 29.2). The "macrolevel" analysis refers to the larger sociocultural contexts, histories, worldviews, beliefs, values, and ideologies that shape the individual outlooks and the various embedded systems under this broad umbrella. The "exolevel" (i.e., external environment emphasis) analysis refers to the larger, formal institutions (e.g., government agency system, courtroom system, police system, religious institution, health care system, or school system) that hold power resources and established personnel (with clear roles and responsibilities) to create, enforce, or modify policies and standards and to execute institutional rulings or doctrines that shape the various conflict ideologies, viewpoints, and experiences.

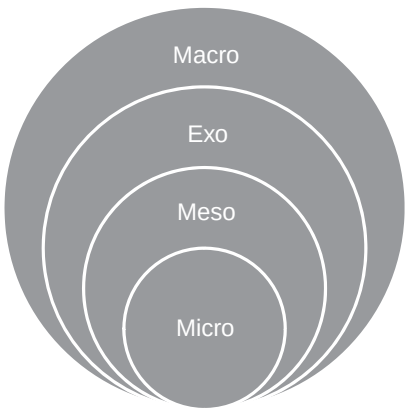

Figure 29.2 Social Ecological Framework of Primary Orientations

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The "mesolevel" analysis refers to the immediate units' influence such as a local neighborhood, a local church group, an extended family unit, and a workplace setting that have some direct or indirect informal impact on the developmental conflict interactions. Finally, the "microlevel" analysis refers to both the intrapersonal-level (i.e., individuated and sociocultural identity-based issues on the personal level, meanings, attributions, and conflict emotions) and interpersonal-level features (e.g., the ongoing team conflicts, conflict eyewitnesses, or the actual face-to-face or mediated conflict encounters) plus the actual physical settings in which the individuals live out their daily lives. It also emphasizes the importance of how individuals can act as active agents to construct or reframe meanings and interpretations of a given intercultural conflict communication event. In addition to the macrosystem, exosystem, mesosystem, and microsystem of analysis, Brofenbrenner (1979) also later added a fifth context, the "chronosystem level" of analysis, which refers to the evolution phases, transitions, patterns, and consequences of developmental conflict changes over time. Unfortunately, the chronosystem level of analysis concerning longitudinal conflict development in different conflict settings has been a sorely understudied area.

In addition, the mass media occupies an interesting position in the social ecological model. While the traditional mass media (e.g., BBC news, CNN news) can be located at the exolevel of social institutional level of influence (e.g., in some countries, the governments run and control the media broadcasts, and in other countries, the media may occupy a more informal yet still widespread persuasion role). Alternatively, the contemporary social media role can also be located at multiple levels of analysis (e.g., on the exo-, meso-, and microlevel), depending on how the social media is being used (institutionally, communally, or interpersonally) and in what particular layered relational and spatial situation. These exo contexts often have filtered (as vs. direct) influence on the community-level or individual-level conflict responses and reactions. However, with the prevalence of social media usage (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) via both filtered and direct channels on a global scale, researchers using the social ecological framework may need to develop additional theoretical lens to account for the role of social media or new media on conflict communication.

Culture-Based Social Ecological Conflict Model: A New Model

The integration of the socioecological framework and the original CBSCM results in the revised model—the new CBSECM displayed in Figure 29.3 The model still depicts two parties (e.g., people) in conflict with one another and illustrates how the conflict process unfolds. The model is meant to describe the process as continuous and flowing rather than starting at a particular point. It is possible to consider additional conflict parties or entities in the conflict process, yet we are constrained in drawing a model on a single page. The primary orientation factors now include multilevel factors at the macro-, exo-, meso-, and microlevels. The situational appraisals also include multilevel factors at each of these levels. The constructs of conflict processes and conflict outcomes are generally consistent with the original model. This section presents the updated conceptualization and research on each of the four components of the new CBSECM: (1) primary orientation factors, (2) situational appraisals, (3) conflict processes, and (4) conflict competence features and outcomes. As the model is a process,

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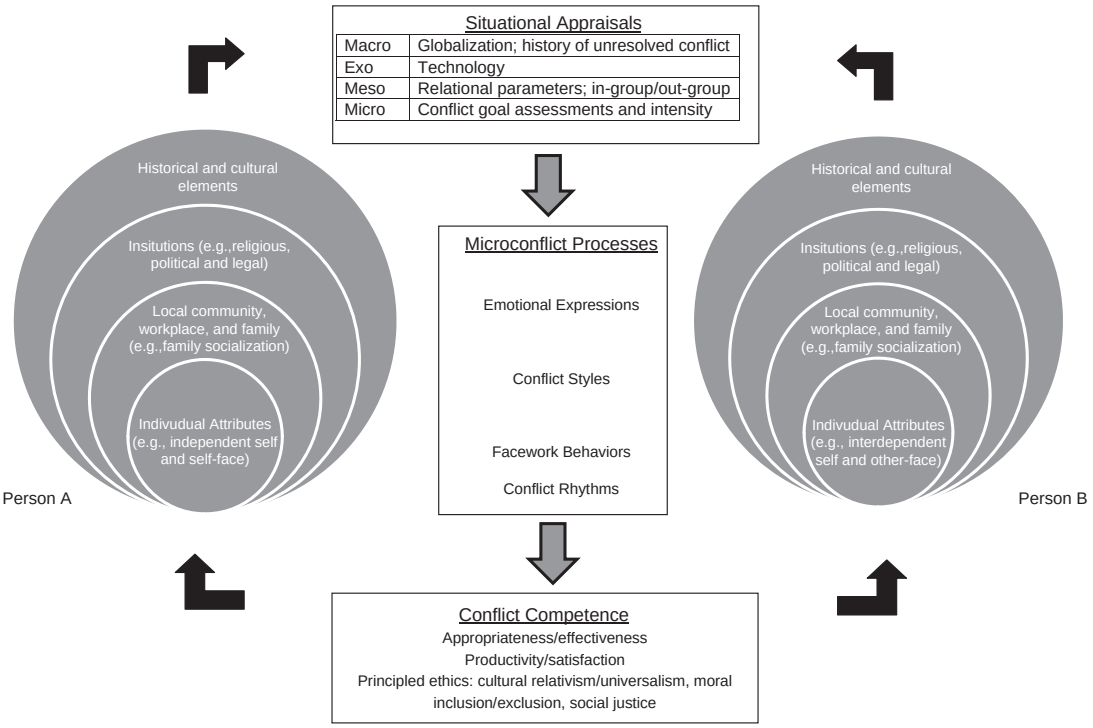

Figure 29.3 Updated Culture-Based Social Ecological Conflict Model

the choice to start with primary orientation factors is arbitrary. After discussing the four core components to the model, we introduce a case study to illustrate the application of the model.

Primary Orientation Factors

The primary orientation factors provide a general pattern for understanding how people from different cultures prefer and tend to manage conflict. The original CBSCM primarily focused on the micro- or macro- (cultural values) levels. The updated version includes these factors and also adds factors at the meso- (e.g., family socialization), exo- (e.g., religious membership and institution), and macro- (e.g., globalization) levels. Figure 29.3 illustrates that individuals' primary orientation to explaining and understanding a complex intercultural conflict case is a mix of the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrolevels. Each of these levels is presented in turn.

Micro. Recent research provides continued support for the inclusion of self-construals and face concerns as factors explaining differences in conflict styles. Cheng and Tardy (2009) surveyed 146 people from Taiwan and the United States to determine if there are differences in the use of silence during marital conflict. They found that high interdependent self-construal was positively associated with using silence to protect the other and negatively associated with using silence to protect the self. Peng and Tjosvold (2011) asked 132 Chinese employees to complete a survey about avoiding a work conflict with a manager. They found that other-face concern was positively associated with yielding and delay, while self-face was positively associated with

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passive aggression. We do not explore this recent research in depth as the findings tend to lend support for the original CBSCM.

Meso: Family Communication Patterns. There are a variety of mesofactors that can influence our conflict behaviors. However, Chen, Fletcher, and Oetzel (2010) explained that family is the primary unit from which individuals acquire cultural norms and learn to communicate about conflict. Family is a group of intimates "who generate a sense of home and group identity, complete with strong ties of loyalty and emotion, who experience a shared history and shared future" (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002, p. 71). Chen et al. (2010) use Koerner and Fitzpatrick's (2006) research to argue that family communication patterns serve to mediate the influence of cultural values on individual conflict behaviors.

Family communication patterns and self-construals interact to create impacts on family conflict. Liu and Goto (2007) surveyed 153 Asian American high school students about their family experiences. The authors found that interdependence in these adolescents is positively associated with family cohesion when independence is high and negatively correlated with family cohesion when interdependence is low. Furthermore, mental distress was positively associated with interdependence for those low on independence. Thus, families that have a high level of interdependence/conformity orientation without fostering an equally high level of independence/conversation orientation appear to have high levels of conflict resulting in mental distress for adolescents. Of course, it is important to note that this study was conducted in the United States and involved adolescents negotiating multiple cultural identities. Thus, this study demonstrates the complexity of macro-, meso-, and microfactors that influence conflict processes and outcomes.

Exo: Religion. A significant factor, and one that is growing in research on conflict in recent years is religion and religious institution. Religion and religious institutions involve both macrolevel (worldview and value framework) and exolevel (how institutions and membership shape members and their perspectives). For example, at the macrolevel, Croucher (this volume) identifies religious principles/teachings toward conflict in three major world religions: Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. These principles/teachings shape understanding of, and behavior toward, conflict.

Beyond providing teachings and worldview about conflict, religion also serves as an aspect of identity that navigates between macro- and local levels. Parker Gumucio (2008) noted that, on the one hand, religion is study of power and regional/international geopolitical imbalance. On the other hand, however, he argued that religious conflicts should be studied as intercultural conflicts and that religion only exists through local cultures and local institutions. He explained that in the midst of globalization and changing societies, religions are adapted to local cultures illustrating that the exolevel institutions interpret and adapt macrolevel worldviews at a local level. Thus, the macro/exo and the meso/micro interact to create something new and not a monolithic and homogenizing entity.

Finally, the strength of religion, or religiosity, is another factor in shaping conflict behavior. Religiosity often is created and reinforced in exolevel institutions. On the one hand, religiosity and religious fundamentalism serve as a buffer to globalization. Salzman (2008) explained that globalization is a stressor that creates anxiety for people and that religious fundamentalism serves as a buffer to that anxiety. On the other hand, religiosity is a factor that connects with particular conflict practice. For example, Croucher, Braziunaite, and Oommen (2012) found Christians in the United States with high religiosity are more

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likely to dissent than those with low religiosity. In contrast, Hindus and Muslims in India with high religiosity are less likely to dissent than those with low religiosity. The authors argued that in the United States, Christianity is the dominant religion, and thus, highly religious Christians feel comfortable in expressing their conflict views and dissents explicitly. However, in India, there is a taboo of expressing controversial views that overrides the strength of religion. Thus, some of these examples illustrate the interdependent and reciprocal interactive nature of the exo- and macrolevels of the newly developed CBSECM in conjunction with the microlevel conflict behavioral responses and reactions.

Macro: Globalization. Globalization is frequently used to describe the intersection of the world and is commonly referred to as "the compression of the world into 'a single place'" (Robertson, 1992, p. 6). It is the increasing interconnectedness of people and places as a result of changes in communication technologies and migration that cause convergence in terms of politics, economics, and culture (Friedman, 2006; Ladegaard, 2007).

There are several perspectives about the impacts of globalization, particularly on the importance of cultural values and identities. The hyperglobal perspective presumes that globalization will lead to the end or minimization of the nation-state/culture (Friedman, 2006; Ladegaard, 2007). Kramsch (2002) argued that "'Culture' has become less and less a national consensus, but a consensus built on common ethnic, generational, regional, ideological, occupation- or gender-related interests, within and across national boundaries" (p. 276). Essentially, the influence of this global culture and the media that carriers its message is so strong as to "force" the world to converge. On the other hand, some dispute the hyperglobal perspective by illustrating that the strong effects of the global culture have not occurred (Ladegaard, 2007). Ladegaard (2007) studied a multinational Danish business to see if there was evidence of convergence in work behavior. He found that participants were quite aware of national culture differences and used national culture to explain communication difficulties.

A third perspective appears to better explain how globalization and national culture influence conflict communication behavior. Friedman (2006) explained that there is a vertical polarization occurring around the world. Specifically, the elites and upwardly mobile citizens of the world are emphasizing a cosmopolitan or global identity. In contrast, the members of lower socioeconomic classes resist globalization efforts and those perceived as supporting a global agenda. In reality, there is an increased xenophobia tendency and resistance at the local level to global economic changes as it is perceived to hurt the local economy and indigenous cultural identity preservation. For example, S. G. Kim (2002) noted that the emergence of the Internet in South Korea, which is primarily in English, has prompted a debate about the impact the English language has had on South Koreans' understanding of their national identity. More specifically, while some believe that the adoption of English as their official second language will improve South Koreans' ability to compete globally and help in their access to global information, the majority believes that the adoption of English as a national second language does not support the underlying understanding that historically South Koreans "tend to harbor strong nationalistic sentiments" (p. 19). Thus, the impacts of globalization on culture and conflict vary for different people depending on their own economic and social class conditions.

Summary. In summary, the updated CBSECM integrates multilevel factors of globalization and cultural values (macro), religious

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institutional membership (exo), family socialization/communication (meso), and personality and interpersonal face concerns (micro). The combination of these four levels creates the various primary orientation factors that shape culture-based conflict attitudes and outlooks. Examining the multilevel factors has the advantage of considering larger global and structural factors to identify how those factors shape conflict behavior. These "top-down" effects (macro to micro) illustrate how the macro influences the micro. We can also illustrate how micro and local factors change and shape the exo and macro factors. These "bottom-up" effects (micro to macro) are illustrated, for example, in cases of local adaptation of religion (Parker Gumucio, 2008) and student protests and social activism movements from the ground up. The multilevel modeling of primary orientation factors helps provide a more complete and intricate picture of the reasons why we prefer to manage conflict as we do in diverse intercultural conflict situations.

Situational Appraisals

While primary orientation factors are the predominant patterns that individuals bring into a conflict, they lead to specific conflict processes through the appraisal of the situation. All conflicts take place in a specific situational context. These situational contexts influence the management of conflict and yet are based in our perception of the conflict. For example, a particular situation might encourage competitive behavior and yet a particular individual may appraise the situation as cooperative. The original CBSCM included multilevel situational features, and yet we did not identify them as such. We also did not include macrolevel situational features. The updated CBSECM identifies four levels of situational appraisals: micro, meso, exo, and macro (see Figure 29.3).

Micro. At the microlevel, the updated CBSECM considers conflict goals assessments and conflict intensity. The assessments of our goals and those of others, along with the intensity of the conflict, are key factors for how we choose to engage in conflict. For example, Lee and Park (2011) studied more than 1,000 Korean and U.S. Americans in their use of particular strategies to address face goals. When making a request of a favor, Koreans were more likely to apologize than U.S. Americans because of their concern with positive face (i.e., their concern for approval from or connection with the other person). In contrast, U.S. Americans were more likely to say thanks than Koreans because of their concern with both positive and negative face (i.e., the imposition on the other).

Meso. The mesolevel situational appraisals center on relationship parameters such as competition-cooperation, affiliation-control, and trust-distrust. Relationship parameters can also include the level of closeness and status in a relationship. All of these relationship parameters can be factors that individuals appraise and then use to make determinations of the most appropriate and effective way to manage the conflict. For example, Moriizumi and Takai (2010) surveyed 367 Japanese university students to identify whether they use different language expression during conflict for different relationship targets. The authors found that the participants use assertive language with mothers, agreement language expressions with supervisors and elders, and problem-solving language with close friends, close elders, and classmates.

Exo. The exo factor we consider is the in-group-out-group distinction. In-group and out-group distinction can be a mesolevel and exolevel factor; we treat it as exolevel because of the broader impact it can have. That is, in-group/out-group operates at a larger societal

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level in that privilege and access to resources is often ingrained within the social structures and within institutions (e.g., institutional racism).

We tend to use different conflict styles when we are in conflict with in-group and out-group members. T. Leung and Kim (2007) surveyed 270 university students about their conflict style usage with in-group and out-group members. They found that people in conflict with in-group members were more likely to oblige, integrate, and compromise and less likely to dominate and deceive than people in conflict with out-group members. Similarly, Peng and Tjosvold (2011) studied 132 Chinese employees who avoided a conflict with a Chinese manager or a Western manager. The strength of the association between avoiding and social face concern was stronger for those employees working for a Chinese manager in comparison to a Western manager. This indicates that the participants made a clear in-group and out-group distinction in reasons for avoiding conflict.

Macro. Macrolevel situational appraisals tend to be about migration patterns and history of unresolved conflict. Globalization has led to increased movement of people around the world. The movement of people is not always the choice of the individuals involved. Refugees are forced to leave their homelands due to exposure to, or threat of, extreme trauma. Jaeckle and Georgakopoulos (2010) interviewed 10 Dinka refugees from Sudan now living in Jacksonville, Florida, to determine the factors that influence and shape the management of conflict. The authors found that cultural values and identity were important factors and yet the experience of trauma and the migration (the authors labeled this transnationalism) were key influences to how participants perceived and engaged in conflict.

Landis (2008) argued that the presence of more multicultural populations has led to the increased opportunity for intercultural conflict, particularly in urban centers. He noted that migration can be problematic: "Modern communications technology can produce conflict and increased poverty unless the nation provides direct aid to the least able in the population" (p. 339). Essentially, the migration patterns bring people from different cultural groups together in conditions that focus on competition for jobs and resources. Under such conditions, initial interactions can be fraught with conflict, given competing goals and the salience of cultural differences.

Migration patterns can also exacerbate deep-seated conflicts that have a historical foundation and have been unresolved. Such conflicts may involve religious undertones (e.g., Israel and Palestine) or previous colonial rule (e.g., France and Algeria) along with economic disparities. Such conditions can result in conflict in several ways. First, under conditions of economic disparities and migrations, cultural groups in power have more resources than other cultural groups. The disadvantaged group(s) begins to feel disenfranchised and forms the basis of two key roots of conflict: (1) disadvantaged people perceived that the system is inherently oppressive and discriminatory, and (2) disadvantaged people lack confidence in the public and private institutions to provide adequate redress for their grievances (Warfield, 2006). These two key roots generally fester until a triggering event brings the conflict to a boil.

Second, members of the dominant culture, particularly those at a lower socioeconomic status, feel that immigrant groups are beginning to take resources that rightfully belonged to their cultural group. This group feels disenfranchised and believes that those in power do not want to address the issues. However, they feel some agency and thus engage in political protests or self-empowering steps to stop the injustice. This pattern is what Friedman (2006) labeled as the vertical polarization of globalization. For example, in Europe from

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early 2006 to 2007, several national elections (Britain, France, and Germany) swung more conservatively with one attributing factor being the desire for curbing of immigration (Robberson, 2006).

Summary. In summary, individuals and entities in conflict appraise the conflict situation at multiple levels. At the microlevel, the appraisal involves thinking about individual conflict goals and the intensity of the conflict situation. At the mesolevel, the appraisal involves the parameters that define the relationship of those involved. At the exolevel, the appraisal involves the distinction between in-groups and out-groups. At the macrolevel, the appraisal relates to migration patterns and history of unresolved conflict. These appraisals are connected in myriad ways. For example, it is easier for an affluent member to identify collaborative relational goals and define the conflict relationship in a cooperative frame if he or she does not perceive the existence of scarce economic resources. It also seems quite possible to understand a self-identified "frustrated, oppressed" person's viewpoint in blaming all the economic ills on recent immigrations due to free trade agreements. Thus, the situational features place certain constraints and facilitators in shaping how we actually view or "frame" the conflict situation and, subsequently, perceive the most effective and appropriate manner to interact during the conflict process.

Conflict Processes

The original CBSCM included conflict styles, facework, emotional expressions, and conflict rhythms as part of the conflict process. It also explained that our primary orientation factors shape our perceptions about conflict and lead to preferences in how to manage conflict. We take these primary factors to a conflict situation and appraise the situation to determine which of the ways is the best to approach a conflict situation. The updated model does not change the specific elements of the conflict process. We do, however, consider a few recent studies providing additional conceptualizations of complex conflict processes and also add emphasis to the dynamic nature of conflict.

Several recent studies provide subtle additions to the traditional dual concern model resulting in five conflict styles. Peng and Tjosvold's (2011) study of Chinese employees considered four strategies to avoid conflict: (1) yielding, (2) outflanking, (3) delay, and (4) passive aggression. Yielding is giving in on the issues; outflanking is using a third party to resolve the conflict; delay is waiting until a later and better time to discuss the conflict; and passive aggression is taking subtle actions against the other party. Similarly, A. S. M. Leung (2008) identified three ways to avoid conflict: (1) deference to authority, (2) giving face, and (3) maintaining harmony. T. Leung and Kim's (2007) study of university students identified three new styles: (1) coercing, (2) deceiving, and (3) ingratiating. Coercing is forcing the other party to change; deceiving is using false messages to manage the conflict; and ingratiating is "buttering up" or complimenting the other party.

Other studies look to identify larger patterns of conflict behavior. That is, rather than identified specific styles or strategies, they focus on conglomerated behavior. For example, Euwema and Van Emmerick (2007) surveyed 542 Dutch military peacekeepers and found that there were two predominant patterns: (1) cooperative and (2) competitive. Merkin and Ramadan (2010) examined 336 U.S. or Syrian university students and found that conflict behavioral patterns were also along lines of competitive (direct, competitive, hostile) and cooperative (ritualistic, indirect, and cooperative).

While our own research identifies up to 8 different conflict styles and 11 different facework strategies during conflict, it appears that there are three broad patterns of approaching conflict: (1) avoiding, (2) competing, and (3) cooperating.

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Table 29.1 Conflict Styles, Facework Strategies, and Conflict Expressions of Three Conflict Style Approaches

Avoiding	*Competing*	*Cooperating*
Pretend	Defend position	Apologizing
Give in/yield	Emotional expression	Remain calm
Involve third party/outflank	Aggression	Give respect
Maintain harmony	Coercing	Problem solve
Passive aggression (involves competitive elements)	Deceiving	Private discussion
Withdraw	Ingratiating	Ritualistic facework
Delay	Direct facework	Indirect facework
	Dominating	Compromising
		Integrating

Table 29.1 displays these three approaches and lists various facework strategies, conflict expressions, and conflict rhythms within these three broad patterns.

Regardless of how conflict approaches are categorized, the dynamic nature of the conflict process cannot be underestimated. The original CBSCM did not emphasize the dynamic nature of conflict interaction. It is difficult to represent a dynamic process in a static figure such as Figure 29.3. Conflict goals and conflict interaction are processes as we negotiate our positions and interests with other parties. For example, Keck and Samp (2007) found that one party's conflict goals and tactics covary with the other party's during conflict interaction. Thus, the primary orientation factors and situational appraisals provide a starting point for our conflict approach, and yet during conflict process interaction, we consistently reassess our approaches based on further appraisal, emotional arousals, or reactive processes and how the other person is behaving. We also consider the outcomes of the conflict in the CBSECM.

Conflict Competence

The updated CBSECM includes the same competence elements from the original model. Conflict competence involves a variety of factors, including managing identity threats, managing prescriptive expectations, and managing mutual face saving (Ting-Toomey, 2005a, 2007). Being able to effectively and appropriately manage these facets during conflict generally results in positive outcomes and reinforces or changes our primary orientations (Cupach et al., 2010). For example, Shupe (2007) surveyed 206 international students from 50 countries in a midwestern U.S. university and found that the presence of (poorly or unresolved) intercultural conflict predicted poor work-related outcomes and sociocultural adaptation. Furthermore, Brew, Tan, Booth, and Malik (2011) examined 128 Australian and 108 Chinese students in a quasi-experiment and found distinct patterns of effectiveness and appropriateness. Effectiveness of conflict management for Australians predicted relationship improvement. In comparison, appropriateness of conflict management for Chinese predicted relational maintenance. Finally, Schlosser, Talleyrand, Lyons, and Baker (2007) explored the use of dialogue to address conflict between Blacks and Jews in the United States. They found that dialogue was a competent way to address the conflict and allowed the participants to learn about the other and resulted in the exploration of shared cultural values.

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The updated model also includes ethics as part of the competence assessment. The assessment of ethics focus on the guidelines that regulate appropriate or inappropriate conflict behavior in a given situation and is a growing interest in the communication discipline (Cheney, May, & Munshi, 2011; see also, Dorjee, Baig, & Ting-Toomey, 2012). We consider three ethical guidelines for assessing conflict competence: (1) ethical universalism-relativism, (2) moral inclusion-exclusion, and (3) social justice (Oetzel, 2009). Ethical universalism emphasizes that a consistent set of standards should be used to judge other people's behavior as good or bad, regardless of cultural context issues, and, in the ideal sense, reflect universal-humanistic concerns. In comparison, ethical relativism is a code of ethics that judges people's conduct based on the importance of considering the cultural context (i.e., different cultures have evolved and developed their own cultural codes of ethics; Pedersen, 1997). Interestingly, a third position, the ethical absolutism position emphasizes the principles of right or wrong in accordance with a set of "assumed universal" fixed standards but, in actual reality, are based on narrow-ranged, ethnocentric standards and judgments (Munshi, 2005; Ting-Toomey, 1999, 2011). Moral inclusion-exclusion focuses on the degree to which we believe that people are within the boundaries of respect, fairness, and moral values. Social justice is a philosophical stance that emphasizes fair distribution of wealth, power, and income across cultures (Oetzel, 2009). The ethical guidelines provide a further framework for determining the degree of conflict competence.

In sum, the CBSECM provides a multilevel approach to understanding intercultural conflict. The model considers multilevel primary orientation and situational appraisal factors that shape conflict communication processes. These processes then influence the evaluation of conflict in terms of conflict competence features. The next section uses a case study of a conflict to illustrate how the CBSECM is a useful tool for understanding the many layered and nuanced features of intercultural conflict.

An Intercultural Conflict Case Study

Gillian Gibbons was a British teacher who was working in a Sudanese school as a teacher of children (around 7 years of age). She described her experience as very positive: "The Sudanese people I found to be extremely kind and generous." She enjoyed visiting the country and working with her students. As part of the mandated government curriculum to learn about animals and their habitat, Gibbons asked one of her students to bring a teddy bear to class. She asked the predominantly Muslim students to identify some names for the bear and then vote on their favorite name. The voting was a way to introduce the students to democracy. The students identified Abdullah, Hassan, and Muhammad. Ultimately the vast majority chose Muhammad. The students took turns taking the bear home and writing in a diary about their time with the bear that was labeled "My name is Muhammad."

An office assistant at the school reported the incident and Gibbons was arrested on November 25, 2007. She was charged with inciting religious hatred—a crime that carries a maximum sentence of 40 lashes, 6 month imprisonment, or fine. The Prophet Muhammad is the most sacred symbol in Islam and to name an animal Muhammad is insulting to many Muslims. Gibbons said that she had not intended to insult anyone and was very sorry. However, she was tried and found guilty of a lesser crime, insulting the faith of Muslims in Sudan (article 125 of the Sudanese Criminal Code). She was sentenced to 15 days in prison and deportation thereafter on November 29, 2007.

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The case set up an escalating diplomatic dispute with Britain, Sudan's former colonial ruler. The sentence generally drew the ire of foreign officials and Muslims in the United Kingdom and other Western nations. For example, the Archbishop of Canterbury said that there wasn't any justification for the sentence and said it was an "absurdly disproportionate response" to a "minor cultural faux pas." The Federation of Student Islamic Societies, which represents more than 90,000 Muslim students in the United Kingdom and Ireland said that they were "deeply concerned" with a "gravely disproportionate" verdict. The federation's president said,

> What we have here is a case of cultural misunderstandings, and the delicacies of the matter demonstrate that it was not the intention of Gillian Gibbons to imply any offence against Islam or Muslims. We hope that the Sudanese authorities will take immediate action to secure a safe release for Gillian Gibbons.

Reactions in Sudan were varied. Officials in Sudan's Foreign Ministry tried to play down the case, calling it an isolated incident and initially predicting Gibbons could be released without charge. However, the day after her sentencing, several thousands of protesters took to the streets to argue that the sentencing was too light. One protester said, "What she did requires her life be taken." Protesters chanted "Kill her by firing squad," "Shame on the UK," and "No tolerance: execution." Another protestor explained, "We can't accept it from anybody. Even if they can do that in Europe, they cannot do it here in Sudan. We ask our rulers and judges to review what they have said. Fifteen days is not enough." Mariam al-Mahdi, leader in Sudan's main opposition party (Umma), said the government had deliberately escalated the case.

During this time, two members of the House of Lords (one of the legislative arms in the British parliament), Lord Ahmed and Baroness Warsi, went to Sudan to negotiate with the President, Al-Bashir. Baroness Warsi noted,

> On Sunday we spent most of that day having very difficult meetings, some of them quite tense, some of them were very, very difficult. And then at the end of Sunday we were presented with some hope that we may be able to see the president on Monday and we may be able to reach a resolution. We had that meeting on Monday morning . . . and thankfully we secured a release.

A presidential pardon was issued on December 3, 2007, and Gibbons was released.

Many journalists and analysts in the West suggested that the case can be understood in the ideology that President Omar al-Bashir's Islamic regime has instituted in Sudan: anti-colonialism, a sense that the West is laying harm to Islam, and religious fundamentalism. In 2006, al-Bashir vowed to lead a jihad, or holy war, against United Nations (UN) peacekeepers if they deployed in the Darfur region of western Sudan. He relented to allow a UN-African Union force there but said that he would bar Scandinavian peacekeepers from participating because newspapers in their countries ran caricatures of Prophet Muhammad.

Gibbons noted that she was in shock during the incident and that she was treated well during her jail time. Gibbons offered sincere apologies for ever offending anyone and said she was very upset when she realized she had offended people. She regretted not being able to finish out her term and said that she would miss the students. At the same time, her students also offered their support for their teacher and said that they would miss her. She also said that she did not want to put anyone off on going to Sudan—that she had a wonderful time. Khalid al Mubarak, media counselor at the Sudanese embassy in London, was

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happy that the situation had been resolved and also suggested that orientation classes for Westerners coming to work in Sudan should be reintroduced. A former BBC correspondent in Sudan attributed the arrest of Gibbons as an opportunity to give Sudan's former colonial master a bloody nose yet feels that President al-Bashir was left with a red face.[1]

Applying the CBSCM: Connecting Model to Practice

This case provides an excellent example of the multiple layers of intercultural conflict and is well suited to illustrate the updated CBSCM. The section presents a brief analysis of each of the main components in the CBSCM.

Primary Orientation Factors. At the core of this case is a misunderstanding about religious practices. By violating Islamic practices, Gibbons offended a segment of the Sudanese population. As a person in authority and teaching children, such an offense was unacceptable to many in Sudan. Furthermore, these practices are placed into law. Religiosity and religious fundamentalism is on display and can partially be understood as a reaction to the anxiety of globalization (Salzman, 2008). Sudan is a developing nation and has poor economic development and thus religious fundamentalism might serve as a buffer to the concerns of growing globalization. These sentiments were allegedly fueled by President al-Bashir's ideology and thus encouraging stronger nationalism and a weaker global identity (Friedman, 2006).

Furthermore, an additional macrolevel factor in this case is likely the cultural value of power distance. Sudan is regarded as a high/large power distance culture and Great Britain is identified as a low/moderate power distance culture. Following her horizontal power distance cultural values, Gibbons allowed young children to have the freedom to make decisions in the class. In contrast, it is likely that Sudanese did not think it appropriate for a teacher to give up that role authority, particularly when the ramifications of that decision were significant. Essentially, "she should have known better."

At the microlevel, it appears that Gibbons has high other-face concern and interdependence given that she apologized and focused on not wanting to offend anyone. In addition, high self-face concern was attributed to President al-Bashir in trying to give the United Kingdom a bloody nose. However, very little information was provided about other parties in the conflict so it is difficult to speculate about either their meso- or microlevel factors.

Situational Appraisals. The situational appraisals appear to involve multiple levels, and we discuss these from the macro- to the microlevel. At the macrolevel, a history of unresolved conflict is prominent. Sudan is a former colony of Great Britain and the anticolonial sentiment was noted by reporters and analysts. Sudan has high rates of poverty and unemployment with a gross domestic product per capita of $2,086 in 2007 (Nour, 2011). There might be some resentment from Sudanese as a member of the former colonial ruler coming in and taking a job away. The protestors appear to feel some disenfranchisement, although the reason for these feelings is not clear.

At the exolevel, there is an element of in-group and out-group distinction. Gibbons is clearly from another country, and the protestors noted that she cannot do what she did without appropriate punishment. President al-Bashir's alleged push of ideology also pushes in-group/out-group distinction with an "us against the world" philosophy and blaming the West for the problems in Sudan. Media reporting within Sudan ("Sudanese teddy bear blasphemy case") versus Great Britain (BBC news: "A storm in a teacup case") also fueled and

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escalated the ongoing conflict case and each media side represented the high ethnocentric-nationalistic sentiment in blaming the other side for cultural insensitivity or harshness.

At the meso- and microlevels, this conflict was defined in terms of competition and became a very intense culture-based conflict. Initially, the conflict goals were about violation of Islamic principles and quickly became a larger issues about the relationship between Sudan and Great Britain as former colony/colonial master. Furthermore, face issues were quite apparent in the negotiation of conflict. Once the world was paying attention, it appeared that neither side wanted to lose face in the international face image arena.

Conflict Processes. Because of the larger framing of the conflict as competitive at the multiple situational levels, it is no surprise that there was a great deal of competitive conflict strategies and facework moves. The office assistant chose a competitive move by turning the matter over to authorities rather than addressing the matter with Gibbons. The quotes by various leaders in Great Britain were condemning of the arrest and sentencing. Protestors took a very competitive stance toward Gibbons. Even the two representatives from the House of Lords face a "difficult" initial negotiating as Sudanese officials were likely defending their identity and relational goals. Eventually, they were able to negotiate a pardon—a pardon that allowed the president to save face as he could say that he granted it and still upheld the deportation of Gibbons.

Conflict Competence. Little analysis is found about the aftermath of the Gibbons incident. Thus, it is difficult to identify the long-term effects of this conflict on the parties. In terms of competence, we do have some indication of how the conflict was viewed. Most Britons believed that the Sudanese judicial system and government handled the conflict ineffectively and inappropriately. They were happy with the final result that saw Gibbons pardoned and returned without harm so this aspect of the conflict was managed with competence—generally attributed to the skill of the two members of the House of Lords and political pressure from the West. Meanwhile, protestors in Sudan believed that the Sudanese judicial system was ineffective and inappropriate because they felt the punishment should have been harsher. Gibbons herself felt that she lacked intercultural conflict knowledge during the incident and likely was the one party in the conflict most likely to change transformationally as a result of the incident. In fact, using the ethical frames, we also can offer some insight about the conflict. First, the parties in this conflict generally used an ethical absolutism lens to analyze the other party's behavior, although they may demand the other conflict party to use an ethical relativism lens to understand their cultural frame of reference. Gibbons was judged harshly for using her own teaching standards; President al-Bashir and the judiciary were judged harshly for using their own legal standards to identify criminal behavior. Second, once Gibbons was arrested and convicted, protestors judged her as being morally excluded—her offense was judged so severe that she lost all consideration of respect and value from the local standard viewpoint. Additionally, Westerners looked at the protestors as morally exclusive as well wondering what type of people they are dealing with who encourage death or severe beating for a "minor misunderstanding." Finally, the lack of social justice is likely the most important frame for this conflict. The inequalities between Sudan and Great Britain on the macro- and exolevel are stark. The differences in economic and political power likely shaped the conflict moves of the parties involved and provide a general context from understanding how this situation increased in intensity and polarized attributions.

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Future Directions

In utilizing the social ecological framework in conjunction with the classic CBSCM, the new CBSECM offers to capture the dynamic interplay between multiple contexts that frame an intercultural or intergroup conflict episode. For example, on the primary macrolevel of analysis on the different components, it draws our attention to the importance of understanding the intergroup historical context, the larger religious ideologies and cultural values' context, and the various exolevel institutional reactions and media reporting in shaping a real-life conflict situation.

While the benefits of the social ecological perspective entail the systematic analysis of each level that asserts influence on the conflict case story, it is also critical to move the theoretical boundary even further to enhance the explanatory nature of this heuristic theoretical framework. This section presents some challenging theoretical and promising research directions drawing from the CBSECM.

Conceptual and Research Directions

Theoretically, the social ecological framework may be used in conjunction with other intercultural/interpersonal communication theories such as expectancy violations theory (Burgoon & Ebesu Hubbard, 2005), coordinated management of meaning theory (Pearce, 2005), communication privacy management theory (Petronio & Durnham, 2008), and/or conflict face negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 2005b). For example, some critical theoretical questions can be applied at each level of analysis based on the new CBSECM.

From the macrolevel analysis, how does globalization shape the changing nature of global versus local cultural values and how does the change translate downward to the interpersonal conflict response level? What are some shifting cultural value dimensions that created further face threats along each macro, exo, meso, micro, and intergenerational level? How do the contrastive religious and political ideologies between two enemy nations or polarized cultural communities affect their assessments of fairness, justice, power, duties, obligations, and rights' issues? How does intergroup history affect the interpretation of the particular conflict case and filter downward to taint the prejudiced lens of out-group and in-group members? How do individuals in a cultural community assert movement and change upward at each level and demand social justice and equality for societal disenfranchised groups?

On the exolevel, for example, how does the courtroom system project and deliver legal fairness and justice to the alleged accused and the victim? What role does the law enforcement perform from the neighborhood community standpoint? What role does the social media play in shaping or priming the opinions of the mass public concerning a conflict news case? What constitute some critical turning point of "face-threatening or face-honoring" events that contribute to the developmental face negotiation processes of the underprivileged or the marginalized groups in this conflict case? Who form alliances with the disenfranchised group and what are their membership motivations? Who are framed as the in-groups or out-groups in this particular conflict situation?

On the mesolevel, how does the immediate community or family members rally around the conflict members? How does the immediate neighborhood react in support or rejection of the alleged accused or conflict victim? What are the multiple voices that are being expressed in witnessing this particular conflict case? What are the multiple voices that are being muted or remained silenced? How do the various family members decode the emerging conflict events and news and what

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respective roles do they play in the conflict intervention process?

On the microlevel, how do the conflict parties themselves view the unfolding conflict turning points? How do they engage in strategic intercultural facework negotiation? What parts do ethnocentrism, prejudice, and privileged lens play in the negotiating of an intergroup team conflict process? How do team members or different status role members manipulate power or gain power productively? How do they engage in dialogue or monologue in the conflict negotiation process?

Furthermore, we believe that it is not enough to merely include contextual features in the new intercultural conflict model. We need to further understand and explain the hows and the whys and under what conditions the bottom-up effects are the most effective in cueing constructive peace-building processes and movements at the macrolevels. Likewise, we also need to understand deeper the interaction effects in creating mass movements and changes at the macrolevels by paying close attention to the meso- and exolevels of conflict resolution success and failure stories and case histories.

Methodologically, since social ecological theorizing processes are still at its fermentation stage in the intercultural conflict communication field, we believe interpretive, critical, and quantitative methods are all well suited to address different levels of conflict analysis pending on the research questions asked (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2011). More important, a social ecological lens attempts to add breadth and depth of understanding the nuanced complexities of conflict communication from a situated, multiple voice perspective. Both international insider and outsider research collaborative efforts are needed to understand the rich fabric of the different designs, patterns, and colorful threads that constitute the interdependent social ecological system in which the particular intercultural conflict occurs. Indigenous narrative, critical action, cross-cultural comparative, and intergroup perspectives are urgently needed for us to truly understand the multiple voices, stories, and dynamics of competent versus incompetent conflict negotiation practice.

Conclusions

By applying some of the core principles and themes of the social ecological framework, the framework focuses our attention toward the "holistic picture" and the "layering, embedded contexts" that frame the various conflict dynamics, decisions, and outcomes. Core theoretical concepts such as top-down effects, bottom-up effects, sideway effects, and interaction effects help fill in the complex, interdependent nature of the links and loops in a complex intercultural conflict case history.

It appears vital that international and interethnic researchers and practitioners should come together to listen, to dialogue, and to inquire about the potential promises and challenges of the newly developed CBSECM. Research teams from different contexts of conflict analysis and from different academic boundaries should come together to further extend the scope and boundary conditions of the newly proposed CBSECM.

Intercultural conflict intelligence demands conflict parties to use a transformational outlook in analyzing the conflict situation from a multiple-layering perspective. It emphasizes the importance of communicating appropriately, effectively, and ethically in approaching culture-based conflict crises with wisdom, courage, and humanism. It demands self-reflexivity and other reflectivity on multiple levels of mindful conflict analysis. It prompts conflict parties to develop their imaginative capacities to feel, to see, to listen, to learn, and to dialogue from the borderlands and the multidimensional (i.e., micro-, meso-, exo-, and

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macrolevels) spaces in understanding the deep layered meanings and the embedded sociohistorical messages of a complex intercultural-intergroup conflict case.

Note

1. Information for this case, including direct quotations, was obtained from the following sources: Associated Press. (2007, November 29). *Teacher guilty in "Muhammad" teddy bear case*. Retrieved from www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22007049/; BBC News. (2007, 30 November). *Sudan demo over jailed UK teacher*. Retrieved from news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7121025.stm; BBC News. (2007, December 3). *Teacher freed: Reaction in quotes*. Retrieved from news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7124646.stm; BBC News. (2007, December 4). *Teacher speaks of Sudan "ordeal."* Retrieved from news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7126162.stm; Osman, M. (2007, December 1). Death demanded for teacher. *Albuquerque Journal*, p. A1.

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30

Transforming Intercultural Conflict Through the Context of Relationship

Beth Fisher-Yoshida

The Dancing Monkeys

A PRINCE had some Monkeys trained to dance. Being naturally great mimics of men's actions, they showed themselves most apt pupils, and when arrayed in their rich clothes and masks, they danced as well as any of the courtiers. The spectacle was often repeated with great applause, till on one occasion a courtier, bent on mischief, took from his pocket a handful of nuts and threw them upon the stage. The Monkeys at the sight of the nuts forgot their dancing and became (as indeed they were) Monkeys instead of actors. Pulling off their masks and tearing their robes, they fought with one another for the nuts. The dancing spectacle thus came to an end amidst the laughter and ridicule of the audience.

—Not everything you see is what it appears to be.—

Communication is a complex phenomenon. It is an action and transaction; it is relational, develops relationships, and is within relationships; it is contextual and culturally influenced; it is dynamic; and it creates the social worlds within which we live. There are sets of assumptions we hold when we communicate and one is that the person with whom we are communicating will understand us in the way we want to be understood. When we pause to consider what happens in the space between people communicating and how many twists and turns our communication can take, it is amazing we can communicate effectively at all.

It is in these twists and turns that conflict can emerge as our perceptions are interpreted through the filters of our worldviews and

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frames of reference created and influenced by our cultural orientations, to make meaning. As humans, we are sense-making individuals, and when our interactions with others do not make sense according to our meaning making paradigms, we can become confused (Pearce, 2007). This internal dissonance affects our relationships and influences, or most likely hampers future communication, and conflict is perpetuated.

In this chapter, we explore some characteristics of communication, especially intercultural and the relationship between communication and conflict. If communication can create, perpetuate, and escalate conflict, then it can also be used as a way to transform conflict into something positive and even nurturing. Three critical concepts that will be explored throughout the chapter are ways in which to develop deeper understanding of *self, other*, and *context* and ways in which to constructively apply this information (Fisher-Yoshida, 2000). One way in which communication can become more effective is by using a frame that we name, *relationship*, and place it as the highest order of context within which we communicate. This framing suggests a dynamic that we act into, so that our focus and perspective shifts from being only about "me" on the individual level to being about "us" on the relationship level. This relational focus could lead to renaming the person or group we call "opponent," to "partner," which calls forth different relational behaviors and norms of communication. The relationship lens becomes stronger, and all understanding and meaning are made through this filter. Suggestions as to how to foster this more effective intercultural communication for better quality relationships and social worlds will be offered. Concepts and practical applications of the five paradoxes to understanding intercultural communication and conflict will be offered. Furthermore, coordinated management of meaning (CMM) and transformative learning through reflective and reflexive processes will be explored.

Role of Culture, Communication, and Conflict

Each person and group of people have their own social realities. There are different criteria to determine what constitutes importance, success, relevance, goodness, and so on. To live in the same environment, same social world, and have some semblance of order, we need to share these worlds or at least acknowledge and understand the differences in criteria that created them. Not all of these social realities have the same principles and values; and to live in harmony, we need to have empathy, which is a human connection to understand why people do what they do even if we do not behave the same way or agree with their choices.

Conflict may result when the real or perceived notion that another person or group of people is blocking us from being able to perform activities that we feel we need and deserve (Deutsch, 1973). The intercultural aspects of conflict are when the involved parties experience these differences and incompatibilities across cultures in that they represent different sets of cultural values and norms (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001).

Our experiences create our worldviews, and these socially constructed patterns are our unquestioned schemes of reference. There are different terms used to frame this concept. Väyrynen (2001) refers to these as our *stocks of knowledge*, and how we determine what is relevant to us and for us is based on these stocks of knowledge. Mezirow (2009) refers to this as *frames of reference* "which are structures of assumptions and expectations on which our thoughts, feelings, and habits are based" (p. 22). Our experiences guide how we act and react, so the more we know about ourselves and the outcomes we desire,

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the more mindful and deliberate we can be in our interactions with others. Every action, every message has a consequence. If we more consciously choose our communication to more directly correspond to the outcomes for which we strive, we can achieve more rewarding results.

Another component to this equation is to know and understand the other with whom we are engaged. It serves us well to be aware that we all have different stocks of knowledge and frames of reference, because we all have our own unique sets of experiences and influences that shape our worldviews. These experiences create filters from which new encounters pass through in the process of interpretation and meaning making, which is an iterative process. Figure 30.1 depicts this interaction which is embedded in the influence of culture.

We make meaning in our lives as a way to understand our worlds, and this takes place in the intersection of self, other, and context. As humans, we are constantly looking to understand our situations, perhaps stemming from an instinctive need to survive. Our points of view and understanding are shaped by and open to the cultural influences we have had or currently have, and this is why self, other, and context are embedded in culture.

Worldviews that have compatible definitions of relevance and sets of values result in more effective communication (Schutz, 1967, as cited in Väyrynen, 2001). Opposing or seemingly opposing sets of values and systems of relevance can result in conflict. This can also mean the way in which conflict is framed and the format of how it should be handled including *conflict scripts*, which refer to who attends to the conflict, who speaks, the order and

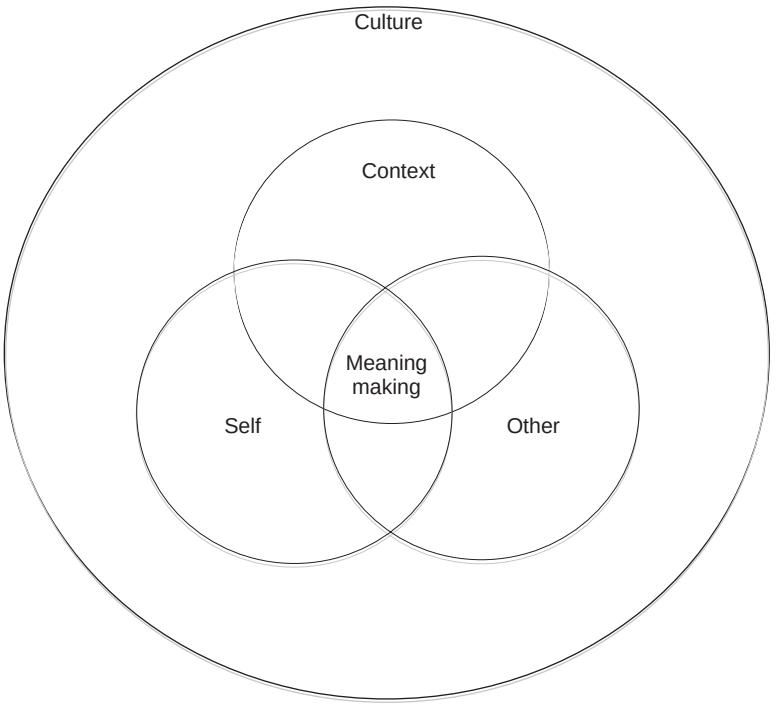

Figure 30.1 Intersection of Self, Other, and Context, Embedded in Culture in Meaning Making

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manner in which they speak, and other defining procedures (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001).

In any conflict situation, there are sets of emotions that occur. Much of the emotional reactions we experience in these settings are not in our conscious minds, but we feel the impact of our emotions, and this brings them to consciousness. Damasio (1999) identifies two biological functions for emotions: One is to induce in us a reaction to a specific stimulus, such as running from danger; the second is to physically prepare our body to engage in this reaction, such as pumping more blood to our legs to enable us to run from danger. Siegel (2007) mentions that emotions can be defined as "a dynamic and central function that integrates behavior, meaning, thinking, perceiving, feeling, relating and remembering" (p. 211). Emotions have an impact on our communication from how we frame and express ourselves to how we interpret and understand others.

In the conflict resolution literature, there is mention of people seeking to satisfy their needs, both tangible and psychological, and when these needs are not met, conflict may result. There are different ways of conceptualizing these needs and their origins. Some believe that needs are sociobiological and that they are universal and all humans have them (Burton, 1990, as cited in Väyrynen, 2001). Others contend that needs are not universal and that they are socially constructed (Väyrynen, 2001). There are implications with how needs are framed because that influences how they are understood and satisfied and how they relate to creating and resolving conflict.

For those holding the *nontotalist* view that needs are socially constructed, their actions to satisfy these needs will be in ways that are culturally sanctified and morally acceptable (Väyrynen, 2001). Others follow the belief that needs are universal, and all people have the same basic needs to fulfill regardless of cultural differences or considerations (Burton, 1990, as cited in Väyrynen, 2001). This framing is important to how we attempt to resolve conflict.

Goals are established directly relating to the types of needs being addressed. There is a focus on the *content* of the conflict when the substantive issues are of concern; on the *relational* aspects when concern is about the relationship; and on needs addressing issues of validation, rejection, and so on when *identity* is of concern (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). In addition to cultures having an influence on the values, norms, and needs of the people of that culture, it also has an influence on how conflict resolution should be handled. Giving or saving face is a society's way of showing respect and maintaining dignity. Ting-Toomey and Takai (2006) discuss Ting-Toomey's *conflict face negotiation theory* and that there are different ways of addressing concerns of face depending on the orientation of face of the involved parties. There can be *self-face* in which people try to protect their own image, *other-face* when people try to protect the image of the other party, and *mutual-face* in which both sides are concerned about protecting the image of the relationship.

Concerns about face are built on a set of assumptions: all communication in one way or another addresses issues of face; identity-based conflicts are especially sensitive to face concerns; and that all of this is culturally influenced (Ting-Toomey & Takai, 2006). Identities are culturally and socially constructed, and conflict happens when aspects of our identity are denied, which could emerge when we are not in a shared reality with others.

Two cultural dimensions facework pays particular attention to are individualism/collectivism and power distance continuums because these orientations influence the nature of the facework concerns and how they are addressed (Ting-Toomey & Takai, 2006). These dimensions can be thought of as running along a continuum with degrees

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of variation influenced by the context (Ting-Toomey, 2010). The flexibility the continuum provides without forcing absolutes, allows for more possibilities in understanding and resolving conflict across cultures. What we pay attention to is culturally induced. Interpretations differ because our own unique worldviews developed from our social worlds create filters from which we perceive, interpret, and make meaning of our experiences.

We pay attention to certain aspects of conversations and interactions, which may be culturally induced. This means that the focal points that are heightened for us, that may lead us to frame our understanding differently than another, could lead to conflict situations. The following section elaborates on how we frame communication.

Frames to Understand Conflict

People operate from their own frames of reference. We expect the people with whom we interact to share these frames because we think they are universal. This may cause conflict, and to transform it, we need to transform the contradictory frames of reference to create a shared frame. This would make the common ground explicit and would lend itself for cooperative processes and outcomes (Deutsch, 2006).

It is easier to conceptually transform these frames than actually put them into practice. To make this attitudinal and behavioral shift, it is useful to develop empathy for the person with whom we are in conflict. Empathy is a complex phenomenon, and one way to define it is "the ability 'imaginatively' to enter into and participate in the world of Other cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally" (Calloway-Thomas, 2010, p. 8). The act of reframing our views of this person based on the terms of reference we currently hold is one way of addressing this relational dynamic. Another way is to introduce new information to our already established set of criteria, so that we modify the frames of reference we hold, creating new filters from which to interpret and make meaning of this other person.

Martin Buber (1970) distinguished between "I/It" relationships and "I/Thou" relationships. In I/It relationships, the other is treated as object, it is indirect, and there is no mutuality in the relationship, whereas in the I/Thou dynamic, there is mutuality, openness, and understanding. Buber describes how we are made in relation to others. It is in the openness and being present to the other that allows us to *confirm* the other person, requiring empathy to be able to reframe how we understand ourselves, the other, and the situation, away from a conflict frame to that of mutuality. Gergen (2009) talks about this mutuality as reciprocity in relationships. The act of affirming someone can lead to reciprocation, and when both parties reciprocate, caring is generated.

As mentioned earlier, communication is complex, and one of the reasons for this complexity is that we communicate on different levels simultaneously, even if we are not aware of it. There are many contextual frames from which we can view, interpret, and make meaning of our interactions with others. Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, and Rinderle (2006) discuss the value of multilevel research because it provides information from different perspectives that add richness to observations and findings. They framed these levels as macro, exo, meso, and micro. In identifying the contexts within which these levels exist, they framed intercultural, institutional, community/organizational, and interpersonal. Each of these levels and contexts add another dimension of data that we can use in our interpretation and understanding of conflict general and conflict specific.

The challenge of addressing data from so many different perspectives can also be daunting. It begs us to address the hierarchy

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of information, influence, and meaning in order to derive useful information to act on. Each participant may frame the conflict differently, and there may not be agreement on the hierarchy of relevance. Their framing reveals information about their worldviews.

Cultural Dimensions Framing

Culture influences how we frame the experiences in our lives for interpretation and meaning making. There are many dimensions of culture that can be useful in understanding the nuances attributed to each cultural group. Hofstede (1984) conducted research in more than 40 countries in the context of one multinational organization to better understand the definition of culture that he uses as "collective programming of the mind." The four dimensions that he deduced from his data refer to power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2000) developed six dimensions of cultural diversity based on data collected from managers in more than 40 countries. These are universalism/particularism, individualism/communitarianism, specificity/diffusion, achieved status/ascribed status, inner direction/outer direction, and sequential time/synchronous time.

Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) look at cultural dimensions in terms of how they affect the manner in which conflict is addressed. They focus on the two dimensions of individualism/collectivism and power distance and further expound on this concept to highlight the contextual factors of the situation and our individual personality attributes. They developed a culture-based situational model that has four clusters of factors: (1) primary orientation factors (values, norms, and face concerns), (2) situational and relationship boundary features, (3) conflict communication process factors (style, strategy, and emotional expression), and (4) conflict competence features.

Fisher-Yoshida and Geller (2009) determined that framing these cultural dimensions as problems to solve can generate more problems as remedies swing from one end of the continuum to the other. Instead, they propose framing these cultural dimensions as paradoxes to manage, and the five paradoxes they highlight are the following: (1) paradox of knowing (knowing self and honoring others), (2) paradox of focus (I-centric and we-centric), (3) paradox of communication (communicating across difference—direct and indirect), (4) paradox of action (doing and reflecting), and (5) paradox of response (short-term and long-term). Ting-Toomey (2010) also supports the use of paradoxes because it is more useful to present criteria on a continuum because they coexist within the same culture.

Paradox Framing

I would like to elaborate here on the role of paradox in understanding the dimensions of intercultural communication and how it can lead to both conflict creation and conflict resolution. There are characteristics that stand out as typical of certain cultures or which are followed by the majority of that population. At the same time, with access to faster modes of transportation and the ever-increasing spread of communication through face-to-face and online encounters, there are more and more intercultural influences in every culture. It seems almost impossible to have a list of what to do and what not to do in any given culture since there are so many variables that can alter what is deemed appropriate and constructive. This is why there is value in framing situations as paradoxes to manage along a continuum with a range of possible actions rather than as problems with an approach that reflects one absolute response. It allows us to enter into

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every encounter confidently with a mind-set of openness and curiosity and prepared with a set of frames from which to understand the self, the other, and the context.

The *paradox of knowing* is the core and foundational paradox to manage because it is about understanding self and other. We need to understand others and ourselves in order to know the potential impact we have on them. An example of this might be a manager considering staff career development who operates from a cultural orientation that providing for staff to take on responsibilities that allow for more autonomy is a good way to mentor and develop them. If there are staff members who consider being mentored in their roles differently, in that they do not take on more responsibilities until they are promoted into that role with the appropriate title, there can be intercultural conflict. Both parties may have good intentions but hold different assumptions about what it means to be a good manager, good staff member, and how career development should take place. One way of addressing this is during a performance review or career development conversation in which these viewpoints can be shared. If in a context where there is a stronger hierarchical structure, the manager is the more likely person to raise this concern, yet considering it affects both parties, either one can raise this.

The *paradox of focus*, which is the continuum reflecting I- and we-centric orientations, has been one of the more researched dimensions of intercultural communication as Ting-Toomey (2010) explores in her research. There are constant tensions in team or group settings, as for example, in an organizational context in which there is a predominance of team-based work, there are sets of assumptions that accompany how rewards and recognition should be assigned. We-centric cultural orientations may defer to the team being recognized and rewarded, whereas in I-centric cultures, the team and the leading individual are rewarded. In both team situations, it is known among the team members how much and in what ways each individual contributed, yet it is unspoken in we-centric cultural orientations and explicitly acknowledged in I-centric cultural orientations. The goal is to develop sensitivity to how and when to reward so that more good performance can result. The manner in which rewards are given can be raised during a performance review.

The *paradox of communication* is probably one of the most complex paradoxes. There are so many nuances in communication; even when fluent in a second or third language, it is not always easy to master the sensitivity to appropriate language use that is culturally and contextually shaped. In a recent workshop I was conducting, which had participants from a variety of cultures, there was a long process in deciding how the group should address the task at hand. In fact, even the process about the process had a range of expectations from the facilitator should decide, to the leader should decide, to we collectively give voice and decide. The participants who spoke up about deferring to the leader or the facilitator to decide tended to be from cultures with a larger power distance structure, and the majority of participants who engaged in supporting a more democratic process of decision making were from lower power distance cultures. There were several participants who did not speak up in the larger group, and when pressed for an opinion, they gave voice in a small group. We eventually decided on how to address the task at hand, and for some, the process of deciding was not comfortable. How to engage in decision-making processes can be raised one-on-one or in small groups, so when the time to make decisions arises, the involved parties know and have agreed to the process.

The fourth, *paradox of action*, addresses the continuum of acting and reflecting. Cultures with an emphasis on reflecting find contradictions to the pace of business in the

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global economy of today. This has an impact on the process of how teams come together, create action plans, and conduct after action reviews. There is a need for risk assessment, as there are some who have low adversity toward risk and want to plunge forward, while others want to spend more time in getting it right to minimize errors. The process of trial and error works more favorably in cultures such as the United States, while in Japan, the process leading up to a decision on a course of action is much longer in duration. This has been a source of contention with some U.S. and Japanese companies doing business together. The U.S. companies want to execute an action in a shorter time frame than their Japanese counterparts and both feel frustration, with one side being perceived as careless and the other overly cautious.

The fifth and final paradox is that of *paradox of response*, which refers to the dimension of time. This is an obvious source of intercultural conflict as the impact of difference in time is easily and frequently experienced. When meetings are scheduled for 2:00, there are various understandings of what this means. To some, being at the meeting by 1:55 is correct, while for others anytime between 2:00 and 2:20 is suitable because they expect the meeting will not start until 2:30. On the surface level, there is a difference in how much time is being allotted for the task, while on a deeper level, these behaviors are considered rude and disrespectful. For the persons kept waiting, they are irritated at the delay of the meeting. For the persons being berated, explicitly or implicitly, for coming late, they are irritated for being pressured about something seemingly insignificant. This does not bode well on subsequent work together.

We can see that there are many dimensions to consider in intercultural conflict, and while it adds to the richness of the diversity of how we think, feel, and act, it can also be overwhelming in trying to determine how to intercede (Fisher-Yoshida, 2005). Using reflective processes as a way to review what worked well and to be mindful about how to engage in going forward is a useful activity in addressing these paradoxes. The more we prepare for these occurrences, the more comfortable and productive we can be, so we turn those moments of cultural awkwardness into moments of deep cultural sensitivity through being able to reflect while we are in the moment. (There is more on reflection later on in the Transforming Communication section.) Following is an approach that takes a particular communication perspective that may be useful in managing the five paradoxes as they are applied to intercultural communication and conflict.

Coordinated Management of Meaning

CMM is both a practice and a theory that takes a communication perspective (Cronen & Pearce, 1981). CMM has a point of view and models that can be useful in supporting the framing and contextualizing of the conflict. There are three principles in CMM, which are *coordination*, *coherence*, and *mystery* (Pearce, 2004). In interacting with others, we strive to *coordinate* our actions and communication, so that we foster mutual understanding. *Coherence* is our own sense making, in that our experiences fit with our expectations, and we understand what this means to us in our lives at that time. Dissonance is unsettling and may cause anxiety. The third principle, *mystery*, acknowledges the complexity of our world and relationships, and that situations and circumstances are not always what they appear to be. It is more comfortable and causes less anxiety if we view this complexity as something to be curious about rather than fearful of as we strive for coherence. Figure 30.2 depicts how coordination, coherence, and mystery are interconnected.

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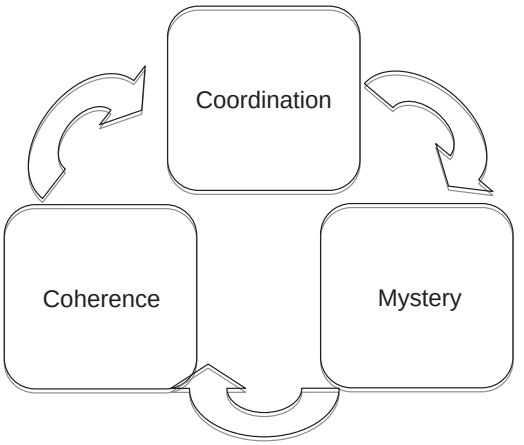

Figure 30.2 Interdependence Among Coordination, Coherence, and Mystery

Together these three principles interact and influence each other. For example, if our communication and interactions with another person are not smooth or clear, the confusion can cause us internal dissonance. We then seek understanding as we try to make sense of our surroundings, and we may accept an explanation that is not complete and perhaps not accurate, but it satisfies our need to know and feel secure. This premature rendering of an explanation will most probably be in alignment with our frames of reference or worldview and may not be considering fully the influence of our conversation partner's worldview frames. We may be omitting important pieces of information that could inform us, but in our haste to squelch the dissonance of not knowing, we jump at the first explanation.

This issue of dissonance, and therefore seeking internal coherence, may deter us from managing paradoxes when dealing with intercultural communication and instead seek an absolute response. To foster better coordination with others across cultures, we need to find ways to be comfortable with the mystery that managing a paradox brings. The danger of acting on biased or uninformed explanations is that we usually do not realize they are ill formed or biased. The five paradoxes to understanding cultural dimensions in combination with CMM provide us with tools to use as a frame to enter into and more successfully manage intercultural interactions.

CMM uses a *Hierarchy of Meaning Model* (Fisher-Yoshida, 2012; Pearce, 2007) to highlight and differentiate the various contexts and draw attention to the varying levels of metacommunication present within and between these contexts. The meaning we extract from our communication is very much influenced by the context within which the actual words are spoken and actions taken. This specific example will illustrate the point.

Someone performs the *speech act* of moving to a different country and into an environment in which community involvement is core to the way of life. This and other speech acts can take place in the *episode* of the community coming together one Saturday a month to clean the local parks. If I interpret this act through the context of *self*, I may be trying to enjoy my day off from work and feel annoyed by what I consider an unfair imposition because this practice is not familiar. If I instead interpret this act through the context of being a member of the *group* because I now live in the same community, I may interpret this act as a good thing and join in the park cleaning. If I connect with the people calling on me Saturday morning to join their cleaning crew,

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Self	*Relationship*
Episode	Episode
Speech act	Speech act

Figure 30.3 Context of Self and Relationship

I may be viewing it from the context of *relationship*, empathize, feel honored, and join them. Figure 30.3 shows the different hierarchies of how self and relationship may be configured.

The main point of talking through these different levels of context is to highlight that the contextual lens I am using to understand a behavior will directly influence the meaning I make of that behavior and the subsequent actions I take next in response to that speech act. Each context has filters that shape how I frame and understand the speech act because different elements in that context are heightened for me. Cultural influences play a significant role in creating some of those filters, and people involved may make different interpretations, resulting in conflict, which can be exacerbated when communicating across cultures.

Relationship as Higher Order Context

There are many ways to name and frame contexts. If we name the context of *relationship* as the highest order from within which we act and make meaning, it will lend a particular frame to how we understand the communication. Inside the framing of relationship, we place the aspects of *self* and *other* because they are both part of the dynamic of the interaction that takes place in relationship. The context of relationship with self and other relates directly to the paradox of knowing; the better we know and understand self and other, the better chances we have of being in coordination. Figure 30.4 shows the context of relationship.

Our sense of *self* is created from our cultural norms, values, and beliefs. We may have more than one social identity depending on the role we play in any particular interaction. Am I a student, CEO, father, religious observer, chef, or another role I take on within any given day? One or more of these roles are privileged in each of our interactions because it is from that social identity that we engage in this encounter with another. The *other* person with whom we are engaging also has myriad social identities and elevates one or more of these roles as well. We both may not be agreeing on which social identity role we are interacting with and that can cause serious miscommunication because we frame the communication with different lenses. You may call yourself a freedom fighter, and all your communication and behaviors are explained from that social identity. If I view you as a terrorist, then everything you do or say is going to come through that filter. I interpret, make meaning, and act from that interpretation.

Relationship

Self and Other

Figure 30.4 Self and Other in Relationship

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There are different ways of defining relationship and the parameters that are used to categorize the different types that exist. For the purposes of assigning relevance to relationship as a context within which we live and interact, we will assume that there is interdependence between the involved parties (Deutsch, 2006). This means that the success or failure of one party directly influences the success or failure of the other; we sink or swim together is a positive interdependence; you sink I swim or vice versa is a negative interdependence. In relationships where we have interdependence, we can choose to be cooperative (positive interdependence) or competitive (negative interdependence), and each orientation has its own set of behaviors, assumptions, and processes (Deutsch, 2006).

Three elements characteristic of interdependence are *substitutability, attitudes*, and *inducibility* (Deutsch, 2006). *Substitutability* is a basic function of social life, and that is when we can substitute someone else's actions to satisfy our intentions or needs. We have division of labor, and this is why we can perform some tasks and depend on others to fulfill other tasks, such as farming, building, teaching, and governing. The flip side of this is negative substitutability when we reject or actively try to thwart or counter these actions. *Attitude* refers to our predisposition toward another; are we favorably or unfavorably inclined as this influences how we interpret and understand this other person. *Inducibility* refers to the level of readiness and openness we have in accepting someone else's influence, and the flip side of this is negative inducibility when we actively reject another person's influence.

Substitutability and inducibility are complementary, in that we are more favorable to those who help us and thus more willing to reciprocate, and those who we perceive as harmful to us we will reject and not help (Deutsch, 2006). Our attitude influences how we view the substitutability–inducibility dynamic, and this dynamic also influences our attitudes. They are all interconnected within the context that we label as relationship. Differences may occur across cultures in how we recognize and respond to acts of substitutability and inducibility. We may look for certain behaviors to depict which people we find helpful, and in what ways and how we want to reciprocate. This reciprocation may or may not be recognized as such by someone viewing and interpreting these acts from different cultural lenses. So an act of "helping" may not be viewed as such and may in fact be viewed as the exact opposite.

We frame our understanding based on our attitude, the structure of the relationship, and the cultural and social lenses we bring. The history of our relationship also plays a key role in how we interpret subsequent conversations and interactions. In social interactions, especially conflict situations, we tend to get caught up in unwanted repetitive patterns (URPs), because we follow rules of communication that set certain dynamics in motion to elicit familiar behaviors and responses (Cronen, Pearce, & Snavely, 1979). These rules are culturally created and socially endorsed. To move beyond these URPs toward more productive patterns of communication, we need to shift our perspectives, and one way of doing this is by reframing the context. Instead of my story or your story, we envision and live into "our" story.

Pearce and Littlejohn (1997) refer to this type of communication as *transcendent* in that it highlights a metastory that overarches the individual stories of the groups involved in the conflict. This is impactful, because as humans we are social beings, who are linguistically connected and use stories as a means of developing our individual and collective identities. New stories can be cocreated that are inclusive of different cultural values and behaviors and use this inclusiveness to build on the context of relationship in managing effective communication across cultures. Conflict will most

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likely still occur, and it can be an opportunity for this transcendence as we consider ourselves as members of a larger expanded community (Briskin, Erickson, Ott, & Callanan, 2009). This concept of transcendence offers a different way of thinking about conflict, and the next section will discuss ways in which we can transform our communication to language of *we* in relationship.

Transforming Communication

In shifting the focus of our actions and communication from dualistic us versus them to language of many possibilities encompassed in the concept of relationship, we have the potential to create better social worlds. We can do this by altering the language and nature of our communication and the types of patterns we develop by identifying common ground between and among us. Language and communication are culturally bound, as is conflict. Language constitutes our reality and since our social worlds are socially constructed, we have the ability to construct the type of world within which we want to live through our communication. We can build a sense of community in these social worlds we are creating.

> True community does not come into being because people have feelings for each other (though that is required, too), but rather on two accounts: all of them have to stand in a living relationship to a single living center, and they have to stand in a living, reciprocal relationship to one another. (Buber, 1970, p. 94)

We need to collectively think through the social construction of meaning that we are cocreating and the coordination and management of this meaning, especially in the event we do not have shared goals, values, beliefs, and ways of behaving in our social worlds due to cultural orientation differences. In this section, I explore transforming communication with consideration of the language and word choice we use, which is connected to our level of consciousness, readiness, and capacity to select more constructive language. We can further develop and raise our level of consciousness by becoming more aware of our worldview influences and reflective processes that lead to more mindful choices.

In conflict situations, our emotions shift from our normal state, and these heightened emotions influence the way we communicate. Some of us may become more direct, and this may have a negative impact on those who prefer more indirect styles of communication, especially as it relates to conflict; and for those wanting more direct communication, they may become frustrated with what they consider as vagueness and lack of clarity in an indirect style. Others may become more obviously emotional in the manner in which they communicate, and when communicating with those who operate on less emotional expressivity, it may shut them down, while the reverse of this would be someone expecting a heightened level of emotional expressiveness and when not seeing it displayed think the person is cold and indifferent. Keeping the paradox of communication in mind and carefully selecting our language may work to better balance our emotions as we strive to express our feelings in a way that is palatable to the other, while discerning the feelings of the other. When done well, we in fact may diffuse the conflict, and with more mindfulness, we can better determine the course of these interactions (Siegel, 2007). In elevating relationship as the highest order context, we create communities within which we live.

Our ability to be more mindful about the type of language we use in our communication is directly related to our level of consciousness. Kegan et al. (2001) identify levels of consciousness that influence how we think, what we pay attention to, and how we express ourselves including the ability to

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make changes in our communication. These levels of consciousness are referred to as *ways of knowing*, and it is Levels 3, 4, and 5 that have particular relevance here. The developmental sequence before Level 3 includes Level 1 typical of infants in which they think objects in the world around them are extensions of themselves and Level 2 when they start to realize that they have some control over their reflexes. In Level 3, *Instrumental Knowing*, we are concrete learners and pay attention to what is tangible. We notice what is within our perspectives and do not have the capacity to take the view of another if their views differ from our own. Showing empathy may be challenging at this level and can affect communication and the social world or the communities we create, because we cannot take the leap into experiencing the perspective of another. This means that in communicating across cultures, we may learn about and adapt certain traditions and characteristics of the other culture but cannot manage paradoxes and ambiguity well. In situations where managing paradoxes is critical because of the ambiguity, but we are operating on Instrumental Knowing, we may shut down, become rigid, or blame the other for not cooperating.

Level 4, *Socializing Knowing*, allows us to in a more reflective way connect with others through relationship. We are in touch with our own values and beliefs as well as the other person's. This level of knowing allows us to move beyond our own frames of reference and expand to acknowledge and understand the world of the other, in the context of relationship, which is what makes building community possible. We tend to be nonjudgmental about our cultural differences and have the capacity to be curious and accepting. In Level 5, *Self-Authoring Knowing*, there is even greater control in how we frame our perspectives, what we consider to be relevant, and how we structure our relationships. In Level 4, we can focus on the relationship as it exists, and in Level 5, we are able to reconstruct the parameters of the relationship. This means that in the context of relationship, we are able to not only acknowledge and respect each other's values and norms of behavior, but we can actually create new ones that fit this particular context we are creating in relationship. We need the ways of knowing characteristics of Levels 4 and 5 to be able to transcend from conflict to community in the process of building better social worlds, through connection and communication, especially when there are worldview differences that exist across and within cultures.

One way we might develop these higher levels of consciousness toward socializing and self-authoring ways of knowing is through reflective and reflexive processes. This can be achieved through reflective processes *on-action* and reflexive processes *in-action* (Schon, 1983). These processes require us to reflect on our assumptions and beliefs that we acquired through the experiences of our frames of reference that form our worldview, which have a strong grounding in our culture. When we reflect after an action, an interaction, or a communication has taken place, we *reflect-on-action*. It is retrospective in the sense that we think back over what transpired, the quality of our interactions and communication; and it is forward looking in that this mindfulness can lead toward a different type of preparation and interaction going forward.

Reflecting-in-action is what Fisher-Yoshida and Nagata (2002) refer to as being *reflexive* in that while we are experiencing an interaction or communication, we are at the same time engaging in a metalevel observation of ourselves being in the moment. Instead of waiting to reflect after a particular situation is finished, we have the chance to reflect and select a course of action or redirection of our action in the midst of the communication unfolding. Ideally, the more we perform reflection-on-action, the better we will develop our skills to be more reflexive in the moment.

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Another aspect of reflective processes is to use *critical self-reflection* that frames reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action in a particular way. Taylor (2009) identifies three forms of critical self-reflection that take place in the process of transforming our perspectives and worldview. These are (1) reflecting on the *content*, which is what we see, feel, and perceive; (2) reflecting on how we perform the functions of perceiving, which is about the *process* of perception; and (3) reflecting on the *premise* of why we even perceive. When we reflect on the content of a conflict, we are focusing on the substantive issues. Content, process, and premise can be used as an organizing framework for reflection-on-action or reflection-in-action.

When we consciously focus on applying the five paradoxes to understanding our intercultural interactions better, and if we are using them in the moments of interaction, we are reflecting-in-action. This metaperspective allows us to be more mindful of where on the paradox continuums we want to be in communication with others. Having this metaperspective allows us to make wiser choices toward more effective outcomes.

When we are in conflict situations, we are experiencing different realities, because our worldviews shape what we experience, and no two sets of worldview experiences are the same. To move past these differences and incommensurate sets of values, we reach critical moments or bifurcation points in which we need to make critical decisions (Pearce, 2007). First, we need to realize that these are critical moments and that we have these choice points from which to decide our course of action. Reflecting on the five paradoxes in these moments is one strategy to use to better understand some of these choices. We need to consider how to create a shared reality with the other party from which we create community. This is done by being open, flexible, reflective, and reflexive, as we live into relationship as the highest order of context. According to Kegan et al. (2001), it calls for a fourth or fifth level of consciousness and the creation of new norms that are mutually created in relationship.

Prioritizing relationship as the highest order of context is in alignment with the collaborative quadrant of the dual concern model, in which a high level of importance is given to both our own needs and degree of assertiveness, while at the same time being very focused on satisfying the needs of the other through cooperation (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993). We become more mindful of our approaches to conflict and can use these models as a guide about the choices we make when we reach critical moments.

Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) expand the dual concern model to an eight-style conflict grid that considers an intercultural approach. The Pruitt and Rubin model (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993) has the styles of inaction or avoiding; contending, dominating, or competing; obliging, yielding, or accommodating; integrating, collaborating, or problem solving; and compromising. Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) add *emotional expression, third party help*, and *neglect* as three additional approaches used by some cultures as tactical conflict behaviors.

This eight-style conflict grid later developed into the cultural values dimension grid (Ting-Toomey & Takai, 2006) in which four approaches to intercultural conflict were identified. These four quadrants are based on the two dimensions of individualism/collectivism and small and large power distance, and they are (1) impartial conflict approach (individualism and small power distance); (2) status achievement conflict approach (individualism and large power distance); (3) benevolent conflict approach (collectivism and large power distance); and (4) communal conflict approach (collectivism and small power distance).

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Now that we have reviewed some ways in which we can transform our communication, the underlying concepts, and levels of readiness needed, I will present a case study to further illustrate these points. The case study helps bring these concepts to life. First will be the background of the case study, followed by some discussion points, and then a look at the case from the viewpoints of context and sequence using the lens of CMM. CMM will provide alternative ways of framing the case as a vivid example of how we can transform communication through framing relationship as the highest order context.

"Living Well" Case Study

This case study of a real-life context brings a tangible and practical aspect to these concepts. The following description is of a global organization that has its headquarters in Canada and operates in a substantial number of countries around the world.

> "Living Well" is a multinational organization in the pharmaceutical industry. They have business centers in more than 40 locations in the world in which they operate. Not all business centers have the same areas of focus, yet they fully represent the organization. This can be from research collaboration amongst scientists in the different laboratories, to conducting seminars with universities on the latest pharmaceutical developments, to partnering in joint ventures with other related organizations. In another five locations, in countries where one of the 40 Business Centers is not located, there are Field Offices set up in which a narrower range of the specific services needed in those locations are offered. Over the years these Field Offices have increased the number of services they have been offering on a regular or on an as needed basis, yet they have not reached the full service offering of a Business Center.
>
> The organization represents more than 70 countries in their staff and management levels. The heads of most of the Business Centers and Field Offices are of the country in which the center or office is located. English is the main language of business communication across the organization, and in each location, the local languages are also used. The heads of these Business Centers and Field Offices are well connected in their communities in political and industry circles. They tend to understand the cultural nuances, including who holds the power and how to "get things done" appropriately in each context. Headquarters and other locations do not always see the value in how other locations operate because their practices differ.
>
> There have been occasions over the past few years when members of the organization have conducted business in one of the five countries in which these Field Offices are located, without involving the field office. These members have had direct contacts on the ground in those countries and either did not see the necessity or relevance of reaching out through the Field Offices, especially if these visits were a "one off" arrangement and not a fuller commitment. The staff in the Field Offices have found out about these visits and business arrangements either as they are about to happen or after they have taken place and they have felt slighted, not significant and somewhat marginalized by their own organization. These individual meetings and business opportunities that happen outside of the Field Offices are usually successful and the Field Offices think the organization doesn't find the need to be inclusive. However, when there is a situation in which the help of the Field Office is needed the organization does not hesitate to seek Field Office support. The representatives in those countries feel they can add value that is not being recognized by the organization or their colleagues.
>
> The individual Field Office leaders have voiced concerns to their manager overseeing all Field Offices about these scenarios. In turn, the manager of the field offices has gone

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> to her vice president (VP) to discuss ways in which the field offices are being marginalized by these actions and that she would like the VP's office to declare to the rest of the organization that it is critical to involve the Field Offices in their overseas endeavors in those five countries. The VP has been reluctant to do so. The Field Office manager thinks it is because of their interpersonal dynamic and that he doesn't see the value in involving the Field Offices as long as these transactions are successful without their involvement. The VP has stated that when the Field Offices need to be involved they will be and that since they are not fully functioning Business Centers there is no organizational mandate that forces their involvement. If and when they develop into fuller Business Centers, then there will be a different set of protocol, and of course at that time, they will more fully represent the organization.

They are stuck in this dynamic and thus far no resolution has been reached. There is information that is explicit and then a wealth of additional information that is not as obvious. Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) use the ODIS (Observe, Describe, Interpret, and Suspend Evaluation) model to foster more mindful observation of the individual players and dynamic interactions between and among them. CMM models can map out what has been taking place and the underlying assumptions and cultural influences that have been felt but not named. This mapping process can facilitate moving from identifying these issues to surfacing what is underneath and fueling them to move this toward constructive resolution. The worldview perspectives these participants hold based on their frames of reference and cultural influences are influencing how they understand and act into these circumstances. There seems to be a lack of awareness of these differing worldviews causing some of the disagreements and misplaced emotional reactions and hurt feelings (Mezirow, 2000). Working on the paradox of knowing for a deeper understanding of self and other can support cocreating a healthier and more productive context of relationship.

Understanding Context

The ordering of these layers of context is important because each layer influences how communication is understood. The higher the level of context, the more impactful it is, so that the highest order of context influences how everything else is understood and acted on from that perspective because everything else takes place within it.

In taking a communication perspective, each speech act is understood based on the episodes within which they occur, and these episodes happen within different levels of context. In the case study, "Living Well," we can identify several speech acts, episodes, and contexts. We look at the different contextual mappings from the viewpoints of both the Field Offices' and Headquarters' perspectives.

The Field Offices view themselves as representatives of the organization in the countries within which they are located. They expect that when the organization conducts any business in that location, the Field Office will be directly involved in one way or another, from actively organizing and participating in the event to being notified as a courtesy that an event will be taking place without their participation. The Field Office places *Self* as the highest order of context, and it influences how they understand this dynamic. This is depicted in Table 30.1.

On the other hand, Headquarters sees this scenario differently because they have placed Episode as the highest order of context. For them, represented in this particular scenario by scientists from their R&D (Research and Development) department, the opportunity to participate in a meeting with peers to advance

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Table 30.1 Contextual Mapping From Field Office Perspective

Self	The Field Office feels slighted, is insulted, and this reinforces their feelings of being viewed as less competent and relevant members of the organization
Episode	Representatives in the Field Office hear from important industry representatives in their location about a delegation from the organization that will visit them, but they didn't notify the Field Office that they will be coming
Relationship	Field Offices think they are part of the same organization, but they do not feel valued by the Headquarters
Speech act	Organization representatives come to the place where the Field Office is located and do not notify the Field Office

Table 30.2 Contextual Mapping From Headquarters Perspective

Episode	Being invited to attend a meeting with potential partnering laboratories to further develop our R&D capacities
Relationship	We connect directly with other accomplished scientists for R&D; this is not a Business Center location, so they do not offer the R&D support we need
Self	We are accomplished scientists advancing the R&D capabilities of this organization
Speech act	Attending a meeting with potential partnering laboratories in a location where there is a Field Office

NOTE: R&D = research and development.

their pharmaceutical capabilities is the highest order of context on which every decision and action is based. To fulfill this action, they reviewed what steps were needed to be taken, and engaging with the Field Office was not a priority because they did not see the value or necessity of it, which is shown in Table 30.2.

The scientists from the R&D department in the organization connect directly with their counterparts in the location they will be visiting. This level of relationship is more meaningful to them because of the differentiation they make in their minds about Business Centers and Field Offices. From their perspective, they have no obligation to be involved with the Field Office because company regulations does not state that they should.

Sequence of Events

Our responses to others within a relationship context are influenced by a number of factors. In each situation we experience, there are critical moments or choice points at which we can make conscious decisions about how we will respond. This depends on the level of consciousness from which we operate (e.g., instrumental, socializing, and self-authoring levels), how self- and other-aware we are, and the skills we have to carry forth our intentions. The degree of self- and other-awareness we have developed in the paradox of knowing is significant in determining the outcomes.

We can refer back to our case study to use it as an example. When the Field Office found out about the R&D group's visit, they could have acknowledged their feelings of being excluded among themselves and bracketed those feelings for the time being, so that they wouldn't cloud the next stages of the communication. They could have invited the R&D group into a conversation inquiring about the purpose of their visit and seeking to identify ways in which they could be of help. The

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R&D group may not have been cognizant of the ways in which the Field Office could support them, so we cannot assume that they did know and that this was a deliberate omission. Going forward, they could gather information in advance of any visits to determine the potential needs of their colleagues, continue to build interpersonal relationships so they can build their self-worth and informally learn about pending visits, and perhaps have a larger-scale strategic conversation with others in the organization to fully explore the vision and function of the Field Offices. Another point of consideration is that the Field Offices may not have the capacity to support the R&D initiative, so they may need to discriminate between what they can realistically support and what they have to let Headquarters manage directly.

An example of this transaction can be as follows:

Field Office: We heard you are coming to our location, and we wondered why we were not notified of your impending visit.

R&D Team: Well, we are meeting with our R&D counterparts, and since you are not a Business Center and probably don't offer services to support us, we didn't think it necessary to involve you.

Field Office: (critical moment of how to respond) Well, perhaps this is an opportunity for us to understand more about what you need and for you to know more about our capabilities. If we can support you, we would like very much to be involved in ways that makes sense to both of us. If not, then perhaps through our contacts, we can point you in the direction of others who can support you.

This can potentially be a difficult conversation for both parties, especially the Field Office, because of their emotional investment in wanting to be acknowledged and valued. By recognizing and bracketing their emotions to be able to lead with an invitation for an exploratory conversation, the R&D team feels welcomed and not defensive about their past actions. Even if there is not a role for the Field Office to play in this particular event, they set the tone of collaboration and receptivity for others in the organization, and this will be a good foundation from which to grow future relationships.

This places *relationship* as the highest order of context instead of *self* for the Field Office and *episode* for Headquarters. The Hierarchy Model for this interaction could be transformed into this instead, as shown in Figure 30.5.

An important note to consider is that before transforming the individual structuring of context into a shared context, there will be need for recognition and respect placed on the context that each party brings. This is a critical step in the process of building relationship, transforming communication, and thereby changing the nature of our relationships. There may be instances in which a shared context cannot be achieved, and at least knowing

Relationship	*Self and Other*
Episode	
Speech act	

Figure 30.5 Transformed Hierarchy of Context for "Living Well"

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and understanding why we name and place the order of context the way we do as well as why our counterparts select their level of context to act into is a first step toward any type of conflict transformation and potential reconciliation.

Strategies for Transforming Conversations

The strategies and techniques mentioned throughout the chapter can be aligned within three main areas: context, self, and other, which are shown in Figure 30.1. Using these three areas to frame how we focus our attention provides us with an organizing mechanism to address the many levels of complexity inherent in communication. This more focused view will aid in transforming our understanding because we have shifted our attention. It also serves as a framework from within which to select the tools that will provide us with the most useful insights to use for developing more constructive relationships.

Addressing *Context* Through Episode Work

The level of context that we place as the highest order has the most influence over how we understand, make meaning, and then act into our communication and interactions with others. We advocate that if we place *relationship* as the highest order of context, it will more constructively influence how we interface with others. If we hold our own interests and needs as the highest order, we will not pay the appropriate amount of attention to the interests and needs of others, and this will lead to a more competitive stance and deteriorate our relationship.

Within relationship is concern for self and other, so our needs and the needs of our communication partner will both be considered. Of course, to frame our communication with relationship as the overarching context, we need to realize the value of the relationship, both short and long term. This requires energy and determination to pursue because it can be challenging considering our worldview differences and degrees of emotional investment. The short- and long-term perspectives can be explored well through the use of the paradox of response in which time factors are considered.

To move toward this contextualization of relationship as the highest order of context, we want to do "episode work" to create certain episodes that will allow this shift in context to happen (Pearce, 2007). There are many ways to foster these episodes, and two broad categories of activities can be either *planned* or *emergent* (Pearce, 2007). In planned episode work, we are consciously intentional on how we will generate communication and how we will respond to others, so that we elicit what will lead to constructive relationship building. We recognize that we have choice, and we identify in advance the choices that will create the episode we desire to make better social worlds. This can be done in preparation through reflection-on-action and while it is occurring through reflection-in-action. In emergent episode work, we are focused on both the content, as in planned episode work, and on the process as well, looking for opportunities to constructively act into relationship as the highest order context. This is putting reflection-in-action into practice as we view the episode from a metaperspective.

One useful way of being able to engage in this effort is by better understanding who we are and what we bring to our interactions with others. Transformative learning can support this effort through the exploration of identifying our worldview, values, assumptions, and ways of seeing the world that may be implicitly influencing our choices, characteristic of paradox of knowing.

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Addressing *Self* Through Transformative Learning

As adults, we reason and make judgments based on our frames of reference, which influence how we perceive, interpret, and make meaning of our social worlds. These frames of reference are formed by our life experiences from a variety of contexts and relationships and constitute our beliefs, values, assumptions, and feelings (Mezirow, 2009). Typically, we are not aware of these factors that influence our choices unless something happens to alert us to these implicit processes we follow. The more aware we are of these tacit belief systems, the more we can understand and shape them toward future decisions and actions. This is especially useful in being more deliberate in the way we interact with others to develop our relationships and frame relationship as the highest order context. We need to know as much as possible about ourselves, so that we can better align our intent with the impact we have on others. This supports why the paradox of knowing is foundational to developing better quality relationships.

Mezirow (2000) identifies 10 phases of learning that are part of the transformative process, and they are as follows: (1) have a disorienting dilemma; (2) self-examine; (3) assess assumptions critically; (4) recognize connection between discontent and transformation process; (5) explore options or new roles, relationships, and actions; (6) plan course of action; (7) acquire knowledge and skills for plan; (8) try new roles; (9) build competence and self-confidence; and (10) reintegrate new perspective into life. A disorienting dilemma can come about as a result of realizing that there are different interpretations in an action or communication and that not everyone views the world the way we do. We learn it by the impact it has on us, which is typically unexpected. These transformations can be epochal, in which they happen all at once, or incremental when the change creeps up on us more slowly and is not as immediately obvious.

There are certain elements that foster transformative learning to take place. This in turn can lead toward more developed self-awareness. Taylor (2009) draws attention to being aware of the personal and sociocultural factors in the context of these interactions as they play a role in influencing our perceptions and behavior. Intercultural interactions when viewed from a learning stance are prime examples of when transformative learning can take place. Brookfield (1987) stresses the importance of critical reflection, so that we uncover the assumptions that guide us toward having certain reactions, feelings, and judgments. From critically reflecting on our assumptions, we can see where on the continuums within the five paradoxes we are placing our interactions and why, so that we can learn more about ourselves and others.

This all works toward increasing our self-awareness, which is a precursor for more developed interpersonal relationships with others. The connection here is that the more we know ourselves, the better able we will be to gauge our impact on others. This is especially important as we communicate across cultures. The more self- and other-aware we are and the more we work toward living into relationship as the framing for the higher order context, the better we will be at bridging across different cultural perceptions and values.

Addressing *Other* Through Intercultural Competence

There are different frameworks to consider in developing awareness of how we understand cultural similarities and differences. As mentioned earlier, Fisher-Yoshida and Geller (2009) identify the five paradoxes

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of communicating transnationally, such as paradox of knowing, which is knowing self and honoring others as the core awareness that underlies all other types of cultural dimensions. This echoes the emphasis on addressing self and other through transformative learning and intercultural competence. In this transition from knowing self to knowing other, we focus on the cultural influences that shape who we are, how we understand and make meaning of the world around us, and how we act on this knowledge. This is core to us being able to elevate and live into the context of relationship constructively.

Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2001) identify four criteria of what they term *intercultural conflict competence* and that is appropriateness and effectiveness paired with satisfaction and productivity. The core of successfully acting on these criteria is mindfulness of communication through paraphrasing what you hear your conversation partner say; of reframing to create alternatives to understand the behavior in different and novel ways; of being reflexive in identifying our own assumptions we bring with us and that affect our interactions with others. In addition, it is important to continually validate our own identities and the identities of others because so much conflict is caused by intentionally or unintentionally violating identity boundaries; doing facework to manage the giving and receiving of face so as not to lose face; and balancing the power dynamics as much as possible.

Some of this work can be done on our own and in direct relations with others. There are times when we are not ready or able to do this work without the support of a third-party facilitator. In addition, there are many cultural orientations that require the use of a third-party intervener, because it is inappropriate to be face-to-face with the party with whom we are in conflict. There are different ways of assessing the role of this third-party person or the qualifications they bring. Following are some suggestions as to how this can work in action. This is not a comprehensive list, so specific cultural differences will need to be taken into consideration as context is an important influencing factor.

Role of Facilitator

Many of the processes we have discussed thus far in this chapter rely on a particular mind-set and set of skills that not everyone possesses. Even if we do have the skills requisite to shift or transform the nature of our communication and relationships, we may not have access to that positive and collaborative mind-set necessary to employ them. This is where the third-party facilitator role can play a useful part in changing the communication patterns to form these new social worlds. The person in this role can help the involved parties shift the context within which they are communicating to relationship as the highest order of context.

A third-party intervener in the role of participant observer can surface insights not immediately known to participants, and they can do this by noticing and redirecting destructive communication patterns. They can make these patterns explicit and then bring this to the attention of the participants. For example, when using the continuums of the five paradoxes, they can notice and draw attention to where on the continuums the parties are engaging. They can then explore with the parties alternative ways of communicating that will elicit different types of responses more conducive to collaborative dialogue and better quality relationships. The more the facilitator can model these skills, the better able the parties will be to see how they are used in action.

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This can also help earn more credibility for the third-party intervener.

In essence, new forms of communication may need to be learned, modeled, and integrated into the communication dynamics. It is up to the facilitator to determine the level of readiness to learn these new skills, and part of that is determined by the mind-set of the involved parties. Together they can cocreate the mutually acceptable norms for the context of relationship.

Conclusion

More research is needed to further explore these ideas and their impact, so that they can be refined in ways that are practical and useful. Developing self-awareness needs to be foundational in any work we do in practice. It is a cornerstone in moving forward to create better relationships and social worlds. In addition to this would be developing a broader and deeper understanding of others. More scholarly applied research can be conducted to see the impact of these ideas and practices on people and their relationships. Capturing narratives and case studies that explore the support and challenges experienced when applying these methods can be useful. For larger-scale theoretical generalizations, perhaps implementing these practices and concepts into wide-scale organizational learning and development, to measure the systemic impact. These concepts and practices can be integrated into the human resource systems in organizations, so that recruiting, talent management, and career development impacts are also considered. The increase in multinational and multicultural organizations calls for this type of learning.

Conflict across cultures is frequent and often unpleasant. There are ways to address this phenomenon and that begins with the mind-set to want to make a difference by doing something different. The three broad categories under which many approaches and techniques were explored in this chapter are developing a deeper understanding of self, other, and context. The involved parties will need to make this effort, so that they improve their skills, develop higher capacity of consciousness, and elevate relationship as the overarching context. Useful tools through considering the five paradoxes toward deeper intercultural understanding, a communication perspective with the use of CMM, and reflective practices to transform perspectives and relationships were shared. This could be the beginning of transforming intercultural communication into better quality conversations, better quality relationships, and better social worlds.

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31

Conflict Communication in Contexts

Organizing Themes and Future Directions

John G. Oetzel, Stella Ting-Toomey, and Willow J. Anderson

Any systematic review or synthesis of a vast amount of research studies within a certain spatial constraint is a daunting task. The scholars in this *Handbook* have done an exceptionally remarkable job of reviewing, critiquing, and integrating a voluminous amount of literature in the four arenas of conflict. The proliferation of conflict research and the never ending, everyday real-life conflicts unfolding around us provide us with an avenue to identify the contemporary trends of conflict communication theory and practice aptly represented in these chapters. We thank the scholars for their hard work, professional dedication, and carefully crafted ideas and chapters. These chapters represent the state of the art on each of these topics and hopefully prove stimulating for future conflict communication research and practice. Our purpose in this conclusion is to synthesize these chapters and to have an eye toward the future of theory, research, and practice in conflict communication.

As with the first *Handbook*, we organized this second edition in four specific contexts: (1) interpersonal, (2) organizational, (3) community, and (4) intercultural/international. The four contexts continue to reflect the predominant fields in which scholars and practitioners research and apply conflict communication theories and principles. In the conclusion of the first edition of the *Handbook*, we advocated using a social ecological theoretical framework (or multilevel approach) that examines conflict communication within and across contexts (we interchange the words *contexts* and *levels* within this chapter). We argued that such a framework would provide some meaningful connection between and among the different levels or contexts of conflict communication and would be beneficial for future theorizing, researching, and practicing of conflict communication.

We continue to believe that there is great benefit for multilevel approaches to be used as organizing tools, theorizing/research tools,

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and practical tools for the study of conflict communication. Multilevel approaches include terms such as the social ecological framework/model, multiple levels of analysis, and multilevel theorizing. In this concluding chapter, we begin with a brief overview of the social ecological framework and multilevel theorizing. During this overview, we illustrate the ways some authors have used multiple levels of analysis to organize their literature review. In addition, we discuss two predominant themes represented across the chapters and how multiple levels of analysis provide depth to those themes: (a) exploring the factors that influence or shape conflict communication and dynamics, and (b) exploring the impact of conflict communication dynamics on outcomes. Finally, we describe two additional themes permeating the chapters and examine potential multilevel components of these themes and relevant future directions: transformation, globalization, and social media.

Multilevel Approaches

Multilevel approaches such as mesoanalysis and social ecological frameworks are quite prevalent in research in areas such as family systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1989), organizational behavior (e.g., Klein, Tosi, & Cannella, 1999; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010), and public health (e.g., McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988; Stokols, 1996). Multilevel approaches are generally rooted in several core principles. First, individual behavior/communication is shaped by the effects of multiple physical, social, and cultural factors. Second, individual attributes also influence individual behavior/communication. Third, individuals are interdependent with a variety of contexts. In this section, we provide a brief overview of multilevel approaches rather than a detailed exploration. Interested readers can explore the citations in this paragraph or the conclusion of the first edition of the *Handbook* (Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, & Rinderle, 2006). Specifically, we discuss the benefits and challenges of multilevel approaches, levels in multilevel approaches, and relationships among the levels.

Benefits and Challenges of Multilevel Approaches

Multilevel approaches have a number of benefits for researchers, theorists, and practitioners. First, multilevel approaches avoid reductionism to single levels (Upton & Egan, 2010). Any research or practice that focuses on any single level will, by definition, underestimate the effects of other contexts (Klein et al., 1999; Rousseau & House, 1994; Stokols, 1996). Conflict communication research and practice tends to focus analysis on either micro- (e.g., individual or interpersonal behavior) or macroprocesses (e.g., social, economic, and political structures). Multilevel approaches focus on understanding concepts at multiple levels as well as between different levels. Second, multilevel approaches have a good fit for "naturalistic environments" (Upton & Egan, 2010, p. 335). Conflict communication does not take place in a vacuum. Our conflicts take place within interpersonal systems, organizational constraints, and societal structures. Multilevel approaches better represent our lives than single-level approaches. Third, multilevel approaches help researchers and practitioners understand the way that contexts/levels support or inhibit behavior and behavior change in individuals (McLeroy et al., 1988; Stokols, 1996). Research and practice is often interested in creating change in conflict communication to produce better outcomes. Such changes may be desired by individuals and yet not implemented because the sociocultural,

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political, economic, organizational, or interpersonal contexts do not support the change.

However, multilevel frameworks do pose simultaneous challenges and burdens centering on research concerns and practical applications. Researchers have to carefully consider the large number of potential concepts and contexts at multiple levels of analysis. Thus, it is critical to select a theory that addresses the middle ground explanation of various conflict concepts and practices and, simultaneously, is sensitive to and inclusive of multiple-level concerns. Furthermore, there is the burden of considering how to sample and analyze multilevel data concerning the various conflict communication phenomena (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). Practitioners also have challenges. Multiple levels require close coordination and collaboration with multiple parties. In addition, partialing, or partitioning, the relevant influence of contexts can be difficult. In trying to change conflict communication, practitioners have to weigh the relative contributions of individual attributes, interpersonal relationships, and other contextual factors. Such challenges can be difficult in the absence of concrete theory and evidence about multilevel effects. Against such challenging backdrop, there are multiple approaches in addressing the multilevel lenses.

Levels in Multilevel Approaches

There are many approaches to examine the specific levels in multilevel frameworks including meso-organizational research (Rousseau & House, 1994) and social ecological frameworks (Stokols, 1996). In this volume and this chapter, we utilized four specific contexts (interpersonal, organizational, community, and intercultural/international) to discuss conflict communication. Our approach most closely follows Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1989) work, which divides environmental influences into four system levels: (1) micro (face-to-face interactions in specific settings—interpersonal conflict), (2) meso (interrelationships among various microsystems—organizational conflict), (3) exo (forces within the larger social system—community to institutional/structural conflict), and (4) macro (cultural beliefs, values, and ideologies—intercultural/international conflict). Figure 31.1 illustrates these contexts as a set of concentric circles and

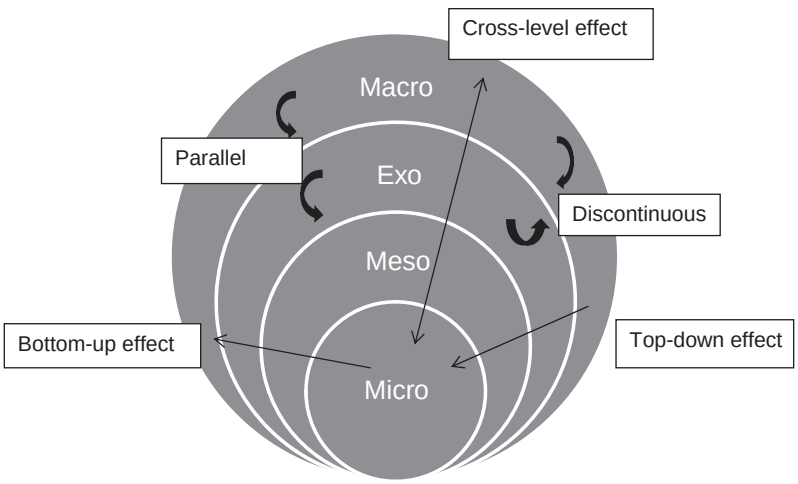

Figure 31.1 Multilevel Model of Conflict Contexts

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also includes arrows to identify specific types of relationships among the levels.

Throughout this volume, a number of authors have used multilevel approaches to organize their review of literature, and we present a few here to illustrate. The levels do not directly correspond with the ones that we have presented, and yet they still represent multilevel approaches. Jiang and Buzzanell (Chapter 3) illustrate the ways that qualitative data have been used to study conflict communication at multiple levels. Caughlin, Vangelisti, and Mikucki-Enyart (Chapter 6) employ three levels to organize their review of literature about conflict in dating and marital relationships: (1) environment, (2) individuals, and (3) relational processes. Jameson and Albada (Chapter 16) utilize the levels of interpersonal, group, and organizational to synthesize the literature on patient–provider conflict in health settings. Kirby, Wieland, and McBride (Chapter 14) consider multiple levels of analysis in exploring the research about work–life conflict balance: macrolevel and cross-cultural level, organizational-level policies, relationship levels, and microlevel perceptions. Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (Chapter 29) integrate macro-, exo-, meso-, and microlevels into the culture-based situational conflict model.

Most of the authors utilize multiple level components, particularly macro- and microlevels, in presenting their core arguments. For example, Guerrero (Chapter 4) considers how emotions and conflict communication are manifest and influenced by individuals nested in interpersonal relationships. Jones (Chapter 15) discusses the mesofeatures of the organization and microfeatures of childrens' socioemotional skills in examining conflict resolution education in the schools. Croucher (Chapter 21) discusses macro- and microlevel aspects in illustrating the ways in which religion shapes conflict behavior. Stohl, McCann, and Bakar (Chapter 27) argue that "conflict dynamics occur at the nexus of macro features of the environment and the micro context of the work group" (p. 714). Beyond the increased attention to multilevel analysis as reflected in this *Handbook*, scholars also started paying astute attention on the interrelationship among levels.

Relationships Among Levels

There are several types of relationships in multilevel approaches. First, multilevel approaches require theorists, researchers, and practitioners to consider the degree to which concepts at multiple levels are parallel or discontinuous (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). Parallel (or isomorphic) constructs exist as similar constructs (e.g., the practice of apology) across different analytical levels. Discontinuous constructs work differently at different levels. Second, we can consider top-down effects (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). Top-down effects consider how the macro influences the micro through the exo- and mesolevels (i.e., the macro influence the exo, the exo influences the meso, and the meso influences the micro). Thus, we might consider how individuals' conflict communication is shaped by cultural values, social structures and policies, workplace attitude, and the interpersonal relationship conflict communication process. Third, bottom-up effects (or emergent) focus on how microlevels affect higher levels such as the meso-, exo-, and macrolevels (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). For example, we might consider the ways the individuals' social activism behavior affect relationships and social network others, organizations, media and institutional policies, and cultures. Finally, interactive effects involve mutual and simultaneous effects at more than one level (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). In some cases, the effects of one level (e.g., macrocultural effect) moderate the outcomes at another level (e.g., microlevel). Interactive effects differ from top-down (or

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bottom-up) in that the former assumes simultaneous process effects or outcome effects at multiple levels, while the latter assumes some sort of summative or cumulative effect passing down (or up) from one level to the next. There may also exist a "sideway ripple effect" within each level of analysis that can be further explored by conflict scholars in the future. Other scholars talk in depth about the intricate theoretical relationships discussed here, and we refer readers to those original sources for a more expert coverage of those topics.

Throughout this *Handbook*, two predominant themes are apparent. First, the various chapters throughout each of the contexts/levels consider the antecedents to conflict communication and dynamics or the factors (e.g., cultural, individual, situational, time) that help explain why people managed conflict as they do. Second, the chapters emphasize the importance of conflict communication dynamics for relational, organizational, community, and sociopolitical outcomes. We use these two themes to illustrate various types of relationships across levels.

Parallels and Discontinuities. One potentially parallel relationship that is identified in the chapters in this volume is that collaborative conflict approaches (e.g., problem-solving, dialogue, and cooperative conflict behaviors) have positive outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, peace, joint gains, and relationship/community building). A quick review of the chapters in this volume demonstrates this relationship; for example, in interpersonal conflict, integrative conflict management is related to with more satisfactory marital and family relationships (Canary, Lakey, & Sillars, Chapter 10; Koerner, Chapter 8); in organizational conflict, integrative conflict tactics are associated with positive outcomes such as joint gains in negotiation or group performance (Teucher, Brett, & Gunia, Chapter 11; Garner & Poole, Chapter 12); in community conflicts, dialogue is heralded as a key consensus and community-building tool (Littlejohn & Cole, Chapter 22; Barge & Andreas, Chapter 23); in intercultural conflicts, collaborative problem solving is critical to improved relationships among culturally diverse people (Dorjee, Chapter 26; Orbe, Everett, & Putman, Chapter 25).

At first glance, this appears to be an isomorphic relationship. However, this assumption has not been directly tested. In fact, consensus building/collaboration may have some negative impacts. Peterson and Feldpausch-Parker (Chapter 19) present arguments about the potential weaknesses of consensus building for environmental policy. Specifically, they identify scholars who believe that at times consensus building often leads to conflict avoidance and inferior environmental policy. Similarly, Lutgen-Sandvik and Fletcher (Chapter 13) discuss how collaboration in a bullying conflict situation does not adequately solve the problem, particularly when the bully has legitimate power, or the organizational structure supports the bullying behavior. Whether isomorphic relationships exist at these multiple levels may be contingent on the type of outcome sought (e.g., relationship versus substantive, satisfaction versus compliance) or contextual constraints that make the processes look discontinuous.

To address parallels or discontinuities, conflict researchers and practitioners should consider two questions. First, do similar concepts mean the same thing at multiple levels? For example, does dialogue in intergroup conflicts (Broome, Chapter 28; Dorjee, Chapter 26) mean the same thing as in moral conflict (Littlejohn & Cole, Chapter 22), situations with citizenship and democratic deficits (Barge & Andreas, Chapter 23), or applying dialogue to ethics and community engagement (Cheney, Beck, & Cline, Chapter 18)? Second, is the nature of the relationships among variables and people consistent across levels? For example, is the relationship

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between antecedents and conflict processes in microlevels the same as that of the exo- or macrolevel? Future practice and research need to consider carefully the meaning of these various constructs to help identify whether the actual conflict patterns are parallel or discontinuous in the embedded conflict contextual frames. As a result, conflict scholars and practitioners can help build on each other's analytical lens in deepening their conceptualizations of the reciprocal causes and outcomes of conflict from an intersectional theoretical and applied intervention angle.

Top-Down Effects. There are numerous examples of top-down effects throughout this integrative synthesis, and we present two examples of antecedents of conflict communication and two examples of conflict communication influencing outcomes. In terms of antecedents at the organizational level, McAllum and Simpson (Chapter 17) describe three philosophies or clusters of conflict strategies for conflict management systems in organizations: (1) law based, (2) management based, and (3) participation based. These higher level philosophies shape the conflict management strategies of individuals and the organizations. At the community level, Croucher (Chapter 21) describes the tenets of three major religions in the world: Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. These tenets influence the way that individuals in these religions think about and manage conflict. In terms of conflict communication influencing outcomes at the interpersonal level, Spitzberg (Chapter 7) reviews the literature on intimate partnership violence and aggressive communication. One key point he illustrates is that the nature of the relationship as aggressive/violent has impacts on individuals' psychological outcomes. At the organizational level, Jones (Chapter 15) illustrates the influence of conflict resolution education programs on school climate and individual conflict resolution strategies. The programs help improve social and emotional competence of youth.

To address top-down effects, future research should consider several facets of multilevel theorizing (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). Researchers need to determine whether conflict communication changes across levels. If it does change, they need to consider the manner in which the processes are linked, including considering temporal reference points. Additionally, researchers and practitioners need to carefully consider and specify the levels at which the conflict communication operate. Most research reviewed in this *Handbook* illustrates top-down effects and yet the effects are not theorized or explained. This is not a criticism of the authors as their task objective was to synthesize the existing literature on a topic at a specific level. Thus, this suggestion is offered for future theorizing and contemplation.

Bottom-Up Effects. There are also a variety of examples of bottom-up effects in this *Handbook*, and again we present two examples of antecedents of conflict communication and two examples of conflict communication influencing outcomes. In terms of antecedents at the interpersonal level, Roloff and Wright (Chapter 5) describe how various types of social knowledge (e.g., beliefs, scripts, and frames) shape conflict dynamics and affect relationships. At the intercultural/national level, Kim (Chapter 24) addresses several questions that illustrate the impact of individuals' identities is a factor shaping intercultural conflict dynamics: What role or roles do identity play when individuals of dissimilar cultural backgrounds come together in a communicative relationship? Under what conditions is identity prone to be a force behind intercultural conflict or peace building? In terms of outcomes, at the community level, Lucero and Wallerstein (Chapter 20) discuss how

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academic and community members developing trusting partnerships might lead to larger level system changes and increase in community and university capacity. At the intercultural/international level, Broome (Chapter 28) argues that dialogue is an instrument for creating a culture of peace among larger entities in protracted conflicts.

To address bottom-up effects, future research should consider many of the same factors as top-down effects (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). Two differences are apparent. First, researchers and practitioners need to look at the lower levels first astutely and then the higher levels. Second, and more important, the temporal factor is critical for bottom-up effects as they take longer to manifest than top-down effects (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010). Future research can look to identify and explain the conditions, contexts, capacities, and skills that are required to create bottom-up effects.

Interactive Effects. While theorizing about top-down and bottom-up effects is still in its nascency, there are a number of research findings illustrating interactive effects in other contexts (e.g., in health care settings). In comparison, there are minimal findings about interactive effects in the conflict communication literature. Teucher et al. (Chapter 11) discuss one example of interactive effects. They explore (among other issues) the influence of culture on negotiation strategy and joint gains. They illustrate how different types of negotiation strategies produce different outcomes for different cultures. Specifically, they review literature illustrating that Japanese use substantiations and offers (rather than questions and answers) to achieve joint gains, while U.S. Americans use questions and answers (rather than substantiation and offers) to achieve joint gains. Thus, culture moderates the relationship between communication and outcomes. Similarly, Stohl et al. (Chapter 27) discuss how globalization alters conflict communication dynamics in work teams and creates paradoxes in identity negotiation (between individual, national, and global identities) that influence conflict dynamics. Thus, globalization moderates the relationship between identity and conflict communication.

Multilevel theorists (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Upton & Egan, 2010) suggest that scholars consider time processes and phenomena change across contexts to explore interactive effects. Earlier, we presented that the findings in Lutgen-Sandvik and Fletcher (Chapter 13) and Peterson and Feldpausch-Parker (Chapter 19) may illustrate discontinuous process. However, these may be reflective of interactive effects that change the nature of the relationship between conflict process and outcome. For example, in bullying contexts, the organizational policies and regulations may change the nature of the interpersonal relationships such that cooperation does not result in positive outcomes. In this manner, the policy moderates the relationship between conflict communication and outcomes. Thus, multilevel theorizing can help us determine whether processes are isomorphic/discontinuous or consistent with interactive effects and also help us be more judicious and reflexive in our analysis of a particular conflict case history.

In sum, multilevel theorizing and approaches has numerous benefits for understanding and practicing conflict communication. First, multilevel approaches help us better understand complex phenomena that seem to change in different conditions and over time. Second, multilevel approaches can help explain why there sometimes are inconsistent findings in the research (i.e., an unmeasured/unexamined level is influencing the phenomenon of interest). Third, multilevel theorizing helps avoid disciplinary sectarianism by encouraging us to think about different levels from a

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combined holistic *and* differentiation viewpoint. Often, different levels are the domain of different types of scholars/practitioners, and we can obtain a fuller, richer understanding of conflict by reflecting about the complex conflict case holistically and diachronically. Fourth, conflict practitioners can also benefit by adopting a multilevel theorizing lens as individual conflict communication resolution may be constrained by factors that are not readily apparent. Likewise, conflict solutions or intervention strategies may exist in multiple levels of complexity (see, e.g., Bolton Oetzel, Chapter 9). While this section has explored multilevel approaches for two predominant themes of conflict communication—antecedents and outcomes—the next section considers some prominent emerging themes in this *Handbook* and or conflict practice.

Emerging Themes and Future Directions for Theorizing, Research, and Practice

Regardless of whether you use a multilevel approach to the study of conflict, there are a number of stimulating topics, issues, and consequences in the study of conflict communication across the four conflict contexts. Some of these topics include the following: (a) focus on time/development of conflict (e.g., Caughlin et al., Chapter 6; Garner & Poole, Chapter 12; Teucher et al., Chapter 11); (b) conflict communication skills (e.g., Canary et al., Chapter 10; Guerrero, Chapter 4; Jones, Chapter 15); (c) dialogue (e.g., Barge & Andreas, Chapter 23; Broome, Chapter 28; Cheney et al., Chapter 18; Dorjee, Chapter 26; Littlejohn & Cole, Chapter 22); and (d) paradoxes and reflexivity (Cheney et al., Chapter 18; Dorjee, Chapter 26; Fisher-Yoshida, Chapter 30; Stohl et al., Chapter 27). We also see three inspiring themes that we think should be, and will be, the focus of future theorizing, researching, and practicing of conflict communication in the coming years: transformation, globalization, and social media.

Transformation

Conflict is part of the human condition; it is inevitable. Researchers and practitioners do not seek to end conflict as much as they strive to lessen its violent effects and transform its power into something more constructive. If we liken the power of conflict to a gush of water rushing down a river, our conflict communication research work is to seek to harness or redirect the energy of the water and not to block it. With this in mind, we suggest that transformation is an inspiring theme that emerges from the preceding chapters as several authors emphasized how conflict can be redirected to enhance and repair relationships at multiple levels for the better. In addition, transformation and the related concepts of forgiveness, apology, and reconciliation are areas that show promise for future research.

To be more specific, transformation is explored throughout the four conflict contexts introduced in this volume. At the interpersonal level, Guerrero (Chapter 4) discussed forgiveness as it relates to how people respond to hurtful events between friends and partners. Those findings suggest that when people are very hurt by the actions of someone close to them, they are more likely to use constructive communication and to forgive if the relationship is rewarding (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006a). Koerner (Chapter 8) explored the functions of family conflict communication and how they can allow for a shift in the power dynamics within adolescent–parent relationships. Bolton Oetzel (Chapter 9) approaches conflict transformation from the perspective that family-based treatments such as training in communication and parenting show great promise in aiding in the recovery of those who suffer from mental illness.

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At the organizational level, Lutgen-Sandvik and Fletcher (Chapter 13) also talk about the importance of collective effort in transforming a conflict-filled environment. They posit that bullying is an organizational rather than individual problem and addressing it with a multilevel approach has a greater chance of transforming a workplace where bullying transpires into one that embraces dignity and respect. Jones (Chapter 15) elucidates how restorative justice programs in schools which focus on reconciliation rather than retribution can significantly lower harmful school-based conflict.

Turning to the community level, Littlejohn and Cole (Chapter 22) explore the potential of transcendent communication such as dialogue to redefine perspectives, realities, and relationships. Cheney et al. (Chapter 18) also highlight dialogue as it relates to working with communities. They point out that processes that seek "deep reconciliation borne of mutual understanding" require in-depth analysis to be conducted on multiple levels: interpersonal, group, and institutional. This is particularly the case with communities that are affected by historical traumas. The authors also point to various academic explorations within the related themes of apology, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Looking from an intercultural/international perspective, Kim (Chapter 24) explores the resilient spirit of immigrants' adaptation process and their stress–adaptation–transformation process from their original cultures to their adopted homelands via a spiraling trajectory of individuation–universalization pattern. Broome (Chapter 28) explores dialogue as an important component of building cultures of peace. He presents both practices that make constructive dialogue possible as well as challenges (e.g., the nonlinear nature of dialogue, the need for time and strong commitment, the tenacity to sit side by side with your enemy and with a respectful attitude) that can prevent its transformative potential. Fisher-Yoshida (Chapter 30) also explores communication's transformative potential but from the vantage point of microlevel analysis. She argues that putting relationship "as the highest order of context within which we communicate" (p. 792) reframes the other in a humanistic, partnership level, and this power of language reframing can profoundly affect how we dialogue and relate to one another shoulder to shoulder in intercultural conflict communication.

Taken together, these chapters play a part in a larger conversation about transformation and conflict communication. There are also other aspects that might be explored in the future. This section suggests areas where we might advance theory, research, and practice as they relate to transformation and the related concepts of forgiveness, apology, and reconciliation. Specifically, we posit that there is richness in the exploration of forgiveness as it relates to institutional wrongs and different cultural understandings of appropriate reconciliation attempts.

Despite its long, diverse, and substantial history in theology and philosophy (Kelley & Waldron, 2006), forgiveness has not often been studied from a communication perspective. When it has, however, it has been with a view to better understand interpersonal relationships and wrongdoing (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Kelley & Waldron, 2005, 2006; Waldron & Kelley, 2007). Recent decades, however, have seen a surge in apologies from large institutions. These apologies were in response to grave mistreatment such as the sexual abuse of children by priests in Ireland and the ensuing cover up by the Church's administration (Coll, 2010) and the sending of aboriginal children to abusive residential schools in Canada (Anderson, 2012).

Some of these apologies (e.g., the one from the Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper) explicitly ask for forgiveness; many of them do not. However, whether implicit or explicit, it

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appears that inherent in all of these apologies is a hope for transformation in the victim-institution relationship. As the world continues to unearth institutional human rights abuses, apologies like those mentioned above presumably will only increase in frequency. So it is increasingly important that researchers engage in the study of forgiveness communication as it relates to institutions.

Institutional forgiveness communication (existing on the exolevel) may differ from that between family or friends (existing on the meso- or microlevel of analysis) in that it is often fraught with multilayered issues of ethics, justice, historical context, and power. In addition, unlike an apology from a family member or friend, victims of institutional violence do not receive the apology from the perpetrator directly, and this can potentially add another enormous barrier to personal healing; finally, the institutional representative who does apologize does so in a highly mediated environment. For all these reasons, institutional forgiveness communication appears to be unique and rife with opportunity for research and theory building in the conflict communication field.

Second, an area worth exploring for researchers and practitioners alike is the communicative factors or characteristics that make conflict transformation possible within different cultural settings. There are many factors that could influence how reconciliatory acts such as apologies might be received. Cross-cultural differences could influence what is considered a sincere or insincere apology (Funk-Unrau, 2004; Hatch, 2006; Yamazaki, 2004), what is an appropriate apology format or script (see Liebersohn, Neuman, & Bekerman, 2004, for more on cultural rhetorical resources), whether the audience feels it is important to hear the specifics of wrongdoing (Funk-Unrau, 2004; James, 2008), whether the provision of an official record is imperative (James, 2008), or what symbolism and or representation is considered appropriate or effective (Hatch, 2006; Yamazaki, 2004). Approaches that aim to transform conflict involve some amount of risk and vulnerability for both parties; that risk is only increased when working across cultures as the meanings of all the key transformation terms can vary from person to person, relationship to relationship, community to community, and institution to institution.

Globalization

Globalization is a phenomenon that is often referenced today and has a number of conceptualizations: (a) "the widening, deepening, and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life" (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999, p. 5), (2) "the compression of the world into 'a single place'" (Robertson, 1992, p. 6), and (3) the increasing interconnectedness of people and places as a result of changes in communication technologies and migration patterns that cause political, economic, and cultural convergence (Friedman, 2006; Ladegaard, 2007). Thus, the definitions consider the ways that globalization leads to both convergence and widening of people as a result of technology and migration. Many scholars emphasize one part of these definitions as they explore the impact on globalizations on a variety of communication aspects including conflict.

In addition, globalization is multidimensional. Stohl et al. (Chapter 27) in this *Handbook* noted that globalization can focus on macroeconomic, -political, and -cultural features, all of which change the focus of the conflict discourse. Appadurai (1996) identified five dimensions to conceive of globalization: ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes. Thus, globalization refers to many different aspects of life and conflict communication.

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Regardless of how scholars and practitioners conceive of globalization, there are elements of connecting and contesting. Specifically, globalization results in connecting people through migration and technology, which, in turn, results in contested discourses/conflict. For example, some contested globalization discourses include the following: (a) contradictory tensions of globalization and localization/indigenization or nationalism (Hill, 1995; Turner, 1990; Wang, 2000); (b) the hyperglobal/cultural homogenization perspective that presumes that globalization will lead to the end or minimization of the nation-state/culture (Friedman, 2006; Tomlinson, 1999); (c) globalization as a constant that brings problems such as religion clashes, global commercial media, and exploitation of workers (Biernatzki, 1997); and (d) migration from globalization that leads to increased interaction among people from different cultures that results in some intercultural conflict, particularly in large urban areas (Landis, 2008). Thus, globalization is often associated with conflict.

Several chapters in this *Handbook* consider the role of globalization for their topic/level. Some of these treatments are minor references in the larger review of literature. At the organizational level, Jones (Chapter 15) discussed the construction of conflict resolution education programs in the context of global initiatives in teacher education. In this manner, the global conversation influences what specific nations do for education. Similarly, Kirby et al. (Chapter 14) discuss various work–life policies across nations that are used to illustrate cultural differences and, in a sense, benchmarking what other countries do. Garner and Poole (Chapter 12) review the research on virtual teams as technology has enabled people to work across time and geographical spaces much easier. At the same time, virtual teams seem to have more conflict than face-to-face/colocated teams. At the community level, Peterson and Feldpausch-Parker (Chapter 19) discuss the negotiation between local and global issues and framing in environmental conflicts.

At the intercultural–international level, the motif of globalization occupies a more primary focus for several chapters. For example, Stohl et al. (Chapter 27) present several core arguments about conflict in the global workplace, including the following: (a) globalization (and culture) influence the way that parties understand conflict; (b) conflict communication occurs at the intersection of globalization at a macrolevel and work group communication at a microlevel; (c) globalization creates paradoxes that create power tensions in teams; and (d) transnational (global) teams are rife with conflict (or opportunities for conflict). In addition, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (Chapter 29) integrate globalization into the culture-based situational conflict model. They argue that globalization creates a negotiation of national and global identities as well as creates a situational factor that influences conflict dynamics.

Thus, it is clear that globalization is a key factor that is worthy of future focus in conflict communication. Practitioners can consider the ways that migration and technology has increased intercultural contact and has led to potential conflicts. Thus, they need to understand economic, religious, and political aspects of conflict and how they might shape conflict dynamics. Practitioners can also use this understanding to create opportunities for positive dynamics and transformations. Researchers and theorists can further consider different aspects of globalization and how it might shape conflict dynamics and outcomes. For example, under what conditions does globalization create conflict in the workplace? How can communities effectively negotiate the effects of globalizations to create peaceful communities? How can organizations integrate conflict management training to address the challenges of globalization? Are there

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communication tools and technologies that can be designed (Barge & Andreas, Chapter 23) to mitigate the negative impacts of globalization on relationships and outcomes?

Social Media

In 2011, two large-scale social movements occurred that were facilitated by social media. In early 2011 (starting in late December 2010), the Arab Spring happened across many nation-states in the Arab World where demonstrators protested a variety of conditions such as dictatorships, poverty, unemployment, economic decline, and censorship. These protests led to the overthrow of governments in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen (for an interactive timeline of events, see www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline). In late 2011, the "Occupy movement" began on September 17 in New York's financial district and spread to more than 900 cities worldwide. The international day of occupation occurred on October 15 and had tens of thousands protestors of the financial systems in major cities over the world. The Occupy movement brought fascination as commentators, newspapers, and politicians marveled over the growth of the movement, especially as it was an unfocused and apparently leaderless movement. Both of these movements involved the use of social media to politicize and publicize the events and also organize people's actions. Thus, social media was a tool that enabled the participants to engage in conflict with dominant entities.

Alas the planning for this *Handbook* was completed in 2010, and we did not have the foresight to predict the burgeoning use of social media to engage in conflict and activism. Furthermore, researchers have not had the time to publish articles on these topics by the time of going to press (in early 2012). As a result, social media is not a prevalent topic throughout this *Handbook*. Stohl et al. (Chapter 27) briefly discuss social media as a factor contributing to conflict dynamics in the global workplace. Other authors (e.g., Garner & Poole, Chapter 12) discuss the role of technology in contributing to conflict and yet do not discuss social media directly. By social media, we refer to web-based and mobile communication technologies that allow for user-generated and interactive content (e.g., Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook).

The ubiquitous nature of social media makes it a rich opportunity for future research, theory, and practice. At the interpersonal level, relational partners and family members use social media to initiate relationships, maintain relationships, rejuvenate relationships, and organize "get-togethers" and daily relating and parental activities, among other tasks. Anecdotal stories abound about the initiation and termination of relationships via social media, and some initial research has blossomed. For example, DeAndrea and Walther (2011) investigated projected self-portrayals of social media and the degree of inconsistency with impression formations through other interpersonal interactions. They found that participants rate inconsistencies of acquaintances as more intentionally misleading, hypocritical, and less trustworthy than inconsistencies of friend or self. Bevan, Pfyl, and Barclay (2012) examined the impact of unfriending on Facebook on emotions. They found that rumination and negative emotion were positively associated with knowing the unfriender, when they were unfriended for Facebook-related reasons, and when participants initiated the Facebook friend request. Thus, future research and practice can consider the ways that social media is used to manage interpersonal conflict and the effects of those efforts. For example, does termination through social media has more negative consequences than termination through face-to-face channels? How do social media interact with other forms of communication

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during conflict? What intercultural or interpersonal theories can have the best potentials in explaining some of these fermenting research findings in linking the role of social media with various interpersonal conflict forms and expressions?

At the organizational level, the role of social media and mobile technologies has been most closely examined in managing work–life conflict and also in practical suggestions for organizations using social conflict. Kirby et al. (Chapter 14) discuss the role of mobile technologies in contributing to or mitigating work–life conflict. The analytical literature review explains that in some situations, mobile technologies facilitate the balanced management of work–life conflict. On the other hand, researchers have also identified technologies as contributing to greater work–life conflict. Kirby et al. (Chapter 14), in this *Handbook*, recommend that social media be viewed as social constructions in particular families, organizations, and cultures to understand the impact of social media on work–life conflict. In addition, the trade literature is filled with suggestions of how to use social media at work to avoid problems (e.g., conflicts) and achieve positive outcomes (e.g., Sparta, 2012). However, research generally has not informed such practical suggestions, although it may take the practical lead in asking interesting questions. Thus, organizational conflict and social media have numerous possibilities for future research. For example, what are the social constructions of social media that result in healthy and productive work–life balance? In what situations do social media lead to productive contributions to the workplace and when do they lead to negative relationships and conflict dynamics? How can we engage in a meaningful integration of the role of social media or new media in our study of workplace conflict dynamics and in different workplace role relationship pairs?

At a community/global level, social media has been examined for its role in social movements such as the Occupy Movement and Arab Spring. Ganesh and Stohl (2010) examined the multiple ways in which activists engaged with technology in the global social justice movement in New Zealand. They found that social media technologies provide agency for activists as the technologies function to disseminate information and connect with audiences as well as perform communication tasks with ease. Furthermore, there were several concerns with technologies including relevance, access, labor, and security as well as different attitudes toward technologies (from suspicion to advocacy). In addition, Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2012) have noted that social media is so embedded in the social landscape that it is not desirable to determine whether social media have a discrete function. Rather, it is more important to understand their role in organizing and framing movement. As this area of research is in its infancy, there are a large number of questions for researchers and practitioners to consider in the future. For example, to what degree do social media enable broad/ambiguous communicative frames versus ones that are more concrete? Do social media allow the creation of thin ties (loose connection without leader organizations) in a social movement versus the need to have "thick ties" between core organizers? (Ganesh & Zoller, 2012). With the phenomenal growth of social media in the global world, how do social media create further divides between the "haves" and the "have nots"? How do social media bring people together for the common good of human global survival and adaptation? How do social media impact the development of a "third language" or "third space" to engage in accelerated conflict peace-building effort around the globe? How do new media shape the ethical stance and the development of individual moral compass of a sense of interconnected global citizenship-hood?

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Conclusion

We had two foci in this chapter. First, we believe future theorizing, researching, and practice should continue to understand the multilevel effects of antecedent factors on conflict communication and also of conflict communication on outcomes. We illustrated various possibilities for using multilevel approaches to explore parallels, discontinuities, top-down effects, bottom-up effects, and interactive effects. Second, we explored several emerging themes in this *Handbook* and extant literature that appear ripe for conflict research and practice: transformation, globalization, and social media. These themes appear to be timely, inspirational, and critical in understanding and explaining conflict communication across multiple levels and contexts. To conclude, in finalizing our editing task on this *Handbook*, we believe that the field of conflict communication across the four contexts of interpersonal, organizational, community, and intercultural/international settings is at a vibrant, blooming stage. We firmly believe that the synergistic wisdom and the knowledge in this *Handbook* can help theorists, researchers, instructors, students, and practitioners to make more mindful choices in their theorizing, teaching, researching, learning, and practicing of constructive conflict communication. On both personal and professional levels, we look forward to the full blossoming of the conflict theory–research–practice field. We hope that some of the themes we mentioned in this chapter will be of heuristic value to the next generation of conflict communication scholars, students, and practitioners.

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