The Handbook of Conflict Resolution

Theory and Practice

Second Edition

Morton Deutsch
Peter T. Coleman
Eric C. Marcus
Editors

More Praise for *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution, Second Edition*

"Morton Deutsch, Peter Coleman, and Eric Marcus put together a handbook that will be helpful to many. I hope the book will reach well beyond North America to contribute to the growing worldwide interest in the constructive resolution of conflict. This book offers instructive ways to make this commitment a reality."

—George J. Mitchell, former majority leader of the
United States Senate; former chairman of the Peace
Negotiations in Northern Ireland and the International Fact-
Finding Committee on Violence in the Middle East; chairman
of the board, Walt Disney Company; senior fellow at the
School of International and Public Affairs,
Columbia University

"This volume is an extraordinary resource, a much-needed comprehensive handbook on conflict resolution."

—Arthur E. Levine, president emeritus, Teachers College,
Columbia University; president, Woodrow Wilson
National Fellowship Foundation

"This *Handbook* should be on the reading list of every course in peace and conflict studies and especially on the lists used in teacher preparation courses in peace education, a field that seeks to cultivate understanding of constructive ways of confronting violence, alternatives to force and lethal conflict for the pursuit of social purposes."

—Betty Reardon, founding director emeritus, Peace
Education Center, Teachers College, Columbia University

"In the past, I have been saying to all of my students at Kyushu University and the participants in my mediation trainings, 'If you are serious about mediation, read *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution*.' Now seeing the updated and enlarged second edition, I would say, 'Read it, for it will help you become a thoughtful and insightful mediator.'"

—Hisako Kobayashi-Levin, associate professor,
Faculty of Law, Kyushu University

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PREFACE

The field of conflict resolution has been developing rapidly. As a consequence, we decided to update and revise the first edition of this handbook. Almost all of the chapters in the first edition have been updated; in some, the revisions have been extensive and in others, only minor changes seemed necessary. Also, we have added new chapters to cover topics that were not covered or needed more coverage than they received in the first edition.

The new chapters have an asterisk next to them in the Contents. They are important, original contributions to the field of conflict resolution by outstanding scholars and practitioners as are the updated chapters from the first edition.

In the Preface to the first edition, we characterized the purpose of the handbook, its organization, professional value, and the handbook's orientation. All of this is expressed in this modified Preface to the first edition. The modification was made so that the description of the different parts of the book, and the chapters contained in these parts, correspond to the revised, second edition rather than to the first edition.

This book is meant for those who wish to deepen their understanding of the processes involved in conflicts and their knowledge of how to manage them constructively. It provides the theoretical underpinnings that throw light on the fundamental social psychological processes involved in understanding and managing conflicts at all levels: interpersonal, intergroup, organizational, and international.

As an area of scholarship and professional practice, conflict resolution is relatively young, having emerged as a discipline after World War II. Practice and theory have been only loosely linked. This book aims to foster closer connection between the two by demonstrating the relevance of theoretical ideas to practice. Though the link between theory and practice is inherently bidirectional, this handbook primarily emphasizes the path from theory to practice.

The theoretical ideas presented in this book were for the most part not developed specifically in relation to understanding conflict, nor to facilitate professional practice in this area. They have relevance to any area in which it is important to understand the basic processes involved in social interactions of all sorts, in various contexts—at work; in politics, schools, families, clinics, courts, and bedrooms; on highways; and elsewhere. For the purposes of this book, the authors have developed their chapters to bring out the relevance of the theories being discussed to understanding conflict specifically.

When appropriate, chapters contain three sections. The first deals with the theoretical ideas in the substantive area being discussed. The second draws out the implications of these ideas for understanding conflict, and the third is concerned with the implications of these ideas for educating or training people to manage their conflicts more constructively.

The Handbook of Conflict Resolution is divided into sections somewhat arbitrarily, and inevitably there is overlap among them. The introductory chapter gives examples of real conflicts and indicates the kinds of questions one might pose to understand what is going on in the conflicts—questions that are addressed in many of these chapters. The Introduction also has a brief discussion of the orientations of the practitioners on the one hand and the researcher-theorists on the other, to permit some insight into the misunderstandings that often occur between these two groups. It also contains an abbreviated history of the study of conflict, from a social psychological perspective, and indicates the sorts of questions that have been and are being addressed.

Parts One through Four comprise the major portion of the book and present the theoretical ideas that have been developed (mainly in areas of social psychology) that are useful in understanding conflict processes as well as in helping people to learn to manage their conflicts constructively. The authors of the chapters in the first four parts discuss the practical implications of their ideas for conflict as well as the theoretical foundations underlying the implications they draw.

Even apart from their usefulness for conflict, the theoretical ideas should be of value to anyone interested in understanding the nature of basic social psychological processes involved in social interactions of any kind. The table of contents for Parts One through Four indicates to the reader the broad range of theoretical ideas and their implications for conflict that are discussed in this

section. They are grouped, arbitrarily, into interpersonal and intergroup processes, intrapsychic processes, personal difference, and creativity and change. Almost all of the chapters discuss matters that cross such arbitrary boundaries. New chapters (Chapters Seven, Ten, Twelve, Fourteen, and Nineteen) respectively deal with language, emotion, gender, and personal implicit theories as they relate to conflict.

Part Five is concerned with difficult conflicts. Two revised chapters (Twenty-Three and Twenty-Four) are concerned with aggression as violence and intractable conflict, respectively. Three new chapters have been added: Chapter Twenty-Five is focused on moral conflict, Chapter Twenty-Six is concerned with religious issues, and Chapter Twenty-Seven deals with the connections between human rights and conflicts.

Part Six contains three chapters that consider the relation between culture and conflict, each from a somewhat different perspective. Chapters Twenty-Eight and Twenty-Nine (a new chapter) examine some of the common sorts of misunderstanding that can arise when people from varying cultural backgrounds interact and what can be done to help people learn to understand one another's cultural background. Then Chapter Thirty examines an influential theoretical approach to conflict resolution, developed in the United States, to see how it is (or is not) applicable to conflict in the entirely different context of China.

Part Seven is most directly concerned with practice. The first of its chapters presents the Coleman-Raider Model for training in constructive conflict resolution, which has been extensively used by our colleagues in the International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution. Chapter Thirty-Two discusses mediation, as well as its values and limitations, from the perspective of someone who is both a highly respected mediator and an outstanding researcher in this area. Chapter Thirty-Three then discusses recently developed methods of managing conflict in large groups by someone who has coauthored the first book in this area and who is a distinguished scholar and practitioner of these methods. Two new chapters have been added to this section. Chapter Thirty-Four is concerned with managing conflict in organizations by a leading scholar/practitioner in this area, and Chapter Thirty-Five presents reflections on practice by one of the most creative practitioners in the field.

Finally, in Part Eight, we look to the future. Chapter Thirty-Six presents a framework for thinking about research on conflict resolution training. As of this writing, there has been little good and systematic research in this area. If the field is to develop and have a bright future, it needs more research. Chapter Thirty-Seven (a new chapter) presents the author's views of the future directions that basic research on conflict and its resolution might well take; the author has been the leading researcher and scholar in this area. The concluding chapter is an overview and commentary on the current state of the field; it

considers issues such as what substantive questions need to be addressed that have not received the attention they warrant—that is, the practice as well as theoretical issues.

The contributors to *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution* are an illustrious group of experts in the areas with which their chapters are concerned. We have asked them to write chapters that can be easily understood by readers who are not social scientists but that are also credible to other experts in their areas. Further, we suggested to them that they limit considerably the number of technical references in their chapter but add a short list of Recommended Readings to provide additional sources of information, if they desired to do so. Given the opaqueness of much writing in the social sciences, it is surprising how well the contributors have succeeded in writing clear, informative, interesting, useful, and authoritative chapters.

We believe *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution* is accessible and valuable to a wide variety of groups who have an interest in constructive conflict management: to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as their professors, in a number of academic fields such as psychology, education, sociology, political science, business, international relations, law, social work, and health care. It is also of value to practitioners such as conflict resolution trainers and consultants, negotiators, mediators, and those who manage or supervise others. In editing this handbook, we have learned a great deal, so we believe that even those considered "experts" can find much of value in it.

One final word about the handbook's orientation. This handbook is concerned with finding cooperative, win-win solutions to conflict, no matter how difficult. The "black arts" of conflict (such as violence, coercion, intimidation, deceit, blackmail, and seduction) are not discussed except, if at all, in the context of how to respond to or prevent the use of such tactics by oneself or others. In our view, such tactics are used too often, are commonly destructive and self-defeating, and are less productive in the long run than a constructive approach.

We wish to thank our faculty colleagues who participated in an informal seminar on conflict resolution at Teachers College; the inspiration for this book emerged from the lively discussions in the seminar. We also wish to thank Riva Kantowitz, Kathleen Vaughan, Joanne Lim, Danny Mallonga, Will Concepcion, Kathryn Crawford, Melissa Sweeney, and Naira Musallam, who typed, e-mailed, did editorial work, and provided other invaluable services necessary to produce a completed manuscript.

July 2006	Morton Deutsch
New York, New York	Peter T. Coleman
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The Handbook of Conflict Resolution

INTRODUCTION

Morton Deutsch

In this introduction, I give some examples of conflicts and indicate the kinds of questions one might pose to understand what is going on in the conflicts—questions that are addressed in many of the following chapters. It also includes a brief discussion of the orientations of both practitioners and researcher-theorists to provide some insight into the misunderstandings that often occur between these two groups. It concludes with an abbreviated history of the study of conflict from a social psychological perspective.

A CONFLICT BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

Some time ago, I had the opportunity to do therapeutic work with a professional couple involved in bitter conflicts over issues they considered nonnegotiable. The destructiveness of their way of dealing with their conflicts was reflected in their tendency to escalate a dispute about almost any specific issue (for example, a household chore, the child's bedtime) into a power struggle in which each spouse felt that his or her self-esteem or core identity was at stake. The destructive process resulted in (as well as from) justified mutual suspicion; correctly perceived mutual hostility; a win-lose orientation to their conflicts; a tendency to act so as to lead the other to respond in a way that would confirm one's worst suspicion; inability to understand and empathize with the other's needs and

vulnerabilities; and reluctance—based on stubborn pride, nursed grudges, and fear of humiliation—to initiate or respond to a positive, generous action so as to break out of the escalating vicious cycle in which they were trapped.

Many couples involved in such conflicts do not seek help; they continue to abuse one another, sometimes violently, or they break up. The couple that I worked with sought help for several reasons. On the one hand, their conflicts were becoming physically violent. This frightened them, and it also ran counter to their strongly held intellectual values regarding violence. On the other hand, there were strong constraints making it difficult for them to separate. Their child would suffer; they felt they would be considerably worse off economically; and they had mutually congenial intellectual, aesthetic, sexual, and recreational interests that would be difficult to continue engaging in together if they separated. As is often the case in such matters, it was the woman—being less ashamed to admit the need for help—who took the initiative to seek the assistance of a skilled third party.

The wife, who worked (and preferred to do so), wanted the husband to share equally in the household and child care responsibilities; she considered equality of the genders to be a core personal value. The husband wanted a "traditional marriage" with a conventional division of responsibilities in which he would be the primary income-producing worker outside the home, while his wife would principally do the work related to the household and child care. The husband considered household work and child care inconsistent with his deeply rooted image of adult masculinity. The conflict seemed nonnegotiable to the couple. For the wife, it would mean betrayal of her feminist values to accept her husband's terms; for him, it would violate his sense of male adult identity to become deeply involved in housework and child care.

Yet this nonnegotiable conflict became negotiable when, with the help of the therapist, the husband and wife were able to listen to and really understand the other's feelings and how their respective life experiences had led them to the views they each held. Understanding the other's position fully, and the feelings and experiences behind them, made each person feel less hurt and humiliated by the other's position and readier to seek solutions that would accommodate the interests of both. They realized that with their joint incomes they could afford to pay for household and child care help that would enable the wife to be considerably less burdened by such responsibilities without increasing the husband's chores in these areas (though doing so, of course, lessened the amount of money they had available for other purposes).

This solution was not perfect for either partner. Each would have preferred that the other share his or her own view of what a marriage should be like. But their deeper understanding of the other's position made them feel less humiliated and threatened by it and less defensive toward the other. It also enabled them to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement that lessened tensions,

despite the continuing differences in basic perspective. (See Deutsch, 1988, for further discussion of negotiating the nonnegotiable.)

AN INTERGROUP CONFLICT AT A SCHOOL

A conflict has developed between two groups of teachers at a high school in New York City: the Black Teachers Caucus (BTC) and the newly formed Site-Based Management (SBM) Committee. The SBM committee's eighteen members consist of the principal, the union chairperson, a representative from the parents' association, a student, and an elected teacher representative from each academic department. All of the SBM members are European American, with the exception of an African American teacher chosen from the math department.

At the last SBM meeting, the math teacher proposed that an official voting seat be designated for an African American teacher. After much heated discussion, the proposal was voted down. But the problems raised by the proposal did not go away. Much personal bitterness has ensued.

The school has experienced a recent demographic shift from a predominantly white student body to one that is now mainly composed of students of color. This has occurred for two reasons. First, there has been a large influx of students of color from the city-owned housing projects constructed in the district during the past two years. Second, as a result the number of science-oriented students coming from other parts of the city has dropped.

The present student population is approximately 40 percent African American, 30 percent Latino American, 25 percent European American, and 5 percent Asian American. The faculty is 90 percent European American and 10 percent African American. The parents' association is 100 percent European American.

The Position of the BTC

The BTC believes that the SBM committee needs its input to make the changes needed—specifically, the curriculum is Eurocentric and many school policies are out of touch with the cultural perspective of the current student population. In addition, the caucus is very concerned about an increase in bias-related incidents in the community and wants to initiate antiracism classes at all grade levels.

The members of the BTC believe that even though the majority of the management committee members are sincerely interested in bringing about positive school change and are good, dedicated teachers, they lack personal understanding of the impact of racism on the African American experience. Some even seem to still value the old melting-pot approach to race relations, a position the caucus members believe is naïve and dysfunctional when it comes to positive educational change.

The BTC believes that having its representative present as a voting member on the committee will add a needed multicultural and antiracist perspective at this critical time of change. The caucus wants to be part of this change and will not take no for an answer.

The Position of the Euro-American SBM Committee Members

There are many reasons the European Americans voted against an African American seat on the SBM committee, and they deeply resent the implication that they are racists for so doing. First of all, they believe that if any particular black teacher wants a seat, he or she should go through regular democratic procedures and get elected by the respective department. New elections will be held in May.

Second, it would not be fair to give a special seat to the black teachers without opening up other seats for the Latino, Asian, Jewish, Greek, or "you name it" teachers. SBM is about department representation, the members say, not about representation based on race or ethnicity.

Third, designating a seat for Blacks or establishing quotas of any kind based on race would give the appearance of catering to pressure from a special-interest group and be difficult to explain to the rest of the faculty and the parents' association. They believe that the best direction for the school and society as a whole is a color-blind policy that would assimilate all races and ethnic groups into the great American melting pot. The site-management members sincerely believe that they do not discriminate because of race, and they resent the implication that they are incapable of teaching children of color.

The principal of the school, who is strongly committed to both site-based management and multiculturalism, very much wants this conflict to be resolved constructively. After several months of unproductive discussions between the two groups, during which they become progressively hardened in their respective positions, the principal calls in a mediator (Ellen Raider, the lead author of Chapter Thirty-One) to help the groups resolve their conflict. By various means over a period of time, she—as well as the principal—encourages a civil problem-solving discussion of the issue. Together, the groups brainstorm and come up with twenty-seven ideas for handling the problem. Ultimately, they agree on one solution as being the best, namely, each year the principal will appoint seven faculty members to a multicultural task force that reflects the student composition. Two of the task-force members will also be members of the SBM committee, one to be elected by the task force members and one selected from the ethnic group most heavily represented in the student population.

The solution, though not perfect, is acceptable to both sides and is implemented to the satisfaction of the teachers. It goes on contributing to the reduction of intergroup tensions as well as to the effectiveness of the SBM committee.

THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

As Cairns and Darby (1998) point out, "The conflict in Northern Ireland is at its most basic a struggle between those who wish to see Northern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom and those who wish to see the reunification of the island of Ireland" (p. 754). The roots of the conflict go back centuries to the period when the English colonized the island, occupied 95 percent of the land, and introduced a community of foreigners (mainly Scottish Protestants) in Northern Ireland. They became a majority in this area, in contrast to a Catholic majority in the south of the island.

Cairns and Darby (1998) also state that "years of oppression by the colonists and rebellion by the native Irish culminated in the Treaty of 1921, which partitioned the island into two sections: the six predominantly Protestant counties of the North, which remained an integral part of the United Kingdom, and the twenty-six mainly Catholic counties of the South, which separated from the United Kingdom" (p. 755) and ultimately became known as the Republic of Ireland. Despite the partition, significant violence has occurred periodically in Northern Ireland.

The use of the terms Catholic and Protestant to label the conflicting groups is not meant to indicate that the conflict is primarily a religious one, although that is an element. A small sector of the Protestant population is virulently anti-Catholic and fears for its religious freedom if union occurs with the Irish republic, whose population is 98 percent Catholic. The Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy has heavily influenced the laws of the Republic of Ireland in such matters as divorce and birth control.

Other elements come into play. The Catholics mainly consider themselves to be Irish, while the Protestants prefer to be viewed as British. Economic inequality has been an important factor in fueling the conflict: there has been considerably more unemployment, less education, and poorer housing among the Catholics as compared with the Protestants. The two communities are largely separated psychologically even though they are not always physically separated. Each has developed separate social identities that affect how the members in each community view themselves and the people of the community. The social identities of the two groups have, until recently, been negatively related: a perceived gain for one side is usually associated with a perceived loss for the other.

Although the costs of the intergroup conflict in Northern Ireland have been relatively small compared to ethnic conflicts in areas such as Rwanda, Lebanon, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, and Kosovo, they have not been insignificant. Taking into account population size, the deaths due to violence in Northern Ireland are equivalent to 500,000 deaths in the United States. There are not only the direct costs of violence in terms of death and injury (about 3,000 killed and 30,000

injured between 1969 and 1994) but also the indirect, harder-to-measure economic and mental health costs. Some of these costs were borne by England: the economic, psychological, and political toll from seeing some of its soldiers attacked and killed in an attempt to control the violence.

Over the years, various attempts have been made to reduce the explosiveness of the conflict, including efforts by the Northern Ireland government to improve the economic situation of the Catholics, stimulation of intergroup contact under favorable circumstances, conduct of intergroup workshops for influentials in both groups, organization of women's groups that conducted various demonstrations against violence, integration of some of the Catholic and Protestant schools, recognition and honoring of the cultural traditions of both groups, and so forth. Many of these efforts were sabotaged by extremist groups on both sides. However, cumulatively they began to create the recognition that peaceful relations might be possible and that continued violence would not lead to victory for either side. Most of the ordinary people on both sides became increasingly alienated from the perpetrators of violence.

The conditions for possible successful negotiation of a solution to the conflict were beginning to develop. The heads of three interested and concerned governments—U.S. President Clinton, Prime Minister Blair of Great Britain, and Prime Minister Ahern of Ireland—played key roles in getting the leaders of the various factions involved in the conflict to the negotiating table. Appointing former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, a highly respected and influential political figure, as a mediator was an important, positive step. He was acceptable to both sides and was a well-practiced, skilled political mediator.

There have been substantial popular votes in Northern Ireland as well as in Ireland in favor of an agreement negotiated among leaders of the main Protestant and Catholic factions in Northern Ireland that was hoped would end their protracted, sometimes violent conflict. The agreement was developed with the aid of a skillful mediator and with strong pressures from the leaders of the three interested governments in constant telephone contact with the negotiators during the difficult phases of the process. In coming to an agreement, each of the conflicting parties had to modify long-held positions, reduce their aspirations, and act with greater civility toward one another as well as bring the extremists in their groups under control. This was difficult to do. The level of distrust among the conflicting groups is still very high despite the agreement. Its successful implementation over a period of time requires a high level of vigilance among those committed to its successful implementation, to prevent misunderstandings or the actions of extremists from unraveling it. The agreement itself was a creative attempt to respond to the apprehensions as well as interests of the various participants in the conflict. Its achievement was honored in 1998 by the Nobel Peace Prize, awarded to John Hume and David Trimble, the leading negotiators for the Catholics and Protestants, respectively.

Professor Ed Cairns, a social psychologist at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland, e-mailed me on November 5, 2005 with his views of what has happened since the agreement. He indicated that the agreement led to the setting up of a regional parliament known as the Northern Ireland Assembly. This made a good start and included ministers from all parties—even those initially opposed to the agreement. However, the Assembly has had a stop-start existence and has been suspended more often than it has been in action. These suspensions came about largely because of Protestant/Unionist perceptions that the IRA was refusing to decommission its weapons as required by the Good Friday Agreement. No weapons were decommissioned until 2001 and the final decommissioning was not announced until 2005. In between, however, there were allegations that the IRA had been involved in espionage, training Colombian guerrillas, and a major bank robbery.

Sinn Fein has also pointed out that Loyalist paramilitaries, which tend to be smaller organizations, have not offered to decommission and are now believed to be involved in racketeering and major crime. Further, although there have been major changes to the policing system, Sinn Fein believed that all the reforms promised in the Agreement have not yet been implemented.

The IRA's refusal to decommission cost David Trimble (the main Unionist leader at the time of the Agreement and in the Assembly) dearly. He had entered into the government with Sinn Fein—seen by most as the political wing of the IRA. However, Protestants felt that Catholic/Nationalists had most of their demands met—for example, by the release of "political" prisoners and the disbandment of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, but had given nothing in return. The result was that in the 2003 elections Trimble lost his seat and his party was virtually wiped out, being replaced by the more radical, anti-Agreement Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) led by Dr. Ian Paisley. Similarly, Sinn Fein made gains in the 2003 elections replacing the Social Domocratic and Labour Party SDLP, (founded by John Hume) as the largest Catholic/Nationalist party.

Generally, these electoral moves have been reflected in social surveys in which a majority of Protestants report that today they would be unlikely to vote again for the Agreement had they the opportunity to do so. Demographic trends also suggest a worsening of intergroup relations indicating that Northern Ireland is entering a period of "benign apartheid" with segregation now worse than it was before the "troubles" began in 1968. Observers are in agreement then that one lesson from Northern Ireland is that a peace agreement does not necessarily lead straight to a post-conflict era but instead may be followed by a post-agreement phase, which may last a considerable period of time.

Despite mostly gloomy news, the original Good Friday Agreement is still in existence, large-scale violence is unknown, and there is general agreement that no appetite exists among politicians, the people, or indeed the (former) terrorists for a return to out-and-out violence.

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT CONFLICT

Conflicts such as these three suggest many questions pertinent to conflicts of all sorts—interpersonal, intergroup, and international. These questions relate to fundamental processes that have been studied extensively by social psychologists. The chapters in this book address many of the fundamental social psychological processes involved in conflict and develop the implications of these processes for understanding conflict and for managing conflicts more effectively. Here is an outline of some of the processes affecting conflict that are addressed in one or more chapters.

- *Cooperation-competition.* Each of the conflicts I have described had a destructive phase characterized by a win-lose or competitive orientation to the conflict. What determines whether a conflict takes a destructive, win-lose course or a constructive, cooperative, problem-solving one?

- *Social justice.* All of the parties in the three conflicts had initially differing conceptions of what would be a fair resolution. What are the important sources of perceived injustice?

- *Motivation.* What needs do the parties in conflict have? Are their needs the same as their positions? What motives foster conflict, and which are fostered by conflict and tend to perpetuate it? Which facilitate constructive conflict resolution?

- *Trust.* Distrust is common whenever a conflict takes a destructive course. What processes give rise to trust, and which give rise to distrust?

- *Communication.* Faulty communication engenders misunderstanding, which may lead to conflict, and conflict often leads to breakdown of communication. What are the characteristics of effective communication in terms of the communicator and the listener? What can be done to develop such communication?

- *Language.* What role does language usage play in affecting the course of conflict? Do metaphors, images, and words relating to war and competition (for example, battle, struggle, fight, coercion, defeat, enemy, suspicion) dominate the discourse, or does the language use reflect terms related to cooperation and peace (for example, constructive controversy, problem solving, creativity, mutual enlightenment, persuasion, trust)?

- *Attribution processes.* Our emotional responses toward the actions of another are very much influenced by what intentions we attribute to the other as well as how much responsibility for the actions we attribute to that person. What are the nature and consequences of common errors in attribution?

- *Emotions.* What emotions make a constructive conflict resolution less or more likely? What gives rise to these emotions? How can one control one's destructive emotions during a conflict?

- *Persuasion.* In most negotiations and conflicts, much of each party's effort is channeled into attempting to persuade the other of the soundness of the former's position. What insights into the conditions resulting in effective persuasion have resulted from systematic research of the processes involved in persuasion?

- *Self-control.* Effective goal-directed actions, particularly those that have to be sustained over a period of time, require effective self-control. During the course of conflict, various distractions, unexpected events, and emotions (such as rage, wounded pride, despair, anxiety) may, when uncontrolled, lead one to lose sight of one's important, enduring needs and goals. Knowing how to keep oneself on course during a conflict is obviously valuable; what help does theory provide?

- *Power.* The distribution of power among parties in conflict and how power is employed strongly influence conflict processes. How do the bases of each party's power (including economic resources, weapons, information, legitimate authority, effective social organization) determine the type of influence exerted during a conflict?

- *Violence.* When conflict takes a destructive course, it sometimes leads to violence. What factors contribute to violent behavior? What sorts of intervention reduce the likelihood of violence?

- *Judgmental biases.* A host of misunderstandings, misperceptions, and potential biases interfere with the ability to resolve a conflict constructively. What gives rise to misunderstandings and biases, and how can their occurrence be reduced?

- *Personality.* How do unresolved self-conflict and individual personality characteristics affect how conflict is managed? How important is it to know the conflictual styles of various types of people (anxious, obsessive, analytical, and so on)?

- *Development.* What differences typically exist in managing conflict depending on whether it is between children, adolescents, or adults? How does psychological development (such as acquisition of language, increase in physical strength, and decreasing dependence on adults) affect response to conflict?

- *Group problem solving and creativity.* Constructive management of conflict can be viewed as a creative, cooperative problem-solving process in which the conflict is defined as the mutual problem to be solved. What leads to effective group problem solving, and what enables individuals to be creative in their approach to nonroutine problems?

- *Intergroup conflict.* Conflict between groups that differ in ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and the like appear to have become prevalent and salient in recent years. How do the processes involved in intergroup conflicts differ from those in interpersonal conflicts?

- *Moral conflict.* Conflict over basic values (for example, "pro-choice" versus "pro-life"), which are often experienced as moral conflict, are often difficult to resolve. Why are they so difficult to resolve and wha approaches have been developed to manage such conflicts constructively?

- *Religious conflict.* Despite the fact that the major religions of the world share many values throughout the ages, religious differences have given rise to many destructive conflicts. Why? It is also evident that religious leaders have often been instrumental in preventing deadly conflict. How can leaders of the different religions be encouraged and helped to foster more cooperative relations among the different religions and more constructive conflict resolution within their own communities?

- *Family and gender conflict.* Some of the most destructive interpersonal conflicts occur within families between genders (husband and wife) and between parents and children. What are the conflicts about, why are they so emotionally intense, and how can the participants learn to manage their conflicts constructively?

- *Organizational conflicts.* Most of us spend a considerable portion of our lives in organizations: as students in schools, as workers in economic organizations, as citizens in community organizations, and so on. We experience interpersonal conflicts with peers, subordinates, or superordinates; intergroup conflicts with other groups within our organizations, and interorganizational conflicts with other organizations. How are such conflicts managed constructively?

- *Culture.* How does the culture in which an individual or group is embedded affect how conflicts develop and are managed? What problems are faced by negotiators from diverse cultural backgrounds?

- *Intractable conflicts.* Difficult, long-standing, intractable conflicts occur at all levels—interpersonal, intergroup, and international. When are such conflicts "ripe" for intervention? What methods of intervention are likely to be productive? How can reconciliation and forgiveness be encouraged between historically bitter enemies?

- *Mediation.* Third-party intervention, such as mediation, can sometimes help people resolve their conflicts when they are unable to do so by themselves. When is mediation likely to be effective? What are the processes involved in mediation?

- *Managing conflict in large groups.* When the conflict occurs among factions within a large group, are there ways of bringing the total group, or its relevant components, together so that the group as a whole can contribute to resolving the conflict?

- *Constructive controversy.* Conflict can take the form of lively, constructive controversy, which stimulates creativity and richer thought processes; yet differences in belief and opinion often produce quarrels that lead to hardening of positions and breakdown of relations. What leads to lively controversy rather than deadly quarrel?

- *Culture and conflict.* Is conflict theory, largely developed in Western culture, applicable elsewhere? Can it be usefully applied in China, for example? What modifications, if any, are necessary?

- *Teaching the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of constructive conflict.* What are the methods employed by some of the most experienced educators (practitioners and trainers to help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of constructive conflict resolution?

- *Research.* The field of conflict resolution is relatively young. There is still much basic research needed to acquire fundamental knowledge about all of the issues mentioned in the preceding paragraphs. What are the most important and urgent questions to investigate? Also, there are many practitioners doing training and intervening in relation to many different kinds of conflicts. There is much need for research that helps us to know what kinds of intervention or training, with what kinds of clients, in what sorts of circumstances, produce what types of effects.

These and other questions relevant to all sorts of conflict are addressed in one or more of the chapters of this handbook—sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly by articulating the fundamental social psychological processes that occur in all sorts of conflict.

SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ORIENTATION OF THEORISTS AND PRACTITIONERS

Inevitable differences in the theory and practice orientations can lead to misunderstanding and alienation if these inherent differences are not understood. In many disciplines of the natural as well as social sciences, the "scientist" and the "practitioner" tend to stereotype each other: the scientist viewing the practitioner as "unscientific" and the practitioner considering the scientist to be

"impractical." In the hope of fostering mutual respect and understanding of each other's orientation, we contrast several aspects of each orientation.

The Analytical Versus the Synthetic Approach

The practitioner must synthesize the knowledge from many theories and research studies; she must make a collage or mosaic of many theoretical ideas of the kind presented in this book rather than relying on any single one. In contrast, the theorist-researcher generates knowledge by analysis and isolation of the object of inquiry; the focus is often narrowly defined. Breadth of theoretical knowledge is more important for the practitioner than precision, consistency, or elegance, although the opposite is true for the theoretically oriented researcher. Moreover, because there are no well-established procedures for combining theories to fit them to a given practical problem, practitioners must often work intuitively without being able to specify precisely how they are weaving together the theoretical ideas employed. In contrast, the pressure on theorist-researchers is to be explicit and specific about their ideas and procedures.

The Skeptical Versus the Pragmatic

The practitioner is rewarded if what he does "works" even if his practice is not grounded in well-established knowledge. Moreover, he is usually more persuasive and effective if he has a positive, confident attitude about what he is doing and recommending. The scientist, on the other hand, knows very well that the path of progress in science is littered with discarded theories, and honor goes to those who help to determine the well-established ones. Thus, it is no wonder that the professional stance of the theorist-researcher is hesitant, self-critical, and skeptical toward the theory and research that social technologists often use with a confident attitude.

Enduring Versus Useful Truths

The theorist has the (rarely achieved) aim of developing knowledge that is universally true; enduringly valid for different times and places, and relevant for understanding cave people as well as astronauts, aborigines in Kakadu as well as Park Avenue sophisticates. Such theoretical knowledge is usually general and abstract, and developing its implications for specific situations requires considerable additional thought and effort. The scientist is especially interested in developing the surprising and thus interesting implications of a theory because its validity and generality seem enhanced by the ability to predict the unexpected.

In contrast, the practitioner is necessarily concerned with the mundane and practical, namely, with those aspects of a specific situation that can be altered with minimum cost to produce the desired consequence. Her interest is more focused on the here and now, on the concrete aspects of the situation in which she has to work, rather than on the general and abstract. Of course, the practitioner