

can be of invaluable significance to psychologists and specialists of cultural studies in the pursuit of their research.

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Sandole, Dennis J.D., and Ingrid Sandole-Staroste, eds. *Conflict Management and Problem Solving: Interpersonal to International Applications*. London: Frances Pinter, 1987.

Patchen, Martin. *Resolving Disputes Between Nations: Coercion or Conciliation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988.

Conflict. The word conjures up images of pain, fear, and destruction. And conflict is a familiar part of our lives. So how do we live with something so common that also seems so devastating? Part of the answer is realizing that conflict *per se* is not inherently destructive. It is the managing of conflict that will influence whether or not the process and outcome are constructive or destructive. These two books reflect the belief that conflict can be managed in such a way that peoples' needs are met.

*Conflict Management and Problem Solving* is a collection of lectures (and responses) that were delivered at George Mason University under the sponsorship of the Center for Conflict Resolution. The list of authors reads like a "Who's Who" in conflict management and resolution (Ralph White, John Burton, Morton Deutsch, Thomas Colosi, Conrad Hassel and Dean Pruitt to name just a few). Their experiences extend from interpersonal to international, and are offered from the perspectives of practitioners, theorists and researchers and across disciplines. The chapters range from discussions of models and theories of conflict management, to specific examples of research and practice in such areas as prisons, community relations, environmental disputes, terrorism, labor relations and nuclear war. In this sense, the collection offers the reader a picture of the "state of the art" in the theory, research and practice of conflict resolution, and highlights the range of tools needed and available for conflict analysis. Emphasis is given to the exploration and development of innovative cooperative alternatives to the more traditional competitive ways of dealing with conflict and, thus, expands the range of possible solutions beyond the win-lose dimension. Like other volumes that cover a broad range of areas, each section of this book is by necessity an overview and leaves out specific detail. The reader is left wanting to know more. Thus, this collection's strength lies in its ability to provoke interest and discussion in an area that deserves continued and expanded work from all perspectives.

While the Sandole and Sandole-Staroste volume draws on experiences from across levels of conflict in the development of a generic theory of conflict management, Martin Patchen's book provides an opportunity to focus on the dynamics and resolution of international disputes. Patchen attempts to apply research and theory on conflict resolution as general social processes in an effort to facilitate an understanding of the more specific processes of dispute development between nations. He focuses his attention on the interaction between nations' leaders and develops a conceptual framework for analyzing this interaction and its impact on dispute development and resolution. The analytical framework, which is designed to help make sense of the "blooming, buzzing confusion" of leader interaction, is initially confusing and overwhelming to the reader. However, in subsequent chapters, Patchen explores each concept in more detail and illustrates generously from disputes which are familiar to us all, e.g., Vietnam, the World Wars, U.S.-Soviet relations. While at times the material in some chapters appears redundant with discussion from earlier ones, in some ways this helps to emphasize the importance of subjective versus objective reality in terms of leaders' perceptions and expectations of alternative actions, the other's probable response and possible outcomes. The chapter on decision-making is particularly well-written in terms of the integration of psychological research on decision-making under risk with work on actual disputes. It provides the reader with insights into the various factors involved in the weighing of gains and losses, i.e., that losses tend to be valued more than gains. Unlike other works in the area of inter-nation disputes which tend to focus on coercive strategies, Patchen's gives equal space to discussion of more cooperative and conciliatory actions. While an appreciation of the numerous factors involved in inter-nation relations can be discouraging, Patchen uses this understanding to help identify what can be done to encourage or discourage certain ways of interacting with the focus on maintaining a firm but flexible stance.

While these two books can be mentally and intellectually challenging, even overwhelming at times, they have a message that rings through loud and clear. Conflict can be managed and in ways that are constructive.

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