ARTICLES

A Conversation Between Conflict Resolution and Social Movement Scholars

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There are scholars of conflict resolution and scholars of social movements, and rarely do the twain meet. Continuing an in-person dialogue, three scholars whose work touches both fields consider the lessons each has to contribute to the other. The paper explores power dynamics, activism solidarity, negotiation strategies, and more.

There are scholars of conflict resolution and scholars of social movements, and rarely do the twain meet. In this bifurcation, we are not unusual. Victims to academic apartheid, the specialties tend to their own kitchen, meeting politely, perhaps, in a corridor here or there but rarely engaging in more than superficial cross-dialogue.

And why should we? Do these two lenses on the world have anything to show each other? What they have in common is that they examine a mode of action intended to make the world a better place—"better," of course, as beheld in the eye of the analyst. But each has territory to defend, regarding itself as the center of the universe, the primary remedy to social ills. In practice, conflict resolvers preach respect and kindness; social movement activists pride themselves on courageous confrontation. Thus, at least at first glance, a disconnect between these two approaches to world improvement seems inevitable, their strategies noncontiguous and irreconcilable. Not surprisingly, these differences track muddy footprints into scholarly kitchens.

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Academics are generally genteel, and so the starkness of this characterization may be disputed (politely, of course). Each of the three authors of this paper works in one of the two fields while having a strong interest in the other. Louis Kriesberg is a sociologist with roots in movements for social justice who theorizes conflict dynamics and their constructive resolution. John Burdick is an anthropologist who studies grassroots movements and has for many years been associated with an academic conflict resolution program. Beth Roy is a sociologist who studies conflicts involving issues of identity (race and religion) and mediates conflicts within and among activist organizations. We started a dialogue in person, in a public forum at Syracuse University, and determined to continue it in text, looking at what the two fields of action and inquiry that concern us have to say to one another. Our purpose is twofold: on the one hand to steel the spine of conflict resolution scholars to engage issues of asymmetry and domination, and on the other to open the minds of social movement analysts to the potential for discovering conflict resolution as a powerful tool for social change. Meanwhile but not incidentally, we forthrightly join long-standing claims to the value of multidisciplinary scholarship, bolstered by urgent needs for social justice activism in the domains of both world and academy.

The Two Fields

The fields are not parallel, offering little overlap among participants and scholars. We start, therefore, by taking a look at three contexts in which to ground our dialogue: the history of each field; their orientation toward construction of knowledge, particularly the relationship between theory and practice; and the relationship between scholarship and subjects of attention.

History

The field of conflict resolution (CR) has evolved considerably since it began to emerge in the late 1950s and expanded greatly in the 1980s (Kriesberg, 2008). Its early emergence was based on research and theorizing about how conflicts were waged and alternatives that are relatively peaceful and constructive. Lessons from practice were drawn from labor relations and international diplomacy. The great surge in conflict resolution practice began in the late 1970s. It took the form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR), in which mediators helped solve local disputes; this alternative to judicial proceedings was in keeping with the societal changes

brought about by the social movements of the 1950s through 1970s. Training and experience in negotiating and mediating began to be institutionalized and diffused in society. Then the field expanded by giving attention to transforming conflicts and getting adversaries to the table, to achieving equitable and enduring agreements, and to building systems of conflict management. The practice of peacebuilding following terrible violence became particularly important after the Cold War ended. The conflict resolution field is now highly diverse in the kind of work done in an array of conflicts. In our discussion here, we give particular attention to conflict resolution scholarship that is still focused narrowly on the practices related to negotiation and mediation, but we do not ignore the much broader aspects of the field.

The field of social movements (SM) has also evolved greatly. Research and theorizing in the 1930s and 1940s drew on earlier work pertaining to crowds and riots. Social movements were a form of collective behavior marked by emotions and irrationality. Such behavior was often viewed as disruptive and destructive. The field changed greatly in the 1950s and 1960s as social movements came to be seen as the great drivers of needed social change. In the United States this was first manifested in the civil rights struggle and, in the colonial world, in struggles for national liberation. Many other movements arose in the United States and around the world, among them the student, antiwar, and women's movements. The nobility of the cause and heavy, repressive responses have sometimes been used to justify resorting to violence as a necessary method of struggle (Fanon, 1961). In recent decades, however, the effectiveness of nonviolent action has been analyzed and demonstrated and more frequently used (Sharp, 2005).

Theory, Practice, and Knowledge

Conflict resolution researchers often combine practice of some sort with scholarship, whether in the form of intervention work outside their academic institution or training new practitioners within their program. Social movement scholars, however strong their sympathies for particular movements, and whatever activism individual scholars may take on, more often approach their subject as analysts, the relations between theory/research and practice/experience being more tenuous. Where it exists, training for activism is usually done outside academic institutions, conducted by nongovernmental organizations associated with specific camps of partisans.

These differing orientations toward action are reflected in approaches to the construction of knowledge. SM activists generally do not read academic

analyses of social movements (Bevington and Dixon, 2005). Self-defined CR practitioners may read some of the literature in that field, but many people engaged in conflict resolution privilege experiential knowledge, gained on the ground or through practical training, some materials for which may draw on academic research and theory (Polkinghorn et al., 2008).

A key contrast between the scholarly fields of CR and Social Movements is that the latter has a more varied, complex relation to practice.One may detect three main traditions. First, many analysts of social movements from the fields of history, sociology, political science, and anthropology address primarily academic audiences and are not interested in trying to generate practical recommendations for activists. Although these writers do not publish with activist audiences in mind, and most activists do not read their works, they say many things that could be useful to activists. (For example, the three main categories of analysis in the classic political process model—political opportunity, social resources, and frames—map key elements of effective strategy.)

Second, an important group of authors on community, labor, and social justice organizing write with organizers as an intended audience, by focusing on improving practical techniques for undertaking effective power analyses and pressure tactics (for example, Alinsky (1971), Sharp (1973), Juravich and Bronfenbrenner (2007), Ganz (2000); see Reitzes and Reitzes, 1987).

Third, writers on participatory action, action-oriented, and activist research explicitly embrace the goal of offering activists methods for understanding their contexts and constituencies that allow them to tap more effectively into popular power for social change (Freire, 2000; Greenwood and Levin, 2006; Hale, 2006; Speed, 2006).

Scholar and Subjects of Attention

Scholarly orientation toward the subjects of study also differs. In the CR field, scholars strive to devote equal analytical attention to all parties to a conflict, while those in the SM field tend to pay special attention to the actors who are dedicated to escalating the conflict. The social movement organizations chosen for study often reflect the values of the researchers, most generally leaning in the direction of peace and justice.

Conflict resolution practitioners often conceptualize their role as neutral, impartially attentive to the concerns and interests of all participants.

Social movement activists, of course, pursue a cause, advocating strenuously for a position and a particular outcome. Although conflict resolution scholars and practitioners may harbor hope that their work will contribute to building a more just society, they see that end achieved by introducing just processes rather than fighting for specific constituencies. (To be sure, many social movement activists believe that doing good for their constituents also does good for the society as a whole.) People in conflict resolution seek to accord moral and political legitimacy to all sides in a dispute, striving to reach a mutually acceptable accommodation through respectful processes, while in the heat of battle some social movement activists may question the moral or political legitimacy of their adversaries.

Nonetheless, members of the two fields of scholarship and endeavor have some fundamental commonalities. Members of both fields construct their activities as being for the social good and regard them as based in social relationships. Whether acknowledged or not, conflict resolution is never only about settlement of conflict; nor are social movements only about articulation of conflict. In both cases, power relations are the key to the feelings and functionalities of the processes.

What SM Scholars Can Learn from CR Scholars and Practitioners

We wish to begin by considering what workers in the field of social movements can learn from the field of conflict resolution from two perspectives: first, how dynamics within social movement organizations might be strengthened by conflict resolution ideas and practices; and second, how strategies of social movements for negotiating demands might be made more effective by conflict resolution skills. The first looks at internal dynamics of social movement organizations, the second at their external transactions with adversaries. Both speak directly to the actions of participants; we suggest they deserve more scholarly attention because both are phenomena affecting the course of social movement organizations in their struggles.

Organizational Dynamics

Social movement organizations are composed of people who wish to bring about social change but often aren't sure how to change the way they interact with their own colleagues, and who may not even recognize the importance

of increasing that awareness. Under the pressure of urgent dedication, and in a culture slim on training in effective social interaction, activists frequently weaken their own organization and hamper pursuit of their own goals by perpetuating organizational and social hierarchies.

These problems show up vividly in the case of human diversity dynamics. How common it is for well-intentioned, predominantly white organizations, for instance, to bemoan the lack of social diversity in their ranks, without understanding the relationship between their homogeneity and their innocence of conflict dynamics. Alliances and coalitions are similarly stillborn when people in dominant cultural groups find themselves stymied by dynamics of dominance unrecognized by them but all too familiar to those of subordinated social identities (Rose, 2000). People who belong to socially dominant groups often assume that their way of doing things is normal and right. People from marginalized social locations are often more "bicultural." Accustomed to the necessity of accommodating their preferred styles of working to more mainstream versions, they frequently grow weary of the extra work, and resentful of the invisibility of their ways and means. Unaddressed, these problems can lead to angry outbursts or other conduct that remains mysterious to socially dominant actors (Roy, 2002; Williams, 1991).

Consider a comparison with organizations whose members are predominantly people of color. They are more likely to have chosen an identity-based constituency, for the sake of intensifying power to negotiate change (West, 1993; Tatum, 2003). Or, if unwillingly too homogeneous, they may have a good deal more insight into the reasons why (Trujillo and others, 2008). Ceding leadership to people whose interactional assumptions and styles differ from one's own is a familiar experience for most people of color, but an uncomfortably new one for members of a dominant social group. This kind of discomfort has been known to undercut dedication to a cause, such that "mainstream" participants drift away or never join, thereby perpetuating homogeneity. Awareness of these dynamics is likely to be well developed among those who experience versions of them daily, while they remain obscure to those whose everyday experience is one of social privilege (Trujillo and others, 2008).

Examples of this dynamic occur in struggles of process versus product. Women, people of color, and working-class people frequently have more highly attuned antennae for relationship themes and a stronger desire to address them, while people enjoying more of the benefits of social dominance often assume the right to drive the agenda. Absent a means to

articulate these differences, analyze them for the power dynamics of hierarchy and coercion they embody, and create new processes for getting the work done that are equally agreeable to all, things fall apart. In groups working on issues of social justice, participants are often unwilling to acknowledge that they have their own problems of inequality; cognitive dissonance is simply too great (Snyder, 2003). Accusations of sexism or racism raise spleen and cause splits. By contrast, when the needs of frequently marginalized people are discounted once again—especially in a place where social justice is supposed to be the objective—the hurt is too great to be tolerated. In a truly just organization, where white approaches to the work clash with those more comfortable to people of color, for instance, it helps in building just relationships if compromises are shared a bit unequally, with a little more accommodation on the part of the white side (Chené, in Trujillo and others, 2008).

One more familiar dynamic of conflict in progressive organizations: the culprit in this case is dedication. Feeling in a minority, fighting against great wrongs, and believing that the cause can only be won by long, sustained, often frustrating effort, generates burnout. Burnout very often takes the guise of internal condemnation (if I feel overwhelmed with work, and I perceive you as doing less, or doing things differently, it's a small step to judgment and a breach in the relationship; Steiner, 1974; Aldarondo, 2007).

In all these cases—and many more—conflict resolution ideas well delivered can deal with dynamics of culture and power, building stronger cadres for making needed social changes. This may include facilitated discussion of an organization's troublesome issues in general and systems of mediation for particular disputes.

Similar dynamics operate among different people working on the same side of a barricade (Woerhle, 1992). Fragmentation of movements has historically led to weakening change potential. An ability to work through differences of approach and doctrine, in a manner that makes for stronger programs and greater effectiveness, is sorely needed in progressive domains. Conflict resolution procedures can aid in constructing a mind-set and means for working through differences, not to homogenize them but to achieve clearer, more powerful movement agendas and strategies. New creative options may be discovered through such procedures.

Beyond Confrontation to Negotiation

The CR field has ideas and practices that are applicable to transforming entrenched conflict, negotiating mutually acceptable agreement, and building

constructive relationships after a destructive encounter. Activists and social movement scholars alike develop skills and are trained, as it were, in the first two-thirds of the constructive conflict process: development of strategy and escalation and articulation of conflict. They are less skilled and analytically attuned to the steps of deescalation, negotiation, and crafting sustainable agreement. Any assumption that these things will take care of themselves once pressure has been exerted can lead to ineffectiveness and disappointment. Large-scale struggles consist of numerous campaigns that wax and wane, and each campaign may include many confrontations that are settled often by explicit agreement. Reaching agreements that endure and that can be built on in the future requires not only good strategy and tactics but also good conflict resolution skills. Social movements and SM analysis would be strengthened, we suggest, by increased attention to how to "get to yes," how to translate pressure into durable agreement. Look at course syllabi on social movements and you will see that the "negotiating agreements" section is usually missing. Teachers need to assign not just Saul Alinsky (1971) and Gene Sharp (2005) but Fisher, Ury, and Patton (1991); Lederach (1997); and Galtung, Jacobsen, and Brand-Jacobsen (2002). A good deal can be learned from integrating this step into social movement analyses, about how different kinds of pressure might favor different types of outcome. For example, note an absence in Peter Ackerman and Chris Kreugler's theory of nonviolent strategic action (Ackerman and Kruegler, 1994). They offer a brilliant list of twelve strategies, but only in the final one is there mention that the opponent might convert, accommodate, be coerced, or disintegrate. The idea of accommodation is presented—from Sharp—but there is no discussion of what to do to move accommodation along, what steps to take. Once one has exerted the pressure necessary to get an interlocutor ready to accommodate, one must know how to turn that readiness into actual accommodation in a new relationship.

If the presumed weaker side will not enter negotiations until it is in a stronger position, it may find that its position continues to weaken. There are many instances when a challenging party refuses to settle for much less of what it seeks and then discovers that it has lost much more than it might have achieved by a negotiated accommodation. For example, this seems to have been the case of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, as represented by the leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (Orjuela, 2009).

A common failing among partisans who seem to be doing well in a struggle is to overreach, adopting more extreme methods as they expand

their goals. As a consequence they may strengthen the resolve of the adversary, alienate their allies, and diminish internal support for continuing the fight. Settling earlier for more limited achievements would be more beneficial. A conflict resolution approach would help avoid overreaching by increasing awareness of the responses of adversaries and constituents. Such awareness can be enhanced by maintaining or undertaking communication with members on the adversary's side and exchanging information about goals being sought and underlying interests. In addition, avoiding destructive consequences resulting from overreaching, as from frustrating rejection, can often be accomplished by recourse to outsider mediation. The mediation can take many forms, from quiet go-between message transmission to active mutual probing of options or highly engaged deal making. Of course, every situation is unique. When an accommodative move or a heightened confrontational move will be more constructive and effective needs to be decided case by case. It depends on the nature of the adversaries' relations, their values, and likely future capabilities. We are stressing the value of reflective analysis and consideration of a variety of alternative strategies. We also wish to stress the value of developing a large set of tools so that an appropriate one can be selected readily.

Additional general policies can be noted that help partisans avoid destructive overreaching. For example, in contexts where violence is already being used, avoidance of indiscriminate, dehumanizing attacks reduces the likelihood of a spiral of violence. Furthermore, if members of one side proclaim and act so as to reassure the antagonists that their essential needs are not threatened, then the possibility of a constructive conflict settlement is enhanced (Dayton and Kriesberg 2009).

What CR Scholars Can Learn from SM Scholars and Activists

The field of conflict resolution is itself a sort of social movement (Adler, 1987). Certainly, many of the people drawn to conflict resolution work are seeking the optimism of small-group effectiveness, having experienced or anticipated the difficulty of making change on a systemic plane (Kriesberg, 2007a). Like most actors seeking to make a difference, CR practitioners may, however, see their tool as more universally useful than it is. If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

In the discussion that follows, we look at what social movement theory can teach conflict resolution people, in three arenas: the analysis of power; the politics of voice; and the issue of violence.

The Analysis of Power

Analysis of social movements can help conflict resolvers make better judgment of where their interventions may be most effective. Many SM effects (though not all) unfold as historical forces that change social and cultural relations and values, without a straightforward "negotiation" phase. In many social movements, in fact, change occurs through an exchange of pressure and response, taking place not in face-to-face negotiations but at a distance.

A helpful example is the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The impact of the boycott did not unfold within a neat process of negotiation or agreement to which the boycotters were a party. In fact, the effort to negotiate with the mayor of Montgomery broke down in the first weeks of the boycott. The effective action of the boycott unfolded not inside the walls of a negotiating room but through the wider shift in standard operating procedures, norms, social rules, roles, and expectations. Here is a brief list of changes brought about by the boycott that went "unnegotiated," yet would shape any future negotiation: growth in the number of businesses in downtown Montgomery that called for an end to segregation laws; growth in new consciousness and identity on the part of the boycotters, who were discovering themselves as human beings no longer willing to sit in the back of the bus; the discovery that blacks were not the subordinate people whites thought they were; the decision by some whites to begin supporting and voting for leaders who would change the laws; and emergence of the pressure felt by the Supreme Court to make the bus laws of the South unconstitutional. It is partly because of the proliferation of these effects that deliberate, guided processes of deescalation may sometimes seem to social movement activists and scholars to have overstated centrality. What all of these processes accomplished was to build the movement's power.

There is a good deal of discussion within the conflict resolution field about asymmetry and "negotiating across an uneven table" (Kriesberg, 2009; Mitchell, 1995; Rouhana and Kelman, 1994); the point for many activists is how to go about creating a genuinely even table in the first place. The main premise of social activism is that some actors enjoy greater social power and privilege than others, and that a table appearing to be even is in reality quite uneven. In this view, when actors of differing social power arrive at a negotiating table, the table is uneven. Actors with less social power cannot negotiate evenness into the table; to even things out they must do something to correct for their lesser social power. The reality or prospect of the less socially powerful actor exerting pressure through mobilization is, in the view of social

movement theory, an essential precondition for realistic, respectful negotiations. "Respect" is not an attitude, in this view; it is recognition of a certain real distribution of power. Negotiations can simply ratify an existing situation or modify it depending on how they are structured. They can be affected by the qualities, resources, and skills a mediator brings to the table. They also can be affected by the presence or absence of various interested parties. The mediator and the presence of groups associated with the weaker party can enhance its bargaining position and thereby increase the symmetry of the negotiations. Power relations are complex, determined by structural, cultural, and political factors in dynamic interaction (Roy in Trujillo and others, 2008). But ultimately, how much power can be equalized "at the table" is limited by who "comes in the door."

Asymmetry in relations between adversaries occurs in varying ways and degrees, forming obstacles to equitable and enduring mutually acceptable conflict settlement (Kriesberg, 2009; Mitchell, 1995). Social movement analyses teach us that what CR scholars call *asymmetry* is actually the heart of the conflict. If our aim is to advance justice as well as peace, we must seek to bring about fundamental change. Toward that end, people working within a social movement frame think in terms of gaining power, while practitioners of conflict resolution cannot work unless there exists reasonable trust among participants. Goals of gaining power and of establishing trust may be at odds with one another at a particular time.

We therefore don't assume that trust is always desirable. One party can be too trusting and end up misled, exploited, and disadvantaged by an opposing side. Recognizing such developments can be a necessary step in achieving well-grounded mutual trust. Such trust may be the result of extended experience in dependable equitable exchanges (Axelrod, 1984). It may result from negotiating agreements or establishing institutions that set rules for conduct in particular domains, and procedures to monitor and enforce compliance. The point is that trust is viewed not as a matter of sentimental niceness or as inherent in good actors but as situational and dependent on conditions that are socially constructed (Hoffman, 2006).

Because conflict resolution is both focused on the pragmatics of settlement and works in the intimacy of face-to-face dialogue, it tends to lack a deeply integrated analysis of power on the institutional and systemic levels. Conflict resolution may help social movement analysts and activists address interpersonal conflict based in social identity dynamics; social movement analysis may help make conflict resolvers aware of those external power dynamics that tend to be unrecognized inside the room where

processes take place. At best, there is some recognition of how social identity inequities influence conflict processes and outcomes, mostly dealing with gender (Rifkin and Cobb, 1991; Nader, 2002; Gwartney-Gibbs, 1994), but few analysts go beyond superficialities when issues of race and class are in play, and even fewer offering effective means to integrate such analyses into practice. In a telling example of what James Scott calls "hidden transcripts"—those stories that members of oppressed social identity groups tell each other but not members of the dominant center—"minority" mediators relish opportunities to share shop talk about what they really do when the door closes and the work commences with others of their identity (Scott, 1990; Coronel in Trujillo and others, 2008). Within the conflict resolution field (as elsewhere, among police officers of color, for instance), verbal critiques abound of the superficiality of training in multiculturalism, with claims made that what is taught may compound stereotypes but not get at fundamental cultural differences at the level of worldviews (Myers in Trujillo and others, 2008).

These issues of culture become urgent in the context of the growing interest in conflict transformation in the CR field, which compels attention to large-scale structures, norms, and societal processes. Such factors affect the context of specific conflicts and the relations among adversaries. Knowledge about the workings of social movements contributes to understanding changes in social structures, norms, and world views. This is evident in global changes in the status of women, the salience of human rights norms, the legitimacy of popular participation in governance, and valuation of cultural diversity.

Beyond social identity and structural imbalances, power works through dynamics of culture, self-concepts, language, organizational roles, and so on. Both fields, conflict resolution and social movements, could benefit from more sophisticated understanding of how those various domains work in dynamic processes to construct moments of conflict and change. In particular, conflict resolvers might become familiar with the literature on how interpretations of actors, power, and justice are shaped by cultural schemata that are themselves power-laden and the outcome of prior struggles (Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992; Polletta, 2006).

The Politics of Voice

The prime tool of the conflict resolution trade is most commonly talk. Those who most often end up sitting at the table, therefore, are people who know how to talk, in the terms and languages that prevail for interveners

and for the field (Trujillo and others, 2008). Key leaders who are unschooled in such talk—fighters, charismatic orators, tough politicians—may end up excluded from, or disadvantaged in, a process that comes to command attention and power without adequately representing all voices. In the end, the bias is likely to privilege recognized elites, because forms of speech map and define social power (Moore, 1996).

This dynamic is very evident on a microterrain—in family mediation, for instance, where young children are rarely included. Adults speak for kids, who might well be able to contribute crucial perspectives and articulate their own interests in verbal language. Indeed, if adults know how to listen, verbal communication with participants as young as four can prove invaluable. Moreover, family interventions are rarely available to poorer people until agencies of the state become involved. They occur in the context of child-protection actions, disputes with school districts over special education, and other "services" that often show up in people's lives as coercive. Rather than benefiting family members, too often they add layers of disadvantage to hardships already taking place. Giving voice to those traditionally marginalized is the essential process of a social movement; to see the contribution of conflict resolution as comparable holds us responsible for finding forms and languages that effectively provide opportunities for those least heard to become central to collaborative decision making (Trujillo and others, 2008).

On the community level, voices from the grass roots may be missed when the language of "the table" is legal and professional. Western Network, an agency working in the Southwest some years back, was hired to facilitate dialogue among federal Forest Service officials and residents in local communities who had been banned from pursuing traditional practices in the forest (collecting pinion nuts, for instance, or fishing in especially fecund streams). Previous attempts at policy negotiations had failed when villagers fell away from the process in the face of research papers and legal terminology. This time, the Western Network facilitators began the "talks" by inviting officials and villagers to map the forest. In the language of utility and forest knowledge, the villagers excelled. The officials learned things about their domain they hadn't known they didn't know. The process concluded with changes to policy satisfying to everyone involved.

On a macro level, as conflict resolution shades into peacemaking in national domains, facilitators tend to rely on the people with whom they have the best opportunity to interact: academics, community leaders in recognizable organizational positions, and so on. John Paul Lederach promotes

an elicitive approach to the work, meaning that the process itself needs to arise from the experience and wishes of the participants (Lederach, 1995). Nonetheless, the participants he identifies are who we might call the "polite" grass roots. He speaks of middle-level leadership, with no particular screening for how representative those people are of the interests of others not present for dialogue.

In Sri Lanka, for instance, a European peace group initiated a series of CR workshops in the midst of a brutal civil war. Participants promptly split, between those who wanted training for leadership in the discord broiling all around them with no prejudgment of what that meant, and those who agreed with the peace group's emphasis on nonviolence.

There is a need to move down the hierarchy to the grass roots, counteracting any presumption that those who inhabit it lack the resources to participate. As social science analyses of indigenous peoples help us understand, they often have the most relevant resources—their own leaders, collective memory, processes of dispute resolution—as well as the greatest stake in outcomes (Atashi, 2009; Pouligny, Chesterman, and Schnabel, 2007). Some workers in the conflict resolution field as well as in the social movement field are sensitive to this reality. More generally, since the 1990s a number of SM analysts have sought a more genuinely collaborative relationship with popular grassroots theory production, through which new theory is produced that is directly pertinent to the priorities of nonstate grassroots social change actors (Casas-Cortés, Osterweil, and Powell, 2008; Conway, 2006; Tang, 2008).

A fundamental problem in CR work among large-scale entities is the tension that leaders experience in their relations between their constituencies and their negotiating opposite numbers (Docherty, 2005). Internal rivals and mobilized constituents can greatly affect the readiness of leaders to escalate or deescalate a conflict and accept or reject possible settlements (Colaresi, 2005; Kriesberg, 2007b). Indeed, conflict resolvers would do well to become more aware that negotiation is an activity of leadership cadres that have specific social qualities and relations to constituencies (Bob, 2005; Gramsci, 1971; Ganz, 2000). This knowledge would help conflict resolvers become more aware of their own social status and of the possible structural limits on their own action. Equally important is the need for conflict resolvers to become more aware of the specific class character of their identity, profession, agenda, and trajectory, permitting them to see both the limits of their action (will they do anything that might risk their professional role?) as well as its hidden potentiality.

The Issue of Violence

In the modern world, it is a simple and noncontroversial fact that the vast majority of violence is wielded by state actors. Despite exceptions that command the headlines, the majority of nonstate actors struggling for social change actually use nonviolent tactics. Still, violence is sometimes potentially or actually present in the tactics of nonstate actors. Unfortunately, in conflict resolution work violence is often not dealt with in a very sophisticated way. People working on intervention in domestic violence, for instance, eschew narrow conflict resolution. Here is a place where the framework within which power is understood works against effective action. Seeing that disputes between domestic partners cannot be resolved through talk when one person is being brutalized, change agents in this arena refuse mediation and work instead to protect the person being harmed. Usually, the only resource recognized for doing so is removing the victim from the home, an act that often results in her isolation from familiar resources and, in the context of a gender-biased economy, increased poverty. Paradoxically, domestic violence activists are increasingly recognizing that the very things they do to "empower" victimized women, given the existing institutional framework, actually land their clients in a position of greater weakness.

But if we can escape a conceptual frame of individualism and the nuclear family, there are alternatives. One agency working primarily with immigrant families from Asia seeks to leave both those doing harm and those harmed in the home by activating the extended community surrounding them. Training friends, relatives, neighbors, and co-workers to intervene, they construct safety without the severe dislocation of a shelter and separation. Having begun this program, they began also to seek conflict resolution skills not for the purpose of negotiating between embattled domestic partners but in order to create cohesion among community interveners.

Social movements by necessity frame things in terms of collectivities, while conflict resolution by practice sometimes tends to narrow frames to "parties," weighted down with assumptions of individualism and class bias. To be sure, people acting to make change on the societal plane are not immune from such limitations of consciousness, for they too are citizens of a common culture. But the nature of the actions they take leads them outward into greater community, while conflict resolution often further isolates people behind a wall of confidentiality.

In more political domains, the world of conflict resolution has shied away from dealing with real-world issues of violence. For all the diverse efforts among conflict interveners to contribute to work in the Middle East, for example, rarely are Hamas and Hezbollah included as parties to actual dialogue processes, or even to thoughtful discussion within the field. Because the work of conflict resolution assumes nonviolent, collaborative behavior, scholars and practitioners in the field need sufficiently nuanced understanding of violent actors to be able to address their role effectively. Social movements can make a major contribution in this regard.

As conflict resolution organizations have become increasingly involved in peacebuilding work after violent conflict ceases, issues of physical security and demobilization become more salient. Indeed, in many ways and areas the fields of conflict resolution and security studies have converged (Kriesberg, 2002). One increasingly sophisticated literature has emerged that conflict resolvers would do well to become acquainted with: a literature that analyzes various struggles for social change in ways that treat violence not as a homogeneous phenomenon but as a nuanced set of communicative actions that must be understood with sensitivity to context (Aretxaga, 1995; Roy, 1994). One step is to analyze the various culturally and socially differentiated meanings of violence (Parkins, 2000). A second step is to recognize that, historically, nonstate actors have engaged in physical violence far less often than have state actors (Mayer, 2000). A third step is to understand violence of larger structures including state terror and institutional violence (Varzi, 2006). A fourth step is to place patterns of mobilization into nonstate violent action, including armed struggle and guerilla warfare (Goodwin, 2001, 2006; Viterna, 2006), in the context of various cultural, social, and psychological forces, among them how violence fits into processes of collective and individual identity formation (Andriolo, 2006; Fanon, 1961; Roy, 1999). It is likely that conflict resolvers who develop a more historical, culturally sophisticated grasp of violence will be more effective in understanding the motives and forces that generate it in its many forms and thus will be better equipped to strategize about how and when to try to reduce it.

Conclusion

The fields of conflict resolution and of social movement studies are distinctive, but they do overlap and have complementary possibilities (Schmelzle and Fisher, 2009). Indeed, work on some topics demonstrates a degree of

synthesis, for example, in the case of work on constructive conflict escalation and on coalition formation in mobilizing support in a struggle.

Much more mutual borrowing and synthesizing would be useful for workers in both fields. Since 1987, the annual series *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts, and Change*, initially edited by Louis Kriesberg and now by Pat Coy, has attempted to foster such efforts. A more direct way to advance this synergy is for workers in each field to examine the writing in the other. It might also be useful to arrange meetings and workshops on particular topics to which some people from both fields are contributing. Finally, one or two persons from the two fields can join together in their writing or in other practices in their fields. The challenge is to articulate joint projects of research and action. It is important to develop a long time horizon, in which it becomes possible to focus on a variety of moments in a long-term process of change. Kriesberg's model of escalation and deescalation (2007b) is a valuable point of departure.

But for the projects to bear theoretical fruit, we suggest at least two other strategies. First, a sponsored discussion of activists, conflict resolvers, and social movement analysts in which all are focused on a single conflict, in which the goal is to identify a common practical puzzle, would importantly strengthen cross-disciplinary dialogue. Perhaps scholars, practitioners, clients, and activists from each field could be invited to participate in a symposium devoted to the topic, followed by a series of forums at major conferences in each field. It is likely that only when a common stake has been identified—one in which there is an equal measure of practical necessity and analytical challenge—will deeper useful insight be achieved.

Second, it is crucial that the very process of discovery involve not just academic participants in this process but nonacademic ones as well. Nonacademic stakeholders need to become involved in the process of knowledge and theory production not just as bystanders but as direct, active participants. Many of the intellectual and political bottlenecks we face today—what counts as an effective, durable settlement? how can we achieve peace and justice together? what counts as useful theory?—may finally be opened wide only after all those with the greatest stake in their resolution are at the table.

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