
THE *ESSENTIALS* OF TEAMWORKING

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Edited by

Michael A. West

*Professor of Organizational Psychology and
Head of Research, Aston Business School, UK*

Dean Tjosvold

Chair Professor of Management, Lingnan University, Hong Kong

and

Ken G. Smith

*Dean's Chaired Professor of Business Strategy,
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*This book is dedicated to the memory of our co-authors Maureen Blyler
and Dana Clyman.*

*Their unique and invaluable contributions to the academic and wider
communities are cherished.*

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ABOUT THE EDITORS

Michael A. West is Professor of Organizational Psychology and Head of Research at Aston Business School. He graduated from the University of Wales in 1973 and received his PhD in 1977. He then spent a year working in the coal mines of South Wales before beginning his academic career. He has authored, edited or co-edited 14 books including *Effective Teamwork* (2004, Blackwell), the first edition of which has been translated into 12 languages, *The Secrets of Successful Team Management* (2004, Duncan Baird), *Developing Team Based Organisations* (2004, Blackwell), *The International Handbook of Organizational Teamwork and Cooperative Working* (2003, Wiley), *Effective Top Management Teams* (2001, Blackhall), *Developing Creativity in Organizations* (1997, BPS) and the *Handbook of Workgroup Psychology* (1996, Wiley). He has also published over 150 articles for scientific and practitioner publications, as well as chapters in scholarly books. He is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society, the American Psychological Association (APA), the APA Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology, and the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. His areas of research interest are team and organizational innovation and effectiveness, particularly in relation to the organization of health services.

Dean Tjosvold is Chair Professor of Management, Lingnan University in Hong Kong. After graduating from Princeton University, he earned his Master's Degree in History and his Ph.D. in the social psychology of organizations at the University of Minnesota, both in 1972. He has taught at Pennsylvania State University, Simon Fraser University, and was visiting professor at the National University of Singapore in 1983–84, the State University of Groningen in The Netherlands, 1991–92, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, 1994–95, and the City University of Hong Kong, 1995–96.

In 1992, Simon Fraser University awarded him a University Professorship for his research contributions. He received the American Education Research Association's Outstanding Contribution to Cooperative Learning Award in 1998. His review of cooperative and competitive conflict was recognized as the best article in *Applied Psychology: An International Review* for 1998. He is past president of the International Association of Conflict Management. He has published over 200 articles on managing conflict, cooperation and competition, decision making, power, and other management issues. He has served on several editorial boards, including the *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Management*, and *Small Group Research*.

He has written over 20 books which have been selected by *Fortune*, *Business Week*, *Newbridge*, and Executive Book Clubs and translated into Chinese and Spanish. These include: *Conflict Management in the Pacific Rim: Perspectives on International Business* (Wiley, 1998) (edited with Kwok Leung); *Psychology for Leaders: Using Motivation, Power, and Conflict to Manage More Effectively* (Wiley, 1995; Chinese Translation, Business Weekly Publication, 1999) (with Mary M. Tjosvold); *The Emerging Leader: Ways to a Stronger Team* (Lexington Books, 1993) (with Mary M. Tjosvold); *Learning to Manage Conflict: Getting People to Work Together Productively* (Lexington Books, 1993); *Teamwork for Customers: Building an Organization that Takes Pride in Serving* (Jossey-Bass, 1993); *Leading a Team Organization: How to Create an Enduring Competitive Advantage* (Lexington Books, 1991) (with Mary M. Tjosvold); *Team Organization: An Enduring Competitive Advantage* (Wiley, 1991); *The Conflict Positive Organization: Stimulate Diversity and Create Unity* (Addison-Wesley's OD series, 1991); *Working Together to Get Things Done: Managing for Organizational Productivity* (Lexington, 1986).

He has given invited seminars at universities in the US, Canada, Europe, and East Asia. He has consulted with large US banks, hotels in Asia Pacific, Canadian, US, and Hong Kong government agencies, family businesses, and organizations in other industries. He is a partner in his family health care business, which has 600 employees and is based in Minnesota.

Ken G. Smith is the Dean's Chaired Professor of Business Strategy in the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland at College Park. Dr Smith received his MBA in Organizational Behavior from the University of Rhode Island in 1972 and his Ph.D. from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1983. From 1972 to 1980 he was an entrepreneur and chief executive officer in the pump and marine products industries where he developed three separate and successful corporations.

The former editor of the *Academy of Management Review*, Dr Smith has served on a number of editorial boards, including *Academy of Management Journal* and *Academy of Management Executive*. He has published over 50 articles, in such journals as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Management Science*, *Organization Science*, and *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, and he has presented numerous papers at national and international meetings, and at many different universities around the world. In addition, he has also published two books: *The Dynamics of Competitive Strategy* (with Grimm and Gannon) (Sage Publishing, 1992); and *Strategy as Action: Industry Competition vs Cooperation* (with Grimm) (West Publishing, 1997).

Dr Smith's research interests in strategic management include strategic positioning, competitive advantage, and the dynamics of competitive and cooperative strategy. He is also a leader in the field of entrepreneurship where his research on the relationship between entrepreneurs and organizational innovation and growth is well known. His research has been supported by grants from the University of Maryland General Research, the National Science Foundation and the Small Business Administration.

In 1991 Dr Smith was a Fulbright Fellow in Strategic Management at the University of Limerick, Plassey, Ireland, and in Spring 2000 was Visiting Professor of Strategy, INSEAD, France. He was elected Fellow to the Academy of Management in 1998.

Professor Smith has participated in a wide variety of executive development programmes, and in 1987, 1990, and 1997 was awarded the Alan Krowe Award from the University of Maryland for teaching excellence. In 1996, Dr Smith was granted the University of Maryland Distinguished Scholar Teacher Award. Dr Smith has been a consultant to a variety of organizations, and is a member of the Academy of Management, the Strategic Management Society, and the Decision Sciences Institute.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Pamela S. Barr, *Robinson College of Business, Georgia State University, 35 Broad Street, Atlanta, GA 30303, USA*

Michael M. Beyerlein, *Department of Psychology, University of North Texas, PO Box 311280, Denton, TX 76203, USA*

Susan E. Brodt, *Fuqua School of Business, Duke University, Box 90120, Durham, NC 27708, USA*

Peter T. Coleman, *Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 West 120th St, New York 10027, USA*

Carsten K. W. De Dreu, *University of Amsterdam, Department of Psychology, Raetesstraat 15, 1018 WB, Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

Morton Deutsch, *Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 West 120th St, New York 10027, USA*

Amy C. Edmondson, *Associate Professor, Morgan Hall T-93, Harvard Business School, Boston, MA 02163, USA*

Mary Ann Glynn, *Goizueta Business School, Emory University, 1300 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30322-2710, USA*

Cheryl L. Harris, *Department of Psychology, University of North Texas, PO Box 311280, Denton, TX 76203, USA*

Giles Hirst, *Aston University, Aston Business School, Birmingham B4 7ET, UK*

David W. Johnson, *Cooperative Learning Center, University of Minnesota, 60 Peik Hall, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA*

Roger T. Johnson, *Cooperative Learning Center, University of Minnesota, 60 Peik Hall, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA*

M. Audrey Korsgaard, *Associate Professor of Management, University of South Carolina, Moore School of Business, Columbia, SC 29208, USA*

Janice Langan-Fox, *Department of Psychology, University of Melbourne, Parkville 3010, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia*

Kwok Leung, *Department of Management, City University of Hong Kong, Tat Chee Avenue, Hong Kong, China*

Xiangfen Liang, *Department of Management, City University of Hong Kong, Tat Chee Avenue, Hong Kong, China*

Lin Lu, *Department of Management, City University of Hong Kong, Tat Chee Avenue, Hong Kong, China*

Joan R. Rentsch, *Associate Professor, Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program, Department of Management, 408 Stokely Management Center, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-0545, USA*

Christel G. Rutte, *Eindhoven University of Technology, Department of Technology Management, PO Box 513, 5600 MB Eindhoven, The Netherlands*

Harry J. Sapienza, *University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management, 321 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA*

Maxim Voronov, *Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 West 120th St, New York 10027, USA*

Laurie R. Weingart, *Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University, 236A Posner Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA*

Michael A. West, *Aston University, Aston Business School, Birmingham B4 7ET, UK*

Jacqueline A. Zelno, *Associate Professor, Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program, Department of Management, 408 Stokely Management Center, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-0545, USA*

PREFACE

Human beings have worked in teams for over 200,000 years. During that time, we have honed our teamwork skills through practice in our childhood games and adult team sports as well as in organizations. By working in teams, we have discovered the structure of the human genome, built grand palaces, explored the beginnings and the outer reaches of our universe, and developed instruments to destroy vast numbers of our own species. Why then another scholarly book about teamworking?

In the last 200 years, we have developed complex, diverse organizations that were previously confined to religious and military institutions. Whereas organizations were typically small craft units of a few people (virtually never exceeding 30), now conglomerations of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of employees are common. The US Wal-Mart Corporation and the UK National Health Service both have more than a million employees. Most employees in developed economies now work in organizations that far exceed those we have learned to work in during the last 200,000 years. Managers and scholars alike underestimate the challenges of teamwork in these large organizations. We do not yet understand nearly enough about how to build successful teams in modern organizations.

This book contributes to that understanding by offering new perspectives from leading scholars in the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, Hong Kong China, and the United States of America. They reveal both the complexity of teamwork and offer empirically based guidance for how teamwork can be effectively developed in modern organizations. The chapters are grouped into five themes.

The first theme weaves together issues of cooperation, conflict, trust and attachment in teams. Morton Deutsch reviews the progress we have made in understanding conflict resolution. He argues that conflict resolution is vital to effective teamwork, since how conflict is managed will determine whether the conflict contributes to team cooperation and productivity or to its dissolution. Deutsch urges us to redouble our efforts to understand constructive conflict resolution in a world where conflict is both pervasive and intense. M. Audrey Korsgaard, Susan Brodt, and Harry Sapienza explore how individuals' trust in their team is key to cooperation by enabling psychological identification (individuals define themselves in part by their membership of the team) and group attachment style (the extent to which they seek and feel secure in groups). Carsten De Dreu and Laurie Weingart challenge prevailing views about task conflict and problem solving in groups, suggesting that we have to understand group performance as being dependent on the interaction between the type of task the team is performing, the types of task conflict team members experience, and the conflict management strategies they adopt. They reject the idea that conflict is always harmful and destructive to team cooperation, offering new insights into how we can manage these processes in teams.

The second theme explores the cognitions of the team, not so much the individual thoughts about teamwork of members, but team member schemas and team mental models. This theme takes the study of teamwork into a new area and suggests that the intuitive, synchronous and spontaneous dance of effective teams confronted with crises, can be understood. Joan Rentsch and Jacqueline Zelno describe team member schemas in relation to what constitutes effective teamwork (cooperative goal interdependence and openness) and in relation to their fellow team members' expertise and viewpoints. The more congruent and accurate these are across the whole team, they suggest, the higher the level of productive task conflict and the lower the level of interpersonal (or socio-emotional conflict). Janice Langan-Fox explores this same theme by identifying the concept of a team mental model—the shared view of their task world and their processes that team members develop. Team mental models, she suggests, can and should be developed by ensuring common focus, clearly defined roles, support for diversity, resolving conflict effectively, using feedback and managing time successfully.

The third theme identifies critical issues for organizations intent on developing team working. David Johnson and Roger Johnson insist that effective teamwork requires competencies in teamwork. Organizations should therefore invest in team member training in competencies in positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, promoting each other's efforts to complete tasks, social skills, aiding group processes, establishing and maintaining trust, and resolving conflicts constructively. Cheryl Harris and Michael Beyerlein shift attention from teams to their context and integration. They challenge existing organization structures that too often hamper effective teamwork. Instead they say that teams require team-based organizations in which managers also work in teams, the rest of the organization is structured to support teams, and support functions are aligned with team needs. This is a radical change from traditional organizations and Harris and Beyerlein describe in detail the investment, structures and effort required.

The fourth theme runs all through the music of teamwork—team processes. This includes team member decision making, the distribution of effort and reward, the use and abuse of power, team learning, and creativity and innovation in teams. Mary Ann Glynn and Pamela Barr depart from traditional views of decision making in teams to explore team cognition or the “collective mind”. This collective mind may arise from the aggregation of individual cognitions, through processes of mutual influence, or through the careful interrelating that enables the collective mind to emerge from the sea of separated team member cognitions. They argue that teams only mature in their decision making when they achieve an understanding of the team as a collective entity. Christel Rutte directly addresses the uncomfortable fact that some team members may work harder than others, producing resentment and withdrawal. She explains how these problems can be overcome through (for example) rewarding individuals and teams appropriately, making individual contributions indispensable and unique, making the team task motivating, increasing team cohesiveness and giving positive feedback on team members' performance. Peter Coleman and Maxim Voronov address another issue that is ignored by most advocates of teamwork. They alert the reader to the hidden assumptions about the legitimacy of power relations between team members higher and lower in the hierarchy. They advocate a process of questioning in all teams and organizations of “taken-for-granted” assumptions, especially those concerned with power, in order that a climate can be created within which all voices are heard and valued, and in which diversity can properly flourish (both ideals of effective teamwork). Amy Edmondson also alerts us to a hidden assumption, that our work in modern organizations

requires us to take risks—the outcomes of which may be uncertain and potentially harmful to our image. Power, trust and safety in teams will profoundly affect our choices she argues. The challenge for team leaders is to create a climate of psychological safety that ensures risk taking, while maintaining tough challenges and targets that prevent complacency. Finally Michael West (one of the editors) and Giles Hirst explore how creativity and innovation can be encouraged in teams. Teams, they suggest, are potentially rich sources of creativity and innovation but they have to be established, supported and led with that in mind. They describe how the team task must be structured, the organizational context adapted, and team processes developed to ensure high levels of team creativity and innovation. The role of leaders, they suggest, is crucial.

The final theme is addressed by Kwok Leung, Lin Lu and Xiangfen Liang and is perhaps the most urgent for scholars to address in an era of globalization, international travel and migration: how to work effectively in teams across cultures. China and India are likely to be the economic powerhouses of the next 50 years and more companies will span East and West in response to this global economic change. A holistic view of East–West collaboration is essential for progress in building effective teams they suggest. We tend to focus on one aspect in these relationships, such as the importance of face in interactions or the conflict resulting from technology transfer. But, say the authors, we must focus on all aspects—cultural, technological, socioeconomic, behavioural and structural—to build effective teamwork across cultures.

All the chapters in this book offer the reader new, challenging perspectives on teamwork. They confront some of the assumptions we have long held about teamwork in a way that we believe is stimulating and thought provoking. Most chapters also offer practical guidelines for how the authors' prescriptions for effective teamwork can be implemented in organizations. If this book spurs you to new research or new practice, we will feel it has achieved its aims.

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January, 2005

COOPERATION AND CONFLICT

A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE HISTORY OF THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Morton Deutsch

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is an inevitable and pervasive aspect of organizational life. It occurs within and between individuals, within and between teams and groups, within and between different levels of an organization, within and between organizations. Conflict has been given a bad name by its association with psychopathology, disruption, violence, civil disorder, and war. These are some of the harmful potentials of conflict when it takes a destructive course. When it takes a constructive course, conflict is potentially of considerable personal and social value. It prevents stagnation, it stimulates interest and curiosity, it is the medium through which problems can be aired and creative solutions developed, it is the motor of personal and social change.

It is sometimes assumed that conflicts within teams in organizations should be suppressed, that conflict impairs cooperation and productivity among the members of a team. This may be true when conflict takes a destructive course as in a bitter quarrel. However, it is apt to strengthen the relations among team members and to enhance productivity when it takes the form of a lively controversy.

In this chapter, I present an overview of the major research questions addressed in the literature related to conflict resolution, as well as a historical perspective to see what progress has been made in this area. My premise is that anyone interested in understanding teamwork and cooperative working should be familiar with the field of conflict resolution. As I stated above, conflict is inevitable in teamwork; how the conflict is managed can lead either to the enhancement or disruption of cooperation and team productivity.

Some Definitions

Throughout my many years of empirical and theoretical work in the field of conflict studies, I have thought of conflict in the context of competition and cooperation. I have viewed these latter as idealized psychological processes which are rarely found in their “pure” form in nature, but, instead, are found more typically mixed together. I have also thought that most forms of conflict could be viewed as mixtures of competitive and cooperative processes and, further, that the course of a conflict and its consequences would be heavily dependent upon the nature of the cooperative–competitive mix. These views of conflict lead me to emphasize the link between the social psychological studies of cooperation and competition and the studies of conflict in my assessment of this latter area.

I have defined conflict in the following way (Deutsch, 1973, p. 10): “A *conflict* occurs whenever incompatible activities occur. . . . An action that is incompatible with another action prevents, obstructs, interferes, injures, or in some way makes the latter less likely or less effective.” Conflicts may arise between two or more parties from their opposing interests, goals, values, beliefs, preferences, or their misunderstandings about any of the foregoing. These are *potential* sources of conflict which may give rise to actions by the parties which are incompatible with one another; if they do not give rise to incompatible actions, a conflict does not exist: it is only potential.

The terms “competition” and “conflict” are often used synonymously or interchangeably. This reflects a basic confusion. Although competition produces conflict, not all instances of conflict reflect competition. Competition implies an opposition in the goals of the interdependent parties such that the probability of goal attainment for one decreases as the probability for the other increases. In conflict that is derived from competition, the incompatible action reflects incompatible goals. However, conflict may occur even when there is no perceived or actual incompatibility of goals. Thus if two team members of a sales group are in conflict about the best way to increase sales or if a husband and wife are in conflict about how to treat their son’s mosquito bites, it is not necessarily because they have mutually exclusive goals; here, their goals may be concordant. My distinction between conflict and competition is not made merely to split hairs. It is important and basic to a theme that underlies much of my work. Namely, conflict can occur in a cooperative or a competitive context, and the processes of conflict resolution that are likely to be displayed will be strongly influenced by the context within which the conflict occurs.

AT THE BEGINNING . . .

The writings of three intellectual giants—Darwin, Marx, and Freud—dominated the intellectual atmosphere during social psychology’s infancy. Each of these major theorists significantly influenced the writings of the early social psychologists on conflict as well as in many other areas. All three theorists appeared—on a *superficial* reading—to emphasize the competitive, destructive aspects of conflict. Darwin stressed “the competitive struggle for existence” and “the survival of the fittest.” He wrote (quoted in Hyman, 1966, p. 29): “. . . all nature is at war, one organism with another, or with external nature. Seeing the contented face of nature, this may at first be well doubted; but reflection will inevitably prove it is too true.” Marx emphasized “class struggle,” and as the struggle proceeds, “the whole society breaks up more and more into two great hostile camps, two great, directly

antagonistic classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat.” He ends *The Communist Manifesto* with a ringing call to class struggle: “The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite.” Freud’s view of psychosexual development was largely that of constant struggle between the biologically rooted infantile id and the socially determined, internalized parental surrogate, the superego. As Schachtel (1959, p. 10) has noted:

The concepts and language used by Freud to describe the great metamorphosis from life in the womb to life in the world abound with images of war, coercion, reluctant compromise, unwelcome necessity, imposed sacrifices, uneasy truce under pressure, enforced detours and roundabout ways to return to the original peaceful state of absence of consciousness and stimulation. . . .

Thus, the intellectual atmosphere prevalent during the period when social psychology began to emerge contributed to viewing conflict from the perspective of “competitive struggle.” Social conditions too—the intense competition among businesses and among nations, the devastation of World War I, the economic depression of the 1920s and 1930s, the rise of Nazism and other totalitarian systems—reinforced this perspective.

The vulgarization of Darwin’s ideas in the form of “social Darwinism” provided an intellectual rationale for racism, sexism, class superiority, and war. Such ideas as “survival of the fittest,” “hereditary determinism,” and “stages of evolution” were eagerly *misapplied* to the relations between different human social groups—classes and nations as well as social races—to rationalize imperialist policies. The influence of evolutionary thinking was so strong that, as a critic suggested, it gave rise to a new imperialist beatitude: “Blessed are the strong, for they shall prey upon the weak” (Banton, 1967, p. 48). The rich and powerful were biologically superior; they had achieved their positions as a result of natural selection. It would be against nature to interfere with the inequality and suffering of the poor and weak.

Social Darwinism and the mode of explaining behavior in terms of innate, evolutionary derived instincts were in retreat by the mid-1920s. The prestige of the empirical methods in the physical sciences, the point of view of social determinism advanced by Karl Marx and various sociological theorists, and the findings of cultural anthropologists all contributed to their decline.¹ Since the decline of the instinctual mode of explaining such conflict phenomena as war, intergroup hostility, and human exploitation, two others have been dominant: the “psychological” and the “socio-political-economic.” The “psychological” mode attempts to explain such phenomena in terms of “what goes on in the minds of men” (Klineberg, 1964) or “tensions that cause war” (Cantril, 1950); in other words, in terms of the perceptions, beliefs, values, ideology, motivations, and other psychological states and characteristics that individual men and women have acquired as a result of their experiences and as these characteristics are activated by the particular situation and role in which people are located. The “socio-political-economic” mode, in contrast, seeks an explanation in terms of such social, economic, and political factors as levels of armaments, objective conflicts in economic and political interests, and the like. Although these modes of explanation are not mutually exclusive, there is a tendency for partisans of the psychological mode to consider that the causal arrow points from psychological conditions to socio-political-economic

¹ This is a decline, not a disappearance. The explanation of social phenomena in terms of innate factors justifies the status quo by arguing for its immutability; such justification will always be sought by those who fear change.

conditions and for partisans of the latter to believe the reverse is true. In any case, much of the social psychological writing in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s on the topics of war, intergroup conflict, and industrial strife was largely nonempirical, and in one vein or the other. The psychologically trained social psychologist tended to favor the psychological mode; the Marxist-oriented or sociologically trained social psychologist more often favored the other mode.

The decline of social Darwinism and the instinctivist doctrines was hastened by the development and employment of empirical methods in social psychology. This early empirical orientation to social psychology focused on the socialization of the individual; this focus was, in part, a reaction to the instinctivist doctrine. It led to a great variety of studies, including a number investigating cooperation and competition. These latter studies are, in my view, the precursors to the empirical, social psychological study of conflict.

EARLY STUDIES OF COOPERATION AND COMPETITION

Two outstanding summaries of the then existing research on cooperation and competition were published in 1937. One was in the volume of Murphy, Murphy, and Newcomb, *Experimental Social Psychology*; the other was in the monograph *Competition and Cooperation*, by May and Doob. It is not my intention here to repeat these summaries but rather to give you my sense of the state of the research and theorizing on cooperation–competition in the 1920s and 1930s.

My impression is that practically none of the earlier research on cooperation and competition would be acceptable in current social psychological journals because of methodological flaws in the studies. Almost all of them suffer from serious deficiencies in their research designs. In addition, there is little conceptual clarity about some of the basic concepts—“competition,” “cooperation,” “self-orientation”—that are used in the studies. As a result, the operational definitions used to create the differing experimental conditions have no consistency from one study to another or even within a given study.

Further, the early studies of cooperation and competition suffered from a narrowness of scope. They focused almost exclusively on the effects of “competition” versus “cooperation” on individual task output. There was no investigation of social interaction, communication processes, problem-solving methods, interpersonal attitudes, attitudes toward self, attitudes toward work, attitudes toward the group, or the like in these early investigations of cooperation–competition. The focus was narrowly limited to work output. The simplistic assumption was made that output would be an uncomplicated function of the degree of motivation induced by competition as compared with cooperation. The purposes of most of these early investigations appeared to be to support or reject a thesis inherent in the American ideology; namely, that competition fosters greater motivation to be productive than other forms of social organization.

FIELD THEORY, CONFLICT, AND COOPERATION–COMPETITION

During the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, quite independently of the work being conducted in the United States on cooperation–competition, Kurt Lewin and his students were theorizing

and conducting research which profoundly affected later work in many areas of social psychology. Lewin's field theory—with its dynamic concepts of tension systems, “driving” and “restraining” forces, “own” and “induced” forces, valences, level of aspiration, power fields, interdependence, overlapping situations, and so on—created a new vocabulary for thinking about conflict and cooperation—competition.

As early as 1931, employing his analysis of force fields, Lewin (1931, 1935) presented a penetrating theoretical discussion of three basic types of psychological conflict: *approach–approach*—the individual stands between two positive valences of approximately equal strength; *avoidance–avoidance*—the individual stands between two negative valences of approximately equal strength; and *approach–avoidance*—the individual is exposed to opposing forces deriving from a positive and a negative valence. Hull (1938) translated Lewin's analysis into the terminology of the goal gradient, and Miller (1937, 1944) elaborated and did research upon it. Numerous experimental studies supported the theoretical analysis.

My own initial theorizing on cooperation–competition (Deutsch, 1949a) was influenced by the Lewinian thinking on tension systems which was reflected in a series of brilliant experiments on the recall of interrupted activities (Zeigarnik, 1927), the resumption of interrupted activities (Ovsiankina, 1928), substitutability (Mahler, 1933), and the role of ego in cooperative work (Lewis & Franklin, 1944). But even more of my thinking was indebted to the ideas which were “in the air” at the MIT Research Center for Group Dynamics. Ways of characterizing and explaining group processes and group functioning, employing the language of Lewinian theorizing, were under constant discussion among the students and faculty at the MIT Center. Thus, it was quite natural that when I settled on cooperation–competition as the topic of my doctoral dissertation, I should employ the Lewinian dynamic emphasis on goals and how they are interrelated as my key theoretical wedge into this topic. Even more importantly, the preoccupation with understanding group processes at the Center pressed me to formulate my ideas about cooperation and competition so that they would be relevant to the psychological and interpersonal processes occurring within and between groups. This pressure forced my theory and research (Deutsch, 1949a, b) to go considerably beyond the prior social psychological work on cooperation–competition. My theorizing and research were concerned not only with the individual and group outcomes of cooperation and competition but also with the social psychological processes which would give rise to these outcomes.

My theorizing and research have been published and widely referred to, so there is little need here for more than a brief summary of some of the theory's predictions, which have been validated by extensive research. Assuming that the individual actions in a group are more frequently effective than bungling, among the predictions that follow from the theory are that *cooperative relations* (those in which the goals of the parties involved are predominantly positively interdependent), as compared with competitive ones, show more of these positive characteristics:

1. *Effective communication* is exhibited. Ideas are verbalized, and group members are attentive to one another, accepting of the ideas of other members, and influenced by them. They have fewer difficulties in communicating with or understanding others.
2. *Friendliness, helpfulness, and less obstructiveness* are expressed in the discussions. Members are more satisfied with the group and its solutions and favorably impressed by

the contributions of the other group members. In addition, members of the cooperative groups rate themselves high in desire to win the respect of their colleagues and in obligation to the other members.

3. *Coordination of effort, divisions of labor, orientation to task achievement, orderliness in discussion, and high productivity* are manifested in the cooperative groups (if the group task requires effective communication, coordination of effort, division of labor, or sharing of resources).
4. *Feeling of agreement with the ideas of others and a sense of basic similarity in beliefs and values, as well as confidence in one's own ideas and in the value that other members attach to those ideas*, are obtained in the cooperative groups.
5. *Willingness to enhance the other's power* (for example, the other's knowledge, skills, resources) to accomplish the other's goals increases. As the other's capabilities are strengthened, you are strengthened, they are of value to you as well as to the other. Similarly, the other is enhanced from your enhancement and benefits from your growing capabilities and power.
6. *Defining conflicting interests as a mutual problem to be solved by collaborative effort* facilitates recognizing the legitimacy of each other's interests and the necessity to search for a solution responsive to the needs of all. It tends to limit rather than expand the scope of conflicting interests. Attempts to influence the other tend to be confined to processes of persuasion.

In contrast, a competitive *process* has the opposite effects:

1. Communication is impaired as the conflicting parties seek to gain advantage by misleading the other through use of false promises, ingratiation tactics, and disinformation. It is reduced and seen as futile as they recognize that they cannot trust one another's communications to be honest or informative.
2. Obstructiveness and lack of helpfulness lead to mutual negative attitudes and suspicion of one another's intentions. One's perceptions of the other tend to focus on the person's negative qualities and ignore the positive.
3. The parties to the process are unable to divide their work, duplicating one another's efforts such that they become mirror images; if they do divide the work, they feel the need to check what the other is doing continuously.
4. The repeated experience of disagreement and critical rejection of ideas reduces confidence in oneself as well as the other.
5. The conflicting parties seek to enhance their own power and to reduce the power of the other. Any increase in the power of the other is seen as threatening to oneself.

The competitive process stimulates the view that the solution of a conflict can only be imposed by one side on the other, which in turn leads to using coercive tactics such as psychological as well as physical threats and violence. It tends to expand the scope of the issues in conflict as each side seeks superiority in power and legitimacy. The conflict becomes a power struggle or a matter of moral principle and is no longer confined to a specific issue at a given time and place. Escalating the conflict increases its motivational significance to the participants and may make a limited defeat less acceptable and more humiliating than a mutual disaster.

As Johnson and Johnson (1989) have detailed, these ideas have given rise to a large number of research studies indicating that a cooperative process (as compared to a competitive one) leads to greater productivity, more favorable interpersonal and intergroup relations, better psychological health and higher self-esteem as well as more constructive resolution of conflict.

GAME THEORY AND GAMES

In 1944, von Neumann and Morgenstern published their now classic work, *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*. Game theory has made a major contribution to social scientists by formulating in mathematical terms the problem of conflict of interest. However, it has not been either its mathematics or its normative prescriptions for minimizing losses when facing an intelligent adversary that has made game theory of considerable value to social psychologists. Rather, it has been its core emphasis that the parties in conflict have interdependent interests, that their fates are woven together. Although the mathematical and normative development of game theory has been most successful in connection with pure competitive conflict (“zero-sum” games), game theory has also recognized that cooperative as well as competitive interests may be intertwined in conflict (as in “coalition” games or “non-zero-sum” games).

The game theory recognition of the intertwining of cooperative and competitive interests in situations of conflict (or in Schelling’s (1960) useful term, the “mixed-motive” nature of conflict) has had a productive impact on the social psychological study of conflict, theoretically as well as methodologically. Theoretically, at least for me, it helped buttress a viewpoint that I had developed prior to my acquaintance with game theory—namely, that conflicts were typically mixtures of cooperative and competitive processes and that the course of conflict would be determined by the nature of the mixture. This emphasis on the cooperative elements involved in conflict ran counter to the then dominant view of conflict as a competitive struggle. Methodologically, game theory had an impact on an even larger group of psychologists. The mathematical formulations of game theory had the indirect but extremely valuable consequence of laying bare some fascinating paradoxical situations in such a way that they were highly suggestive of experimental work.

Game matrices as an experimental device are popular because they facilitate a precise definition of the reward structure encountered by the subjects, and hence of the way they are dependent upon one another. Partly stimulated by and partly in reaction to the research using game matrices, other research games for the study of conflict have been developed. Siegel and Fouraker (1960) developed a bilateral monopoly, “buyer–seller” negotiation game; Vinacke and Arkoff (1957) invented a three-person coalition game; Deutsch and Krauss (1960) constructed a “trucking game”; Deutsch (1973) employed an “allocation” game; and many other investigators have developed variants of these games or new ones. Pruitt and Kimmel in 1977 estimated that well over 1000 studies had been published based on experimental games. Much of this research, as is true in other areas of science, was mindless—being done because a convenient experimental format was readily available. Some of it, however, has, I believe, helped to develop more systematic understanding of conflict processes and conflict resolution. Fortunately, in recent years, experimental gaming has been supplemented by other experimental procedures and by field studies which have overcome some of the inherent limitations of experimental gaming.

THEMES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON CONFLICT

Social psychological research on conflict, during the past 35 years or so, has primarily addressed the following major questions:

- (1) *What are the conditions which give rise to a constructive or destructive process of conflict resolution?* In terms of bargaining and negotiation, the emphasis here is on determining the circumstances which enable the conflicting parties to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement which maximizes their joint outcomes. In a sense, this first question arises from a focus on the cooperative potential inherent in conflict.
- (2) *What are the circumstances, strategies, and tactics which lead one party to do better than another in a conflict situation?* The stress here is on how one can wage conflict, or bargain, so as to win or at least do better than one's adversary. This second question emerges from a focus on the competitive features of a conflict situation.
- (3) *What determines the nature of the agreement between conflicting parties, if they are able to reach an agreement?* Here the concern is with the cognitive and normative factors that lead people to conceive a possible agreement and to perceive it as a salient possibility for reaching a stable agreement: an agreement which each of the conflicting parties will see as "just" under the circumstances. This third question is a more recent one and has been addressed under the heading of research on the social psychology of equity and justice.
- (4) *How can third parties be used to prevent conflicts from becoming destructive or to help deadlocked or embittered negotiators move toward a more constructive management of their conflicts?* This fourth question has been reflected in studies of mediation and in strategies of de-escalating conflicts.
- (5) *How can people be educated to manage their conflicts more constructively?* This has been a concern of consultants working with leaders in industry and government and also with those who have responsibility for educating the children in our schools.
- (6) *How and when to intervene in prolonged, intractable conflicts?* Much of the literature in conflict resolution has been preventive rather than remedial in its emphasis. It is concerned with understanding the conditions that foster productive rather than destructive conflict (as in question (1)) or developing knowledge about the circumstances that lead to intractable, destructive conflict, in the hope of preventing such conflict. More recently, the reality that many protracted, destructive conflicts exist in the world has induced some scholars to focus their attention on this problem.
- (7) *How are we to understand why ethnic, religious, and identity conflicts frequently take an intractable, destructive course?* With the end of the Cold War, there appears to be a proliferation of such conflicts. In the past 10 years, interest in such conflicts has been renewed. Attention has been addressed to what causes such conflict but also what can be done after the typical atrocities of such conflict to bring about reconciliation and reconstruction.
- (8) *How applicable in other cultural contexts are the theories related to conflict that have largely been developed in the United States and Western Europe?* In recent years, there has been much discussion in the literature of the differences that exist in how people from varying cultural backgrounds deal with negotiations and, more generally, manage conflict.

In the next section, I shall attempt to describe tentative answers which social psychological research has given the foregoing questions.

What Are the Conditions which Give Rise to a Constructive or Destructive Process of Conflict Resolution?

In social psychology this question has been most directly addressed in the work of my students and myself and summarized in my book, *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes* (1973). Our research started off with the assumption that if the parties involved in a conflict situation had a cooperative rather than competitive orientation toward one another, they would be more likely to engage in a constructive process of conflict resolution. In my earlier research on the effects of cooperation and competition upon group process, I had demonstrated that a cooperative process was more productive in dealing with a problem that a group faces than a competitive process. I reasoned that the same would be true in a mixed-motive situation of conflict: a conflict could be viewed as a mutual problem facing the conflicting parties. Our initial research on trust and suspicion employing the prisoners' dilemma game strongly supported my reasoning, as did subsequent research employing other experimental formats. I believe that this is a very important result which has considerable theoretical and practical significance.

At a theoretical level, it enabled me to link my prior characterization of cooperation and competitive social processes to the nature of the processes of conflict resolution which would typically give rise to constructive or destructive outcomes. That is, I had found a way to characterize the central features of constructive and destructive *processes* of conflict resolution; doing so represented a major advance beyond the characterization of *outcomes* as constructive or destructive. This was not only important in itself but it also opened up a new possibility. At both the theoretical and practical level, the characterization of constructive and destructive processes of conflict created the very significant possibility that we would be able to develop insight into the conditions which initiated or stimulated the development of cooperative–constructive versus competitive–destructive processes of conflict. Much of the research of my students and myself has been addressed to developing this insight.

Much of our early research on the conditions affecting the course of conflict was done on an ad hoc basis. We selected independent variables to manipulate based on our intuitive sense of what would give rise to a cooperative or competitive process. We did experiments with quite a number of variables: motivational orientation, communication facilities, perceived similarity of opinions and beliefs, size of conflict, availability of threats and weapons, power differences, third-party interventions, strategies and tactics of game playing by experimental stooges, the payoff structure of the game, personality characteristics, and so on. The results of these studies fell into a pattern which I slowly began to grasp.

All of these studies seemed explainable by the assumption, which I have labeled "Deutsch's crude law of social relations," that *the characteristic processes and effects elicited by a given type of social relationship (cooperative or competitive) also tend to elicit that type of social relationship*. Thus, cooperation induces and is induced by a perceived similarity in beliefs and attitudes; a readiness to be helpful; openness in communication; trusting and friendly attitudes; sensitivity to common interests and de-emphasis of opposed interests; an orientation toward enhancing mutual power rather than power differences; and

so on. Similarly, competition induces and is induced by the use of tactics of coercion, threat, or deception; attempts to enhance the power differences between oneself and the other; poor communication; minimization of the awareness of similarities in values and increased sensitivity to opposed interests; suspicious and hostile attitudes; the importance, rigidity, and size of the issues in conflict; and so on.

In other words, if one has systematic knowledge of the effects of cooperative and competitive processes, one will have systematic knowledge of the conditions which typically give rise to such processes and, by extension, to the conditions which affect whether a conflict will take a constructive or destructive course. My early theory of cooperation and competition is a theory of the *effects* of cooperative and competitive processes (see earlier section “Field theory, conflict, and cooperation–competition” (p. 12) and Deutsch & Coleman, 2000, Chapter 1 for a summary). Hence, from the crude law of social relations stated earlier, it follows that this theory provides insight into the conditions which give rise to cooperative and competitive processes.

The crude law is *crude*. It expresses surface similarities between “effects” and “causes”; the basic relationships are genotypical rather than phenotypical. The crude law is crude, but it can be improved. Its improvement requires a linkage with other areas in social psychology, particularly social cognition and social perception. Such a linkage would enable us to view phenotypes in their social environments in such a way as to lead us to perceive correctly the underlying genotypes. We would then be able to know under what conditions “perceived similarity” or “threat” will be experienced as having an underlying genotype different from the one that is usually associated with its phenotype.

What Are the Circumstances, Strategies, and Tactics which Lead One Party to Do Better than Another in a Conflict Situation?

Most of the important theoretical work by social scientists in relation to this question has been done not by social psychologists but by economists, political scientists, and those concerned with collective bargaining. Some of the most notable contributions have been made by Chamberlain (1951), Schelling (1960, 1966), Stevens (1963), Walton and McKersie (1965), Kahn (1965), Jervis (1970, 1976), and Snyder and Diesing (1977). Machiavelli (1500) earlier had described useful strategies and tactics for winning conflicts: Machiavelli’s emphasis was on how to use one’s power most effectively so as to intimidate or overwhelm one’s adversary; Potter’s (1965) on how to play upon the good will, cooperativeness, and politeness of one’s opponent so as to upset him and make him lose his “cool.” More recently, Alinsky (1971) has described a “jujitsu” strategy that the “have-nots” can employ against the “haves” and described various tactics of harassing and ensnaring the “haves” in their own red tape by pressuring them to live up to their own formally stated rules and procedures.

Social psychologists have just barely begun to tap and test the rich array of ideas about strategies and tactics for winning conflicts or for increasing one’s bargaining power and effectiveness that exist in the common folklore as well as in the social and political science literature. This research has provided some support and qualification of preexisting ideas about bargaining strategy and tactics. I shall briefly discuss research relating to “being ignorant,” “being tough,” “being belligerent,” and “bargaining power.”