

Every new academic journal aspires to promote the development of knowledge in their subject. The Journal of Mediation & Applied Conflict Analysis (JMACA) intends to achieve this by stimulating thematic conversations between researchers and practitioners who are reporting and reflecting on all aspects and forms of conflict intervention. The Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention produces and hosts this journal. JMACA aims to further the Institute's mission to build capacity in society for constructive approaches to conflict.

The journal welcomes article submissions from professionals and academics in the fields of family mediation, workplace, commercial, multiparty, community, conflict resolution in education, collaborative practice, restorative practices and peacemaking. This invitation is made in the belief that the examination of the ideology and approaches to conflict and conflict intervention in many fields enables cross-fertilisation and increases depth in the knowledge base of each practice.

This first issue contains a number of such varied and thought provoking articles. Mediated Dialogue and Systemic Change in Northern Ireland, by Duncan Morrow, Brendan McAllister, Joe Campbell & Derrick Wilson, who review and discuss the methodology and vision of a programme of mediated dialogues on policing and community relations in Northern Ireland. This article details a critical dialogue approach that addresses distrust between police and civilians, working to create a more restorative culture and will be of interest to all those concerned about healing splits between public and political organisations and citizens.

Claire Casey reports on the development of a community restorative practice initiative in West Tallaght, Dublin in her article, Restorative Practices in Action: Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiatives' Restorative Practices Programme. Her rich case examples illustrate the changes made in people's lives by this initiative.

Attribution in conflict is a regular dynamic observed by mediators, escalating conflict and difficult to unpack. Charlie Irvine explores the nature of attribution and the difficulties created by anti-bullying policy labels in "Do You See What I'm Doing With Here?" Vicious Circles in Conflict. He recommends policies and procedures that enable dialogue, facilitating the unravelling of polarised projections, before any anti-bullying investigations further dehumanise personal stories.

Treasa Kenny reviews the development and practice of workplace mediation in the world today in her article, Developing the Conversation about Workplace Mediation, an assessment that takes in many variables and concludes with calling for further research that enhances understanding of the potential of workplace mediation practice.

Mindfulness holds the promise of bringing many benefits to many professional practices, mediation being one of these. Barry Winbolt highlights the benefits of mindful practice in his

article, Mindfulness and the Mediator, and suggests a course of action for mediators that “helps clarity of thought, concentration, problem-solving and energy levels”.

The principal of neutrality is much debated in the mediation literature. In his article Neutrality in Mediation: an Ambiguous Ethical Value, Paul Bailey reviews this discussion and draws some interesting conclusions on this topic.

This inaugural issue of the journal concludes with a Case Study. Barbara Wilson and Janine Geste analyse and review a restorative dialogue in their article, Dialogical Processes Examined: A Victim Offender Dialogue Case Study. They set out the case of young woman was killed in a road traffic accident by a man who was intoxicated at the time and track the development of the conversation between the members of her family with the man who killed her. This case study illustrates the power and potential for connection and healing in restorative work.

The Journal of Mediation & Applied Conflict Analysis is an bi-annual, online-only, open-access journal covering all aspects of mediation, restorative practices and conflict intervention, as well as interdisciplinary topics where applied conflict analysis forms the central theme. The journal is intended as a free source of information aimed to assist those who are working toward a more collaborative world.

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