

Editorial

Conflict is a natural part of life. Yet when faced with difficult situations people can slip into adversarial and destructive behaviours that exacerbate reactivity, causing an escalation into estrangements and violence. Thoughtful and strategic management of likely circumstances known to cause difficulties could ameliorate such reactions. The first two articles in this second publication of JMACA examine elements of the root causes of issues that spark such hazards and seek to find ways forward that enable the continued connection, engagement and working through of these troubled situations. The two articles that follow demonstrate how such thoughtful processes can work in practice, the inclusion of children in mediation and restorative circles in prison. The next article is the presentation of a research study on mediation ideology which examines the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of the base of different forms of mediation practice including their impact on mediation outcome. Two case studies follow, reflective articles about experience. The first records the development of an action plan by an individual with a goal of connecting a peace process in Mali to the Irish peace process with the object of mutual learning. The second case study reflects on the impact of the downturn in the Irish economy on separating couples in mediation. Two of the editors review the *Choreography of Resolution*, in the final article; a publication they found to be a challenging and fascinating read. These articles are scheduled as follows:

In the first article Garry Keegan writes about the difficulties that arise from the siting of high voltage overhead lines in local communities in Ireland. He reviews the literature, bringing concepts from other environmental disputes to bear on this issue and concludes that more research is required to facilitate knowledge and skill development in working with providers and communities to find ways forward together.

In another large scale overview, Rory Finegan explores the relationship between NGOs' and peace keeping forces, how their missions overlap and the differences in culture and objectives that can lead to difficulty. Rory highlights how these two groups regularly share common territories and so developing strategies and methodologies to enhance engagement between them is vital.

Siun Kearney writes about a conflict intervention process that needs careful and thoughtful management, the inclusion of children in mediation. She demonstrates how this can be done. The needs of children require that this process is sensitively and thoughtfully managed. Siun examines the purpose and goals of involving children in mediation and details three methods practised in Ireland for involving children in the process

Catherine O'Connell's article addresses working with the consequence of violence, exploring the dynamic and dialogical intervention of restorative circles which promote "connectedness, accountability and healing". She describes a restorative circle process in Green Bay Prison, USA, and reflects on the theoretical paradigm that informs this practice.

Mediation has a rich history; however, mediation training tends to focus on one particular form of practice without reference to other mediation ideologies and practices. Mediation processes are not usually examined theoretically. Hans Boserup sets about redressing this gap through his research on the ideological basis of different forms of mediation practice. He uses discourse analysis and interpretive repertoires to demonstrate that a mediator's ideology and practice affects the outcome of mediation.

Two case studies follow. The first of these sets out the journey taken by Elizabeth Healy who traces her involvement with the Tuareg people in Mali, West Africa who are managing the aftermath of armed conflict and peace process. She traces how she developed her goal of connecting these people with the Irish for mutual learning about conflict, peacemaking and practices following a peace agreement.

In the second case study Majella Foley Friel looks back over her experience as a mediator working with families during the period 2004 and 2014, a time of dramatic change in the economy in Ireland. She reviews the consequences of the Irish economic collapse for couples and their children as they separate and divorce.

Two of the editors of JMACA, Aileen O'Brien & Mary Lloyd provide the last article in the issue with a book review of *Choreography of Resolution, Conflict, Movement & Neuroscience* (2013), edited by Le Baron, MacLeod and Ackland. Aileen and Mary find that this is a revolutionary book, shifting the mediation paradigm from a rational cognitive orientation to a holistic, body focused process. This detailed and comprehensive review of articles written by mediators who took part in a research experiment shows how the methodology of dance brought mediators into their body and an awareness of how the whole self is engaged by the mediator in the mediation process. This review concludes the second journal issue, a publication with articles covering broad and wide ranging topics.