



# Editorial

The Journal of Mediation and Applied Conflict Analysis begins its third year of publication with this fifth issue. The mission of the journal is to present “interdisciplinary topics where applied conflict analysis forms the central theme” and the application of theory to practice scholarship in a variety of contexts and in a variety of processes. Reflecting on the previous issues published I believe that the journal is fulfilling its mission.

Before I introduce the articles in this volume of JMACA, I would like to thank Mary Lloyd who is stepping down from our Editorial Management team and whose dedicated work with the journal has made a valuable contribution. There are a number of other changes in the management of JMACA with this issue. This is the first journal that is peer reviewed, and we are grateful that our reviewers on the Editorial Advisory Board have engaged with the articles promptly and supportively. We welcome Lorraine Schaffer, Deirdre Curran and Treasa Kenny to the Board. Michael Lang, is not only remaining on our Editorial Advisory Board but is taking on the role of Special Advisor to the Editorial Team.

This issue includes a diverse set of articles covering topics which include cultural violence, restorative practices, game theory applied to negotiation, and creative artistic methodologies for working with conflict. Though accidental, there are some interesting common themes across the articles. Two articles deal with the influence culture has on conflict and violence and mediation practice, and another focuses on the manifestation of culturally imbued attitudes in specific instances, that is in “microaggressions”. Two further articles present dance, theatre and movement and body work as methodologies for working with conflict and trauma.

Looking at conflict through the lens originally proposed by Galtung, Jason Springs examines how symbolic violence built into a culture can legitimise direct and structural violence. This article provides extremely important sociological perspectives on non-direct violence with material that illustrates the concepts. Tony Whatling’s article aims to raise awareness of culture and diversity issues in the context of mediation and dispute resolution practice. He provides some theoretical ‘frames of reference’ that enable us to analyse such differences and to offer some practical steps towards the development of culturally sensitive mediation practice. According to Alan Gross, “microaggressions” are minor slights, unconscious biases and prejudices leaking out into our communication. He presents us with some challenging mediation situations where such interactions occur. These examples could be used for discussion in a variety of contexts, in class with students or in mediator team meetings.

On a somewhat lighter note Mark Young tells us that the urge to play is at least as strong as the urge to fight. He presents us with different negotiation games and their outcomes in negotiation, giving valuable insight into recognising and changing the game.

Nadia Siddiqui, Michelle O’Connor-Hill, Brisa Muñoz, and Lili Nikolova explore the intersection of mediation and artistic and embodied practices for peacebuilding contexts. The Peace and Wellness project created and developed by Patty Abozaglo is presented by her with detailed examples of her work



with communities in Columbia, Peru and Ireland. She illustrates how self-help through dance, movement and bodywork can enable both community development and the healing of trauma caused by violence. These two articles highlight the importance of practices that include bodywork, movement and dance for empowerment and healing in conflict intervention work.

In her research, Michelle Stowe examined setting up a Professional Learning Community in a school with teachers, interested in inculcating the practices and principles of Restorative Practice in their classrooms. She reports that in practice a Professional Learning Community improved relationships, promoted empathy and encouraged teachers and students to work together. In her article she outlines the methodology for developing and conducting this community. Her research findings emphasise the importance of reflective engagement by teachers in the implementation of restorative practices.

I trust that you will enjoy and benefit from the articles in this volume of JMACA.