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International Peace Research Institute, Oslo
Fuglehauggata 11, N-0260 Oslo, Norway
Telephone: 472-55 71 50
Cable address: PEACERESEARCH OSLO
Telefax: 472-55 84 22

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Notes on the Contributors

Ludmilla Andrejeva, PhD (University of Sofia, 1992). Assistant Professor, University of Sofia.

Yehudit Auerbach, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel.

Daniel Bar-Tal, Tel-Aviv University

Ilemda BenYehuda Agid, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel.

Klaus Boehnke, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Education, Free University of Berlin, Germany.

Julie E. Criss, PhD, Centinela Family and Child Guidance Clinic, Inglewood, CA

Gyorgy Csepeli, PhD (University of Budapest, ELTE, 1972). Chair, Department of Social Psychology.

Antti Eskola, PhD, Professor of Social Psychology, University of Tampere, Finland.

Ronald J. Fisher, PhD, Professor of Psychology, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada.

Wolfgang Frindte, PhD, Professor of Social Psychology, Department of Psychology, Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, Germany.

Benina Berger Gould, PhD, Adjunct Professor of Psychology, Saybrook Institute, San Francisco, CA and Research Associate, University of California, Berkeley, Center for Slavic and East European Studies.

Scott B. Hamilton, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, USA.

Andy Handler, graduate student at the California School of Professional Pyschology, Los Angeles

Moshe Hazani, Department of Criminology, Bar Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel

Paula B. Johnson, PhD, Professor of Psychology, California School of Professional Psychology, Los Angeles, CA

Nadia Kashlakeva, M.A. (University of Sofia, 1991). Assistant Professor, University of Sofia.

Carolyn Killifer, M.A. (Oregon State University, 1990). Professional Counselor.

Yechiel Klar, Tel-Aviv University

Arie W. Kruglanski, University of Maryland
Krum Krumov, PhD (University of Sofia, 1981). Chair, Department of Social Psychology, University of Sofia.
Knud S. Larsen, PhD (Brigham Young University, 1973). Professor, Oregon State University.
Claude Louche, Centre de Recherche en Psychologie, Equipe de Psychologie Sociale et du Travail, Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier, France.
Zeev Maoz, University of Haifa
Alexander V. Melnikov, PhD, Senior Researcher, Institute for the Problems of Higher Education, Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, Moscow, Russia.
Michael Moore, Department of Education in Science and Technology, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology
Gabriel Mugny, PhD, Professor of Social Psychology, Faculté de Psychologie et des Science de l'Education, University of Geneva, Switzerland.
Bendigt Olsen, Affiliated, Department of Social Science and Development, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway
Juan Antonio Pérez, PhD, Professor of Social Psychology, Departamento de Psicologia, University of Valencia, Spain.
Laszlo Pordany, M.A. (Attila Jozsef University, 1973). Hungarian Ambassador to Australia.
Jacob M. Rabbie, Department of Social and Organizational Psychology, University of Utrecht, The Netherlands.
Patricia Roux, PhD in Sociology, Faculté des Sciences Sociales et Politiques, University of Geneva, Switzerland.
Zlatka Russinova, PhD (University of Sofia, 1987). Associate Professor, University of Sofia.
Margarita Sanchez-Mazas, Faculté de Psychologie et des Science de l'Education, University of Geneva, Switzerland.
Tytti Solantaus, MD, PhD, Senior Lecturer, Department of Child Psychology, University of Helsinki, Finland.
Ulrike Unterbruner, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Didactics of the Natural Sciences, University of Salzburg, Austria.
Alistair B.C. Wallbaum, Doctoral student of Health Psychology, School of Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine.

PART 1:

Cognitive and Perceptual Approaches

Introduction to Part 1

This section opens with a chapter that centers around a question vividly debated over the past decade or so: how threat of war or other global threats can affect the psychic well-being of people. *Boehnke et al.* postulate a way of conceptualizing threat within a cognitive-phenomenological theory of stress as outlined by Lazarus. They also point out, however, that cognitive stress theory can be applied only if certain qualifications are made. First, threat of war has to be classified as macro-social stress, as opposed to other types of stressors like everyday hassles. Furthermore, remote threats of war have to be distinguished psychologically from immediate threats of war. The authors then argue that the original cognitive-phenomenological theory of stress has one central deficit, in that it ignores the social determinants of appraisal and coping. On the basis of thoughts by Tajfel, suggestions are made on how to integrate social-psychological ideas into the theory of stress. The chapter closes with brief propositions in regard to design and methodology in future research on the psycho-emotional effects of global crises.

The review essay by *Maoz* examines decision-theoretic studies of the initiation, management, and termination of international conflict, focusing on the traditional distinction between rational choice models and cognitive ones. The main arguments of this chapter are threefold. First, contrary to conventional wisdom, rational and cognitive models of international conflict provide not mutually exclusive but rather complementary explanations. Second, it is therefore constructive to view these models as context-dependent explanations of actual conflict behavior of national decision-makers. Third, we can get a better understanding of the decision-making processes by which conflicts are being made and unmade if these two approaches are synthesized.

The chapter by *Wallbaum* reviews the literature on integrative complexity during international crises. In several archival studies, crises that ended in war showed reduced complexity among the policy-makers. Conversely, increases in integrative complexity have been shown to precede international agreements. Political longevity is associated with the ability to maintain or increase complexity during crisis situations – although this ability seems

Minority Influence and the Psycho-Social Mechanisms of Discrimination

Patricia Roux
Margarita Sanchez-Mazas
Gabriel Mugny
Juan Antonio Pérez

1. Introduction

Relations between foreigners and a particular country's nationals are frequently difficult, tense and marred by conflict. Social psychology can contribute to an understanding of such intergroup phenomena by describing the processes that underlie them. It was first demonstrated that social competition may depend upon the fact that members of discrete groups perceive an incompatibility between their particular goals. That is, social rivalry arises when the members of group A feel that the goals of group B will be achieved only at the expense of the goals of group A (Sherif, 1966). It has also been shown that intergroup tensions have deeper psychological roots. In particular, when groups evaluate and compare each other on the basis of criteria that they consider to be especially important (Brewer, 1979), discrimination against the outgroup may be employed as the means of preserving self-esteem. In this way, group members can maintain a sense of positive identity, since the group to which they belong has been rated higher than the outgroup and this superiority can be assumed by each individual member (Tajfel, 1978, 1982; Turner, 1981, 1987). Social psychologists have been interested not only in describing the dynamics that characterize intergroup relationships but also in determining the circumstances in which ingroup favoritism and outgroup discrimination do not appear. Thus, Sherif's studies have shown that the incompatibility of group goals may be overridden when there is a 'superordinate goal', i.e. when some more significant common cause can be espoused by both groups, bringing them together. Mummendey and Schreiber

* These researches are part of a joint project with members of the Laboratoire Européen de Psychologie Sociale and were carried out with the assistance of the Fonds National Suisse de la Recherche Scientifique and the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

(1983) established that discrimination against the outgroup is not observed when members of a group are allowed to reach independent judgements on their own group and on another; that is, they can place a value on their own group without the need to depreciate the other. The search for a positive social identity,which is ensured by the superiority of their own group, does not necessarily lead to ingroup favoritism. This is particularly true when group members can judge their own group favorably on the basis of certain attributes or characteristics, while recognizing the value of a different set of attributes in another group. This process of 'mutual social validation' (Rijsman, 1984; van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 1990) is fair to both groups.

2. Xenophobia and Ways of Considering Intergroup Relations

In this chapter, we are interested specifically in the determinants of xenophobia (negative attitude towards foreign people). Xenophobia is manifest as an unfavourable and discriminatory attitude towards people of a different nationality and is rooted partially in the social status of individuals. In the various studies we undertook of relations between Swiss nationals and foreigners, we asked a number of young nationals to quantify the extent of their agreement with various propositions that would be favorable to foreigners (such as rights to freedom of expression, certain political rights and rights to equal salaries; cf. Mugny & Pérez, 1991). Our experimental subjects were mainly apprentices and high school students; we chose these two distinct groups of young people because of the differences between them, in terms both of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and of the nature of their education. Comparison of the results from the two groups revealed the existence of more negative attitudes towards foreigners among apprentices than among high school students (Mugny, Sanchez-Mazas, Roux & Pérez, 1991).

Similar results were obtained in response to the question of reducing the percentage of the foreign population in Switzerland (currently about 16%). The majority of apprentices are in favour of reducing this percentage, while most students wanted to maintain it at its present level or even increase it. The nature of apprenticeship is such that apprentices will enter the labor market earlier than high school students, and will therefore be exposed sooner to the pressures of productivity, particularly those linked to competition for jobs. Immigrant workers are thus more likely to be seen as a potential threat and as a group who may benefit at the expense of apprentices. Apprentices fear the diminishing of the rights they claim for themselves (such as the right to a job). This negative interdependence of the interests of nationals and foreigners would have more influence on the reasoning of apprentices than on that of the students: benefits for the outgroup would be seen as representing probable losses for the nationals. In contrast, more positive attitudes towards foreigners are often shown by those whose background tends to favor extended formal education, i.e. the high school students. The social status of these individuals is such as to give less prominence to negative interdependence as a factor in

their relationships with foreigners and even to promote a feeling of solidarity with people of other national communities.

We aimed to establish whether xenophobic attitudes are function of the way in which intergroup relationships are perceived and not merely of relative social status. We were testing the hypothesis that xenophobia goes hand in hand with a perception of intergroup relationships based on *negative interdependence* ('what the other group gains, my group loses'), and that more xenophilic attitudes (positive attitudes towards foreign people) are linked to a perception of *independence*, if not solidarity or positive interdependence, between groups.

In testing this hypothesis, we studied preferences for two systems of allocating a variety of resources to Swiss nationals and foreigners (Mugny et al., 1991). The subjects had to decide on the extent to which members of the two national groups should benefit from the implementation of various resolutions, such as subsidised accommodation and minimum salary levels. Half the subjects – all Swiss nationals – were asked to apportion a total of 100 points between Swiss and foreigners for each of the resolutions. This first experimental condition produced a negative interdependence in intergroup judgements, since advantages granted to one group necessarily reduced those granted to the other. The other half of the subjects were able to award up to 100 points to Swiss nationals and, separately, up to 100 points to the foreigners. This allowed them to make quite independent judgements of the benefits that should be granted, since awards to foreigners did not detract from those that could be made to nationals.

On the basis of their responses to an initial question concerning whether or not the number of foreign residents in Switzerland should be reduced, it was possible to distinguish three types of subjects. Those who thought the number should be reduced were classed as 'xenophobes', those who wanted to maintain the status quo were classed as 'intermediates', and those who considered that the number of foreigners permitted to live and work in Switzerland should be increased were classed as 'xenophiles'.

Let us consider the principal results. First, subjects were asked a number of questions to determine their opinion of the design of the study. With regard to the experimental condition (having a 100 points to share between Swiss and foreigners or 100 points for each national category), they were asked to say whether this type of question was a fair way of presenting the problem and whether it accorded with their way of thinking. The answers they gave reflected the categories described above: the xenophobes favored a design which allowed them to respond in terms based on negative interdependence and which was more familiar to them; as for the xenophiles, they showed a preference for reasoning in independent terms and identified themselves most with the 'independent design'. Thus, we were able to verify the hypothesis that attitudes towards an outgroup are related to the way in which the individual thinks about intergroup relationships.

The second set of results that we shall consider concerns ingroup favoritism, which was measured by calculating the difference in the number of points

awarded to the Swiss and to foreigners for the proposed resolutions (a positive sign indicates the allocation of more points to the ingroup). The xenophobic subjects favored their own group, i.e. the Swiss, in both the independent (m= +30) and the interdependent (m= +33) condition. The xenophilic subjects systematically applied a principle of solidarity, which was equally apparent in the independent (m= +01) and the interdependent (m= +03) condition, no difference was established in the allocation of advantages to both national categories.

The intermediate subjects, who favored maintaining the status quo, were particularly sensitive to the experimental condition. When questions were posed in interdependent terms (100 points to be shared between the two groups),there was evident ingroup favoritism (m= +15); for many resolutions, intermediate subjects clearly favored their fellow citizens. However, when questions were posed in independent terms (up to 100 points could be awarded to each group), this bias disappears (m= +05) and differences in the benefits awarded to Swiss nationals and to foreigners lost all statistical significance. Thus, given the opportunity to make separate judgements on the ingroup and the outgroup, moderate individuals (those in favor neither of reducing nor of increasing the foreign population residing in Switzerland) abandon discrimination in favor of an attitude of solidarity.

Assuming that an important proportion of a population, like that of Switzerland, may be regarded as moderate in their attitudes towards foreigners, it is easy to imagine the importance of social policies favoring one or the other sociocognitive mode. Campaigns that highlight an independent or solidary attitude towards relations between different national groups could result in a significant number of people adopting a more egalitarian stance. One might hope that children could be educated in international relations in a way that would promote this. Even so, xenophobic individuals would remain a problem: they continue to discriminate against foreigners even when given the opportunity to make independent judgements that run contrary to their usual way of considering relations between groups. The question must be asked, what psychosocial processes can prevent such individuals, whose social origins and ways of thinking are so firmly entrenched, from becoming locked in their exclusive and sociocentric attitudes? We looked for a possible solution among the processes of social influence.

3. Xenophobia and Minority Influence

Our model of influence offers certain analogies with the social reality in which such discrimination phenomena occur. Indeed, during the past 20 years, the presence of foreigners in Switzerland has been regularly challenged. Swiss citizens are periodically polled in national referenda which propose a liberalization or a restriction of the rights of immigrant workers (mainly European) or – more recently – of political refugees (mostly colored). The results of these polls have shown quite consistently that the Swiss have reservations about the foreign presence in their country, and that xenophilic attitudes are to be found only among a minority. Whatever the status of those promoting the interests of foreigners (Christians, a left-wing group or any other social movement), their position appears to be diametrically opposed to majority opinion. To persuade xenophobic (or, at least non-xenophilic) individuals to adopt a more tolerant attitude and more open-mindedness towards intergroup relations implies a minority influence on a majority attitude and way of thinking.

It therefore seems wise to turn to the model of minority influence, according to which, changes in norms, in popular opinion, mentality and values are frequently the result of intervention by active minorities (Moscovici, 1976). From the research done in this field (cf. Moscovici, Mugny & Van Avermaet, 1985; Mugny & Peréz, 1991; Paicheler, 1988), we are now interested only in the fact that the effectiveness of minority pressure for change seems to be induced by the *conflict* that it generates rather than by the approval it receives (Moscovici, 1980). A source may be rejected initially because of its minority status or the minority nature of its ideas, but ultimately succeeds in its objectives despite, or perhaps because of, the conflict it has engendered (Peréz & Mugny, 1990).

In the area of intergroup relations it is possible to advance the hypothesis that the conflict aroused by minorities may be a means of challenging the xenophobes, of attracting their attention and persuading them to reflect on the minority alternative (Mugny & Peréz, 1988). Such a reflexion would not have been reached without the minority's intervention. Even if xenophobes do not openly adopt the minority's positions, they may be sufficiently inspired to modify their attitudes and behavior in consequence (Nemeth, 1986).

Looking at the problem from this point of view (i.e. that of the conflict aroused by minorities) is a new approach and one of which no account has been taken in current social practices. Indeed, the usual observation is that people do their best to avoid ideological confrontation. Even those groups who intervene in society in attempts to attract their audience to more xenophilic positions sometimes, if not frequently, employ strategies designed to avoid conflict (Peréz, Mugny & Roux, 1989). Thus, the Christian communities who campaigned in the early 1980s to increase the rights of foreigners in Switzerland did not attempt to prescribe how their fellow citizens should vote, but rather invoked humanitarian principles and biblical rules of conduct. In this way, they systematically avoided provoking conflict – but, the campaign was a total failure. It may therefore be concluded that a minority group that, through inconsistent (in other words, insufficiently coherent) behavior (Moscovici, 1976) or over-conciliatory dialogue, generates too little conflict has scant chance of altering public attitude (in this case xenophobia) or even of persuading the public to consider its proposal.

An experiment by Mugny & Peréz (1985), directly inspired by this anti-xenophobic campaign, illustrates the efficacy of minority persuasion where greater conflict is provoked. We compared the effects on a Christian-derived population of various pro-foreigner messages, designed to be more or less provocative. Eight messages were composed in an effort to simulate both the strategies adopted by the Christian communities described above and

more provocative campaigns. The messages were similar to one another but differed in three parameters so as to produce different levels of conflict (weak or strong). Each experimental subject was exposed to only one of the messages, and the intention was to measure the impact of the messages by comparing the reactions of those who read them.

Half of the subjects were exposed to messages advancing accepted humanitarian claims, such as the rights for foreigners to freedom to speech and to social security, and half to more radical messages that advanced claims more usually rejected, in particular the right of foreigners to vote in Switzerland. Moreover, half the messages advanced these claims on the basis of religious principles and, since the experimental population was Christian, induced only weak conflict. The other half based their argument on political principles, which produced greater conflict in these subjects. Finally, half the messages were formulated in conciliatory terms ('It is to be hoped that ...') and half in a more rigid and constraining manner ('It is absolutely necessary that ...').

To reiterate, one of the messages effectively reproduced, in tone and content, that used by the Christian communities in their appeal: widespread humanitarian claims were proposed in a conciliant manner, in the name of biblical principles that subjects could recognize as their own in view of their Christian identity. The other messages were more conflictual, as they introduced more radical claims, they used a more rigid tone and/or they used a more political argumentation difficult for our experimental population to accept.

After subjects had been exposed to one of the messages, they were questioned about their attitudes to foreigners and about whether they approved or disapproved of the various proposals that would benefit foreigners. The results showed that attitudes differed according to the nature of the message presented. Least favorable attitudes were recorded among those subjects exposed to the least provocative message, that is a message based on biblical and humanitarian principles and framed in conciliatory terms. Conversely, and as predicted by the minority influence model, the messages designed to provoke the greatest conflict were those that produced the least discrimination against foreigners. Thus, ideological confrontation with minority ideas has potential innovatory power.

4. Minority Influence and In(ter)dependence of Judgements

As shown above, a relationship exists between people's attitudes to foreigners and the independence or negative interdependence of their thinking with respect to intergroup relations. But what happens to the thinking of the xenophobe who is confronted with a minority argument that provokes conflict? Can minorities influence an attitude of discrimination by persuading the xenophobe to think in independent terms, that is to consider the interests of two groups as no longer being mutually exclusive? In another experiment (Mugny et al., 1991, expt 2), we combined minority influence with both judgement modalities – independence and interdependence. Half of the

experimental subjects were presented with a highly xenophilic message couched in conciliatory terms as before ('It is to be hoped that ...'). The other half were given a more rigid message ('It is absolutely necessary that ...'). Subjects were then asked to express themselves as being in favor of Swiss nationals on the one hand or foreigners on the other with respect to five separate issues (rights to social security, minimum wage, training assistance, unemployment benefits, and subsidised accomodation). As in the earlier experiment, half of the subjects had to apportion a total of 100 points between Swiss nationals and foreigners, and the other half could award up to 100 points to each group. Lastly, subjects were asked to complete a questionnaire relating to their attitudes to foreigners, expressing their approval or disapproval for a number of resolutions that would benefit foreigners. Analysis of the results concentrated on those subjects classified as xenophobic on the basis of their initially expressed desire to reduce the number of foreigners living and working in Switzerland.

The results of this study confirmed our earlier observations, that xenophobic individuals favor their fellow nationals regardless of the style of the message (conciliatory or rigid) or the mode of judgement (independent or interdependent). Thus, confrontation with the minority viewpoint is not in itself sufficient to counteract the typical discriminatory attitude adopted by xenophobic individuals. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that subjects granted more points (and hence more advantages), not only to Swiss, but also to foreigners, in the independent than in the interdependent conditions. Moreover, in allowing subjects to be more generous, the independent conditions of judgements also promote a line of reasoning that is opposed to intergroup competition. Indeed, the correlation between points allocated to the ingroup and to the outgroup is close to −1 in the interdependent conditions but approaches 0 and loses all statistical significance in the conditions of independence, i.e. when benefits for the Swiss are not granted at the expense of foreign nationals.

At the end of the experiment, subjects were asked for their opinions on the pro-foreigner resolutions. At this level, the influence of the minority message becomes evident. Subjects who were led to reason in independent terms, i.e. were allowed to award up to 100 points to both groups, clearly displayed less unfavorable attitudes toward foreigners than subjects who had to make interdependent judgements. Freed of the constraint of a competitive relationship between the two groups, which was seen as threatening their own interests, subjects were able to espouse the more egalitarian approach of the minority cause. The more firmly the minority message was expressed, the more pronounced was this effect, which confirms the conclusions drawn in the earlier study.

Subjects of the present study, all of whom had tended towards xenophobia, initially resisted the minority influence and showed clear national favoritism in the first allocation of points to the two groups. Later, however, when confronted with resolutions that would benefit foreigners and allowed to make judgements in the independent mode, they marked this [illegible]

when the minority position was highly provocative. It therefore seems that the articulation of an independent approach to intergroup relations with a certain intensity of conflict generated by the minority message, predisposes to an attitude of solidarity or equality that could counteract, if not substitute, discrimination.

5. Conclusions

The foregoing observations open various avenues of thought on counteracting discrimination. On a superficial level, assessing the importance of relative social status as a determinant of xenophobia suggests that the integration of foreigners into society would be less fraught with conflict if nationals did not perceive this process as threatening their own access to certain rights. In other words, a lessening of social injustice and of inequity of rights would do much to reduce conflict between national groups. Many of the xenophobic objections raised about the presence of foreigners in Switzerland are expressed in terms of rising unemployment, housing shortages, budgetary cuts, inadequacy of pensions, tax increases, etc., all of which cause greater problems for the most disadvantaged sections of the society. Categories such as apprentices are highly susceptible to this type of argument, which finds expression as a belief in the negative interdependence of the interests of Swiss nationals and the interests of foreigners.

Of course, it may seem very idealistic to count upon the introduction of a global policy that could help install the conditions for the development of a feeling of equity and social justice that would favor pleasant relations between Swiss and foreigners. The current situation shows that for the time being only minorities nourish such a project and are trying to involve part of the public opinion, thereby creating psychosocial conditions that would favor concrete changes. Social psychology's approach of the processes linked to minority impact can suggest a certain number of considerations to take into account while planning campaigns in favor of foreigners.

A first idea is that minorities could attempt to counter the logic of the negative interdependence of group interests. Anti-racist and anti-xenophobic movements should stress that the interests of the Swiss and those of foreigners can be complementary and a source of mutual enrichment. In doing so, they would demonstrate that these interests are not exclusive and source of social decline. This seems to be the message conveyed by recent campaigns in favor of full citizenship of foreigners in the adoptive land: the joint study of problems equally shared by nationals and foreigners (housing, environment, education, etc.) with the aim of improving the standards of living of the less-favored residents. For a principle of solidarity to substitute discriminatory behavior, one must promote the idea that the answer to the social and economic problems as experienced by Swiss citizens does not imply a strong defense of their interests against those of foreigners. Such an approach would help go beyond an interdependent vision of the world that nowadays is still very common, particularly in certain groups or organizations

that give precedence to the defense of social and economical positions for their nationals and thereby encourage the reasoning characteristic of xenophobia and the discriminatory attitudes that go along with it.

A second idea relates to the notion of conflict. A large number of groups defending the interests of foreigners, immigrants and refugees, most often develop a strategy of minimal conflict, using humanitarian ideals as their main argumentation and are reluctant to adventure themselves in a socio-political field that socially proves to be more conflictual. This fear of conflict (that is perhaps overdeveloped in Switzerland, as it is a country used to a certain level of 'social peace'), brings us to one last conclusion in the light of the results of the researches we presented in this chapter. It was indeed shown that conflict could generate personal questioning and innovation. Whereas majorities may call upon the power of consensus to convey their ideas (as is widely done in this country), minorities have another type of argumentation at their disposal: conflict. But, in the case of relations between Swiss and foreigners for instance, the minorities advocating this cause ultimately aim at the establishment of a more equitable and tolerant world, or in other words a more pacific one. Would there then be a certain contradiction between ends and means? between a pacific world and a strategy of conflict?

A positive answer to this question would be contrary to the processes we have analyzed. Confrontation is a mediation that brings individuals to de-center themselves by considering referents other than their own, to set their vision of the world aside and realize the existence of other points of view. Given the opportunity to recognize different points of view, it is then possible for individuals to integrate them in one way or another, at least partly, to their modes of thinking and in their attitudes. The refusal of confrontation too often implies a reproduction of social relations in terms of hierarchy of power, interests and rights. By contrast, the conflict induced by active minorities can bring individuals into the process of redefining these relations.

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10

Community Psychology Applied to Peace Studies*

Julie E. Criss
Paula B. Johnson

1. Introduction

This chapter addresses several ways in which theory from community psychology can be applied to peace studies and to the generation of non-violent solutions to international conflict.

Since the end of World War II, the field of psychology has gradually increased its focus on the study of the causes and prevention of war. Across various areas of the field (e.g., social, biological, cognitive, development, humanistic, experimental, and clinical), psychology has investigated such topics as public opinion towards nuclear war; the psycho-social consequences of the arms race; psycho-biological explanations of war; paranoid attitudes toward the enemy; dehumanization of the enemy; perceptions of risk or threat; conflict resolution; nationalism and ethnocentrism; and gender issues, to name a few (Jacobs, 1989). The area of *community psychology*, however, is noticeably absent from the above mentioned research. Community psychology models have much to offer the growing field of peace studies. Community psychology has at its basis an ecological/interactional model, values of cultural relativity and diversity, a focus on searching for new paradigms, theory that enables examination of social issues at multiple levels, and an openness to multidisciplinary approaches (Rappaport, 1977). It is also more applied than most other areas of psychology.

Community psychology was born during the 1960s, a time of awakening social conscience and activism. It had and still has close ties with clinical psychology. However, social and economic injustices were recognized as contributing to psycho-social distress. As such, the locus of intervention

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