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CHAPTER 21

Conflict and Conflict Management[1]

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A BALANCED VIEW of conflict is emerging in the literature which recognizes that conflict can have constructive or destructive effects, depending upon its management. To aid in conflict management, two general models of conflict are synthesized from the literature—a process model and a structural model. The process model focuses upon the sequence of events within a conflict episode, and is intended to be of use when intervening directly into the stream of events of an ongoing episode. The structural model focuses upon the conditions which shape conflict behavior in a relationship, and is intended to help in restructuring a situation to facilitate various behavior patterns. The chapter concludes with some general observations on the state of the conflict literature.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict, like power, is one of those fascinating but frequently abused and misunderstood subjects. Like any potent force, conflict generates ambivalence by virtue of its ability to do great injury or, if harnessed, great good. Until recently, social scientists have been most aware of conflict's destructive capability—epitomized by strikes, wars, interracial hostility, and so on. This awareness seems to have given conflict an overwhelming connotation of danger and to have created a bias toward harmony and peacemaking in the social sciences. However, a more balanced view of conflict seems to be emerging. More and more, social scientists are coming to realize—and to demonstrate—that conflict itself is no evil, but rather a phenomenon which can have constructive or destructive effects depending upon its management.

In this chapter, I have tried to assemble a body of theory which will be helpful in managing industrial and organizational conflict, and I have attempted to put that theory into a coherent and understandable form.

[1] I wish to thank Dave Jamieson for his able help in reviewing the conflict literature, and Ralph Kilmann and the members of the Human Systems Development Study Center, UCLA, for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper. Portions of this work were supported by UCLA and the Division of Research of the Graduate School of Management, UCLA.

Specifically, I have surveyed the conflict literature for relevant concepts, hypotheses, and findings, interpreted that material in the context of my own theoretical framework, and integrated that material into two complementary models of conflict. Where there were appreciable gaps in those assembled models, I have also filled in with hypotheses of my own.

The literature relevant to industrial and organizational conflict is in need of integration. Much of this literature is specialized according to organizational arena—for example, the interface between union and management, between superior and subordinate, between different departments, and so on. This situation makes it difficult for students, theorists, and practitioners specializing in one area to benefit from the concepts and models of other areas. Moreover, there is a great deal of research outside the boundaries of organizations which has yielded concepts and insights of great potential relevance to the study of conflict in organizational settings. This research, from experimental gaming, small group research, social conflict, international relations, etc., is also largely specialized and unintegrated.

It is presumed here that the dynamics underlying conflict behavior in one area will be relevant to conflict in other areas. This assumption was spelled out in an editorial of the first issue of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (1957, p. 2):

> Many of the patterns and processes which characterize conflict in one area also characterize it in others. Negotiation and mediation go on in labor disputes as well as in international relations. Price wars and domestic quarrels have much the pattern of an arms race. Frustration breeds aggression both in the individual and in the state. The jurisdictional problems of labor unions and the territorial disputes of states are not dissimilar. It is not too much to claim that out of the contributions of many fields a general theory of conflict is emerging.

This chapter, then, will focus upon material which appears relevant to conflict phenomena in all arenas of organizations.

Definition of Conflict

Before proceeding any farther, it is important that conflict be defined. In the behavorial sciences, the word "conflict" has no single, clear referent. When used by psychologists, the word often denotes incompatible response tendencies within an individual. For example, ambivalence may be called "approach-avoidance conflict" (Levinger, 1957). Likewise, the term may be used to mean role conflict—competing response tendencies within an individual stemming from the requirements of different roles which he occupies (Kahn et al., 1964).

In this chapter attention will be restricted to the type of conflict which occurs *between* social units. These social units may be individuals, groups, or organizations. Moreover, the discussion will be restricted to conflict between *two* social units, which will be referred to as "dyadic conflict." Conflict phenomena between more than two units involves the formation of coalitions, and the discussion of such "political" behavior is outside the scope of this chapter.[2]

Even with such restrictions, however, there is no consensus among researchers on a specific definition of "conflict." A painstaking review of conflict literature conducted by Fink (1968) revealed a large number of divergent usages, including fourteen different criteria for simply distinguishing conflict from competition! Within the organizational conflict literature, Pondy (1967) likewise found a number of divergent specific definitions ranging over objective conditions, emotions, perceptions, and behavior. Rather than attempt to argue that one of these specific definitions was really conflict, Pondy recommended that "conflict" be used in a generic sense to include all these phenomena.

Taking a cue from Pondy, then, I shall adopt a more general working definition of dyadic conflict. Dyadic conflict will be considered to be a *process* which includes the perceptions, emotions, behaviors, and outcomes of the two parties. Specifically, in order to differentiate conflict processes from other processes, I shall say that conflict is the process which begins when one party perceives that the other has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of his.[3] Later in the chapter, this definition will be further developed into a process model of dyadic conflict. Meanwhile, however, it should be pointed out that this working definition includes a wide variety of phenomena, since a party may be frustrated by actions ranging from intellectual disagreement to physical violence.

[2] The reader interested in coalitions should refer to Gamson (1964) and Caplow (1968). Perhaps the most well-known study of coalitions in organizational politics was reported by Dalton (1959).

[3] The noun "party" and the pronoun "him" will often be used in this chapter to denote a social unit involved in a conflict. These terms are used for convenience, and are not intended to limit the discussion to individuals.

[4] For example, this view has recently been expressed by sociologists (Coser, 1956; Van Doorn, 1966), psychologists (Schmidt & Tannenbaum, 1960; Blake & Mouton, 1964; Deutsch, 1971; Hoffman et al., 1962), economists (Boulding, 1964), and organization theorists (Pondy, 1967; Thompson, 1960; Litterer, 1966).

Effects of Conflict

As was mentioned earlier, attitudes toward conflict appear to have shifted over the past twenty or thirty years. The human relations movement, with its emphasis upon the personal and organization costs of conflict, implied that conflict was to be avoided or eliminated (Kelly, 1970; Litterer, 1966; Baritz, 1960). There is now a more general recognition that interpersonal and intergroup conflict often serves useful functions.[4]

Some recurrent themes in discussions of positive effects of conflict are as follows:

First, a moderate degree of conflict may not necessarily be viewed as a cost by the parties involved. Theories of motivation are shifting from notions of tension reduction to the view that organisms tend to maintain optimal levels of stimulation (Allport, 1953; Hunt, 1963; Driver & Streufert, 1964). It is increasingly recognized that too little stimulation or tension (boredom) may be as unpleasant to a person as an excess of it. Under conditions of low tension, people may welcome or seek out the novelty of divergent opinions, the challenge of competition, and at times, the excitement of overt hostilities. Deutsch (1971, p. 48) mentions that conflict stimulates interest and curiosity, and that "conflict is often part of the process of testing and assessing oneself and, as such, may be highly enjoyable as one experiences the pleasure of full and active use of one's capacities."

Second, the confrontation of divergent views often produces ideas of superior quality. Divergent views are apt to be based upon different evidence, different considerations, different insights, different frames of reference. Disagreements may thus confront an individual with factors which he had previously ignored, and help him to arrive at a more comprehensive view which synthesizes elements of his own and others' positions. The ideology of the university has long stressed the importance of the free exchange of ideas in the pursuit of knowledge. In a study of medical researchers, Pelz (1956) found that researchers who discussed their work with colleagues of different orientations were more likely to be high performers. Hoffman (1959; Hoffman & Maier, 1961) found that groups composed of members with different interests tended to produce higher quality solutions to a variety of problems than did homogenous groups. On the basis of a number of his own group decision-making studies, Hall (1971, p. 88) concluded that "conflict, effectively managed, is a necessary precondition for creativity."

Third, aggressive behavior in conflict situations is not necessarily irrational or destructive. Rapoport (1966) identified two basic models of international conflict which also appear to describe alternative views of conflict in organizations. According to the first model, the participants in a conflict fall under the influence of strong nonrational forces which push the parties toward increasingly destructive behavior. Viewed in this way, conflict resembles a dangerous

disease which should be suppressed. Janis and Katz (1959) point out that the majority of past research on intergroup and interpersonal conflict has focused upon its destructive aspects, helping to promote this view. According to the second model, however, conflict behavior is the instrumental, goal-oriented behavior of two largely rational parties. As such, the parties remain in greater control of the situation, and the outcome need not be destructive.

Indeed, the aggressive pursuit of apparently conflicting goals by two parties may well lead to constructive outcomes. March and Simon (1958, p. 129) and Litterer (1966) state that such conflict tends to initiate a search for ways of reducing the conflict. Since one party's gains are not necessarily another party's losses, two parties actively seeking to improve their own conditions may thus succeed in finding new arrangements which benefit them both (Follett, 1941). In a very real sense, such new arrangements constitute progress for the parties and for the organization. Viewed from this perspective, the suppression of conflict may have the effect of impeding progress and maintaining the status quo (Van Doorn, 1966).

A few useful side effects of conflict have also been noted. Litterer (1966) noted that conflict within an organization may call attention to systemic problems which require change. Hostility between groups also tends to foster internal cohesiveness and unity of purpose within groups (Coser, 1956; Blake & Mouton, 1961). Finally, power struggles often provide the mechanism for determining the balance of power, and thus for adjusting the terms of a relationship according to those realities (Coser, 1956).

Recognition of useful consequences of conflict, of course, does not mean that conflict is regarded as intrinsically good instead of intrinsically bad. The destructive consequences of conflict in organizations are well known. What does seem to be emerging is a more balanced view of conflict which recognizes cost and benefit, danger and promise.

With the recognition that conflict can be both useful and destructive, the emphasis has shifted from the elimination of conflict to the *management* of conflict. The goal of conflict management has been variously stated as keeping conflicts productive or at least not destructive (Deutsch, 1971, p. 53), or as keeping conflicts creative and useful (Kahn & Boulding, 1964, p. 76).

Conflict Models

The shift in emphasis from the elimination of conflict to conflict management requires a more discriminating understanding of conflict phenomena. In order to manage conflict, we must understand what sort of conflict behavior is most likely to lead to constructive outcomes and which behaviors tend to be either unproductive or destructive. Then we must begin to identify the variables which influence the occurrence of those behaviors, so that we can develop productive intervention strategies and tactics.

The remainder of the chapter will be spent developing two models of dyadic conflict—a process model and a structural model. Together, the two models are my attempt to integrate and build upon some of the insights in the conflict literature. Both models focus upon the conflict-handling behavior of the conflict parties, and both models attempt to understand that behavior. However, in reviewing the literature, it became apparent that researchers attempt to "understand" conflict phenomena in different ways—hence the two models.

PROCESS MODEL. One form of research attempts to understand conflict phenomena by studying the internal dynamics of conflict episodes. Here the objective is commonly to identify the events within an episode and to trace the effect of each event upon succeeding events. From this perspective, conflict is very much an ongoing process. I have, therefore, referred to the model which incorporates this sort of research as a "process model" of conflict.

To illustrate the focus of the process model, let us examine a hypothetical conflict episode between Sales and Production department supervisors:

> Sales has promised a customer an early delivery date on a given item. When informed of this during a meeting, the Production supervisor feels frustrated because that delivery date would throw off his whole production schedule. He has carefully planned his schedule in order to maximize the productive capacity of his equipment. Perceiving that covering Sales' promise is incompatible with the efficiency of his own department, the Production supervisor attempts to make the Sales supervisor change the promised delivery date. Annoyed at this response, and disturbed by the idea of disappointing the customer, the Sales manager resists this influence attempt and tries to convince the Production manager to meet the delivery date. In the resulting discussion, both parties become more hostile and argumentative. The meeting adjourns, leaving the two parties deadlocked.

In examining this episode, the process model is concerned with identifying events —for example, the frustration of one party, his conceptualization of the situation, his behavior, the reaction of the other party, and the final agreement or lack of agreement. Having identified those events, the model is then concerned with the influence of each event upon the following events—for example, how did each manager's conceptualization of the issue influence his behavior, how does one manager's behavior influence the other's, and how is the form of the final agreement influenced by their behavior?

This sort of knowledge would tend to be helpful in influencing an ongoing episode. Knowing what effects one's own behavior would have upon others would help a party manage the behavior which occurs during an episode. Knowing the likely effects of behavior upon outcomes would help the party steer interaction toward a desirable outcome. Such knowledge would presumably be of use to the two principal parties as well as to third parties—mediators, arbitrators, supervisors, committee chairmen, etc.

STRUCTURAL MODEL. Other research attempts to understand conflict phenomena by studying how underlying conditions shape events. Here the objective is to identify parameters which influence conflict behavior, and to specify the form of that influence. Because these conditions or parameters are relatively fixed or slow changing, I have referred to the model which incorporates this research as a "structural model" of conflict.

As a means of illustrating the focus of the structural model, let us examine the relationship between the Sales and Production managers with a view toward identifying the underlying variables which shape the parties' behavior:

> Negotiations between the department heads are largely confined to biweekly meetings convened by the vice president of operations. This procedure shapes the behavior of both parties —complaints accumulate and smolder until meeting time; and the formality of the meeting and the presence of their boss minimizes risk taking. At the same time, the boss's presence provides a resolution mechanism which is sometimes utilized when they deadlock: his arbitration provides an alternative to continuing power struggles. Formal rules and past agreements by the two parties eliminate conflicts on issues which are unambiguously covered by those rules and agreements. However, because of the abundance of rules, disagreements which do occur tend to be win-lose issues over the interpretations of those rules. Social pressures from other parties help to keep the competition from escalating uncontrollably, although the prevailing organizational norms do not encourage problem solving. The Production manager tends to be somewhat more competitive and hostile than the Sales manager. This difference is partly due to the Production

manager's personality: he is an older, up-from-the-ranks manager who fought his way through the Depression. However, competitive behavior by both department heads is encouraged by the members of their departments, each of which has come to view the other department as an enemy. Underlying many of the issues which arise between the two department heads is some very real conflict of interest stemming from tight performance indices and tightening organizational resources. Both parties have high stakes in these issues.

In examining this relationship, the structural model is concerned with identifying the pressures and constraints which bear upon the parties' behavior—for example, social pressures, personal predispositions, established negotiation procedures and rules, incentives, and so on. Furthermore, the structural model attempts to specify the effects of these conditions upon behavior—for example, in what way do peer pressures influence behavior, how does frequency of interaction influence conflict behavior, and how do various personal motives shape one's conflict behavior?

This understanding of structural influences would tend to be helpful in altering variables to produce long-run changes in conflict-handling behavior in a situation: Personnel may alter hiring or promotion policies to favor more collaborative individuals, incentive schemes may be changed, new rules made, new meeting procedures instituted, etc.

NEED FOR BOTH MODELS. Having identified and differentiated these models, something needs to be said about their interrelationship. First, the two models complement each other. The structural model tends to be useful for suggesting systemic changes, while the process model tends to be helpful in managing an ongoing system. The structural model suggests long-run improvements in relationships, while the process model helps one cope with crises. And so on. Both models, and the tactics which they suggest, are necessary for effective conflict management.

Secondly, the two models are presented separately for convenience and because they seem to reflect somewhat different research literatures. In reality, of course, they fit together into one larger view of conflict structure and process. The structural variables constrain and shape the process dynamics, while knowledge of the process dynamics helps one predict the effects of structural variables.

PROCESS MODEL OF DYADIC CONFLICT

The first model to be developed is the process model, which identifies and examines the events within a conflict episode. Pondy (1967) and Walton (1969) note that conflict in a dyadic relationship tends to occur in cycles. Pondy refers to a given conflict cycle as an episode. Within a relationship, each episode is partially shaped by the results of previous episodes and in turn lays the groundwork for future episodes.

The process model of dyadic conflict to be developed in this chapter is shown in Figure 1. This model depicts five main events within an episode from the viewpoint of one of the parties: frustration, conceptualization, behavior, other's reaction, and outcome.

Briefly, the episode is produced by the party's experiencing of frustration, present or anticipated, to the realization of one of his goals. If the experienced frustration is dealt with consciously, the party will then conceptualize the situation. This is the point at which the conflict becomes salient to the party. In Walton's terms, the conflict becomes defined as an "issue."

Based largely upon his conceptualization of the situation, the party then engages in behavior vis-à-vis the other party to cope with the situation. "Behavior" is used here in a general sense so as to include avoidance or withdrawal as well as more assertive behaviors.

The other party then reacts to this behavior. The loop in Figure 1, between behavior and conceptualization, represents

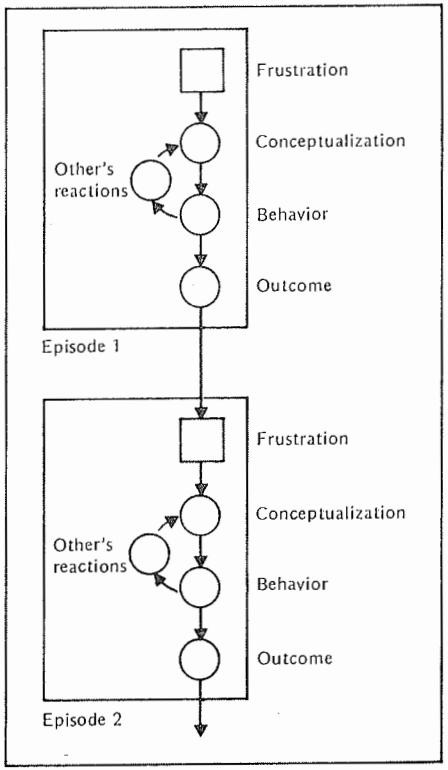

Figure 1. Process model of dyadic conflict episodes.

the effects upon the party of the other's reaction to his behavior. The party's initial behavior may initiate a more or less prolonged interaction between himself and the other. Each party's behavior serves as a stimulus for the other's response. During the course of this interaction, each party's conceptualization of the conflict issue may change, affecting his behavior accordingly.

When the interaction on a given issue stops, some sort of outcome has occurred. Depending upon the preceding behaviors, this outcome might take various forms—joint agreement, domination by one party, joint avoidance of the issue, unresolved disagreement, etc. In Walton's terms, the outcome has "consequences" for both parties. Pondy (1967) speaks of these consequences as the "conflict aftermath."

The outcome of a given episode sets the stage for subsequent episodes on the same issue. Specifically, the outcome is likely to determine the degree to which the goals of the two parties continue to be frustrated, and thus the likelihood that the experienced frustration will provoke another interchange in the future.

Let us now consider the events in the model in more detail.

Frustration

Conflicts appear to stem from one party's perception that another party frustrates the satisfaction of one of its concerns. The word "concern" is used here as a blanket term to include more specific concepts like needs, desires, formal objectives, and standards of behavior. In the literature, conflicts have been traced to a variety of such concerns. For example, status concerns have been linked to conflict in interpersonal relations (Whyte, 1948), interdepartmental relations (Seiler, 1963), and union-management relations (Walton & McKersie, 1965). Autonomy concerns have been shown to produce conflicts in relations between supervisors and subordinates (Argyris, 1957), as well as between departments (White, 1961). Other cited concerns involve formal objectives, promotion, scarce economic resources, behavioral norms and expectations, compliance with rules and agreements, values, and various interpersonal needs.

Just as concerns vary widely, frustrating behaviors take a number of forms. Conflict episodes might stem from: disagreement, denial of a request, violation of an agreement, insult, active interference with performance, vying for scarce resources, breaking a norm, diminishing one's status, ignoring one's feelings, etc.

Conceptualization

The next event in the process model of conflict involves the party's conceptualization

of the situation. As will be discussed, this appears to involve a definition of the conflict issue in terms of the concerns of both parties plus some notion of possible action alternatives and their outcomes.[5] The process model considers how particular conceptualizations influence conflict-handling behavior, and how escalation and other changes in behavior stem from changes in a party's conceptualization.

The element of subjective reality appears to be crucial in understanding and influencing a party's conflict-handling behavior. As Allport said, "The way a man defines his situation constitutes for him its reality" (1955, p. 84). Deutsch (1969) argues that there is no necessary relationship between the "objective" characteristics of the situation and a party's conflict behavior, elaborating a number of ways in which subjective reality intervenes. However, surprisingly little psychological theorizing and research appear to have been done on the conceptualization of conflicts by the parties involved.

DEFINING THE ISSUE. The first element in a party's conceptualization of a conflict situation is his definition of the issue involved. Operationally, this appears to involve some assessment of the primary concerns of the two parties—the party's own frustrated concern and his perception of the concern which led the other party to perform the frustrating action. For example: "I want a raise, but my boss wants to reduce departmental expenditures"; "The union wants an additional sixteen cents, but management prefers to give twelve cents"; "I want to receive more air time during meetings, but so does the Marketing vice president."

A party in a given conflict situation may define the issue in a number of ways. There is no one "objective" issue, but rather a series of possible definitions. Three dimensions of a party's definition of a given issue seem relevant here: egocentricity, insight into underlying concerns, and the "size" of the issue. These three dimensions appear important in terms of their influence upon the party's subsequent conflict-handling behavior.

"Egocentricity" refers to defining the issue solely in terms of one's own concerns. For example, "We need another maintenance man, but the maintenance supervisor won't lend us one," or "The union wants another sixteen cents an hour, but management doesn't want us to have it." The contrasting mode is the appreciation of the other party's own concern. For example, "We need another maintenance man, but the maintenance supervisor needs him for another project"; or "The union wants another sixteen cents an hour, but management would prefer to invest that money in new equipment." This distinction has not been developed in the literature, but would appear to be important. Specifically, an egocentric definition of a conflict issue fails to recognize the other party's concern and makes subsequent cooperation less likely.

Related to egocentricity, but more general, is a party's insight into underlying concerns. At one extreme, a party may think only in terms of the specific issue contested: "My boss wants me to adopt a new form for my weekly reports, but I prefer the old one." By contrast, the party may instead identify more basic concerns which are responsible for both parties' stands. For example: "I can't afford the time required to complete the new, longer form, but my boss needs information which wasn't on the old form." Several theorists have pointed out that the appreciation of underlying concerns increases the likelihood that a solution can be reached which satisfies those concerns for both parties (Follett, 1941; Deutsch, 1969; Walton, 1969).

[5] This "conceptualization" need not be a thoughtful analysis. Party may respond habitually, or "without thinking," in many situations. In these instances, however, we can still think of Party as behaving in accordance with "performance programs" which have been evoked by the situation (March & Simon, 1958, pp. 139–142). These programs are in effect conceptualizations based upon past experiences with similar situations. However primitive, these programs contain a definition of the situation and salient alternatives.

Follett (1941) referred to such solutions as "integrative" solutions. Using the current example, for instance, defining the issue in the second manner may suggest the possibility of a shorter form which focuses upon the information most useful to the boss.

Identifying underlying concerns may be difficult, however. Eisinger and Levine (1968) maintain that such concerns are often unconscious in labor-management relations. Walton (1969) points out that personal or "emotional" concerns are often viewed as less acceptable than more "substantive" concerns in organizations. As a result, these concerns may be unrecognized by the parties involved, but may be expressed by bringing up more substantive and acceptable issues. Walton (1969) refers to these substantive issues as "umbrella issues," while Schutz (1958) calls them "goblet" issues. The underlying concerns have sometimes been referred to as "hidden agendas" (e.g., Stagner & Rosen, 1965). Without identifying emotional concerns, these goblet issues may appear particularly mystifying and difficult to resolve. Muench (1960, 1963) used a clinical psychological approach to help identify underlying issues in union-management negotiations.

The notion of "size" of an issue was developed by Fisher (1964). Fisher noted that wars tend to be fought over large issues, and conversely that large issues are difficult to resolve short of war. His recommendation for conflict management was, therefore, a form of "issue management"; namely, the "fractionation" of large issues into smaller ones:

> The danger inherent in big disputes and the difficulty of settling them suggest that, rather than spend our time looking for peaceful ways of resolving big issues, we might better explore the possibility of turning big issues . . . into little ones. (Fisher, 1964, p. 92)

Fisher identified five aspects of the size of an issue: the parties on each side, the immediate physical issue, the immediate issue of principle, the substantive precedent which settlement will establish, and the procedural precedent which settlement will establish. Regarding the parties, for example, a grievance might be regarded as between a worker and his supervisor, between the local union and the company, or between organized labor and big business. Concerning the immediate physical issue, a supervisor and his subordinate might discuss the subordinate's substandard performance on a given task, poor performance on a number of tasks, or the general quality of the subordinate's work. Regarding principle, Sales and Manufacturing might simply discuss whether to sacrifice a production schedule for the sake of a last minute customer order, or they might invoke the principles of customer service versus efficiency. Substantive precedent is increased when the parties decide they are "going to settle this thing once and for all." Procedural precedent becomes involved when the parties become concerned that they not establish a pattern of yielding to demands. The upshot of Fisher's discussion, then, is that conflicts are most easily resolved when they are defined as occurring between the people directly involved, are limited to a single concrete issue, are not treated as matters of principle, and are considered as isolated instances to be weighed on their own merits.

SALIENT ALTERNATIVES. The second aspect of a party's conceptualization of the conflict situation is his awareness of action alternatives and their outcomes. By "action alternatives" is meant the possible final actions of conflict episodes which represent dispositions of the conflict issue—a maintenance supervisor dispatches an additional maintenance man, a union is granted an additional five cents an hour, etc. A given party, being less than omniscient, is assumed to be aware of a relatively small set of alternatives in the conflict situation at any given time (Simon, 1957), which we shall call the set of his "salient" alternatives. The party is also assumed to have some notion of the probable outcomes of these salient alternatives for both parties—specifically, the degree to which

the concerns of both parties would be satisfied. These salient alternatives, together with their probable outcomes for both parties, determine the party's view of the conflict of interest between himself and the other party.

It appears useful here to introduce the joint outcome space as a format for representing the party's conceptualization of alternatives and their outcomes.[6] Figure 2

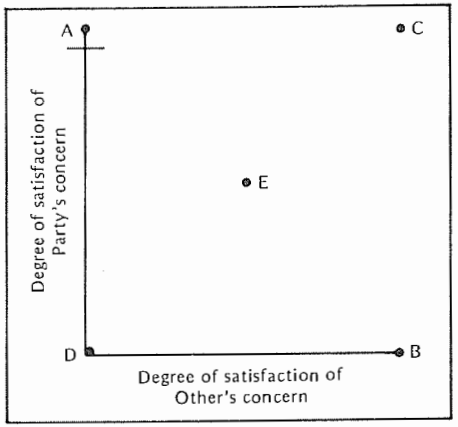

Figure 2. The joint outcome space.

represents Party's conceptualization of the joint outcome space for himself and Other. The horizontal and vertical axes represent the degree to which the Party perceives that Other's concern and Party's concern, respectively, would be satisfied by a given alternative. Point *C* represents an alternative which is seen as satisfying the concerns of both parties. Point *D* represents relatively complete frustration of both parties' concerns. At Point *A*, Party satisfies his concern while Other is frustrated; while the opposite is true at Point *B*. Point *E* represents an alternative which yields some, but incomplete, satisfaction to both parties.

When Party's set of salient alternatives deviates from Point *C*, he is assumed to be aware of conflict of interest between himself and Other.[7] Because no alternative is perceived which allows both parties to simultaneously satisfy their concerns, Party perceives that each represents an obstacle to the other's satisfaction.

Again, researchers have noted that a party's perception of conflict of interest is to some extent independent of the objective situation. For example, Blake et al. (1964, p. 31) refer to the win-lose "assumption," and Walton and McKersie (1965, p. 19) suggest that "The fact that certain items often become the subject of distributive bargaining is explained as much by a party's perception as by the inherent nature of the agenda item." In the present case, a party's definition of a conflict issue is asserted to influence the type and degree of conflict of interest which he perceives by suggesting different patterns of alternatives. The four modal patterns shown in Figure 3 will be considered.

Figure 3a depicts an "either/or" conceptualization of a conflict issue. Here, conflict of interest is total: the only outcomes seen are total satisfaction and total frustration, and each party's satisfaction is seen as occurring at the expense of the other. This conceptualization is referred to by Blake et al. (1964) as "win-lose," and is an example of what Hayakawa (1963) termed "the two-valued orientation." Such a conceptualization might be suggested by defining an issue egocentrically, "Either I get *X* or I don't,"

[6] The joint outcome space was used by Galtung (1965) and is common in the bargaining literature (Luce & Raiffa, 1957). Payoff matrices provide an alternative representation of conflict situations (Walton & McKersie, 1966; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and are used extensively in the two-person experimental game literature. The joint outcome space is used in the current instance because patterns of outcomes are easier to visualize.

[7] There exists no agreed upon unambiguous definition of conflict of interest. Bergström (1970) has discussed some of the ambiguities in the concept. Axelrod (1967) developed axiomatically a measure of conflict of interest using the joint outcome space. However, he assumed continuous alternatives and a convex range of outcomes—assumptions which appear unjustified in terms of the perceptions of many conflict parties.

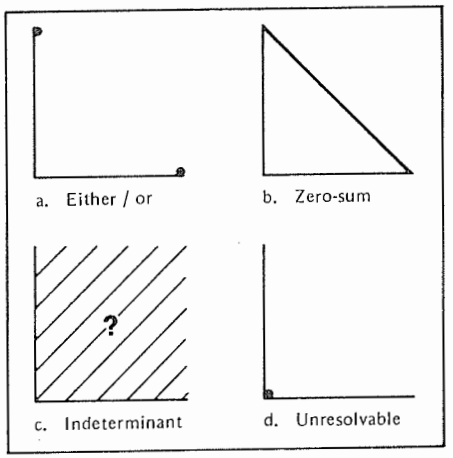

Figure 3. Patterns of conflict of interest.

or in terms of a specific point of contention, "Whether or not we do *Y*." Such phrasings admit of only two possibilities. Either/or conceptualizations are also likely under conditions of high stress and strong ego involvement. Under high stress, new alternatives are unlikely to be perceived (Osgood, 1961) and parties' conceptualizations of the situation tend to become simpler (Schroder et al., 1967; Walton, 1969). With increasing ego involvement in a position, parties tend to reject intermediate positions and to associate them with the opposing position (Sherif & Hovland, 1961), leading to a polarized either/or view of alternatives.

The zero-sum conceptualization in Figure 3b is similar, but less extreme. This conceptualization is somewhat more sophisticated than the previous one—the party has identified a dimension rather than two points. For example, the issue may now involve the amount of time or money spent on a new product line, rather than the decision of whether or not to develop it. Or the issue may now involve allocation of responsibility for a past event, rather than deciding who was to blame and who was innocent (Gragg, 1964). Here, a range of intermediate settlements are recognized as possibilities—compromises between the preferred alternatives of the two parties. Some degree of satisfaction is seen as simultaneously possible for both parties, although increases in one party's satisfaction are still at the expense of the other.

In the "indeterminant" conceptualization in Figure 3c, the party's definition of the issue does not imply a specific set of alternatives. Such a conceptualization is apt to be the result of defining the issue in terms of the underlying concerns of the two parties. For example, in a dispute between sales and production, the issue may be defined as quickness of delivery versus efficient utilization of production facilities. Because there is no a priori relationship between these two concerns, finding alternatives becomes an empirical matter. If the party is optimistic (Blake et al., 1964) he may seek to identify integrative alternatives. If so, what was formerly a distributive issue may be rephrased as an integrative problem (Walton & McKersie, 1965), namely, "How can we furnish quick delivery without sacrificing production efficiency?"

Figure 3d represents a party's conceptualization of an unresolvable issue. Such a conceptualization might stem from not understanding an issue well enough to cope with it, from defining conflicts in terms of big, unresolvable issues (Fisher, 1964), or from the perception that both parties are unalterably attached to their positions. Unresolvable issues are depicted as frustrating to both parties. Although neither party is seen as gaining at the other's expense, strong conflict of interest remains in the sense that each party is seen as an obstacle to the other's satisfaction.

To sum up the material on conceptualization, then, it has been asserted that Party's conceptualization of a conflict situation is a critical, and often ignored, influence upon his behavior. In a given situation, it is possible for Party to define a conflict issue in a number of different ways. Different definitions suggest issues of different "size" or im-

portance to Party, giving him different stakes in a conflict. In addition, each definition suggests a different pattern of salient alternatives and outcomes, which may in turn produce a markedly different perception of the conflict of interest present in the situation. As we shall see later, Party's perception of stakes and conflict of interest have an important influence upon his behavior.

Behavior

Following frustration and conceptualization, the third event in the process model involves the party's conflict behavior. In this section, we shall consider three components of behavior—orientation, strategic objectives, and tactics—and the determinants of each. Since the distinction among these three entities is frequently overlooked in the literature, let's consider a familiar example. Clyde and Lucille have a reasonably successful marriage. Both have basically collaborative orientations toward important issues which come up between them; they like each other and try to resolve issues so that both parties are satisfied. However, on one particular afternoon, a crucial professional football game is on TV at the same time as a rerun of Lucille's favorite Sinatra movie. Although they would like to collaborate, each regretfully perceives a conflict of interest. And because the preferred program is important to each, both Clyde and Lucille attempt to see their own program. (Their strategic objective on this issue is to win.) Accordingly, each adopts various mild tactics which they think may bring the other around—reading favorable reviews in the newspaper, citing the importance of their program, appealing to a sense of fairness, and so on. To be sure, orientation, strategic objectives, and tactics are interrelated. However, they are to some extent independent since they respond in part to different variables. The collaborative orientation is partly a response to their mutual identification, while the competitive strategic objectives are partly a response to the perceived conflict of interest, and the tactics are partly shaped by each party's knowledge of the other. All three sets of influences are important in understanding the resulting behavior.

ORIENTATION. The model categorizes a party's orientation on the basis of the degree to which he would like to satisfy his own concern and the degree to which he would like to satisfy the concern of the other. Figure 4 uses the joint outcome space to plot five such orientations—competitive, collaborative, avoidant, accommodative, and sharing—together with their preferred outcomes. Although the names and conceptualizations are somewhat different, this categorization scheme stems most directly from the work of Blake and his colleagues (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Blake et al., 1964; Hall, 1969).

Before discussing the orientations in Figure 4 individually, some comments on the complexity of this scheme are in order. A five-category scheme is obviously more complicated and difficult to master than a dichotomous differentiation like cooperative-uncooperative. The latter is appealing in its simplicity and is still used extensively in the

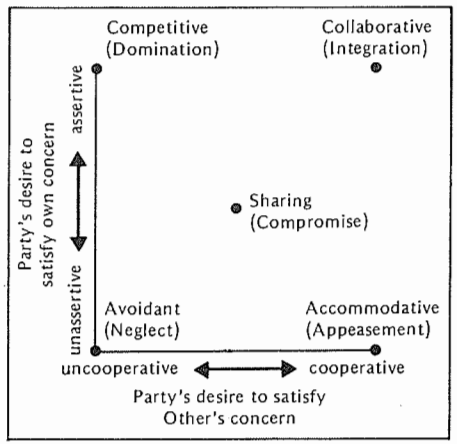

Figure 4. Five conflict-handling orientations, plotted according to Party's desire to satisfy own and Other's concerns.

experimental game approach to conflict research. However, the cooperative-uncooperative dichotomy appears to greatly oversimplify the more complex range of options available to the conflict party.

A stronger case can be made for the present two-dimensional scheme. The cooperative-uncooperative distinction represents one dimension which might accurately reflect the thinking of Party's opponent: "Does he want to cooperate and help me satisfy my concerns, or doesn't he?" However, a different distinction is more likely to be reflected in the thinking of Party and his constituents, namely, "Does Party actively strive to achieve his own concerns, or doesn't he?" Both distinctions in fact reflect important dimensions which are analytically independent: the degree to which one attempts to satisfy the other's concern and the degree to which one assertively pursues one's own concerns.

A great deal of unnecessary sacrifice or competition seems to stem from confusing these two dimensions or reducing them to a single dimension. When cooperation is assumed to be in opposition to pursuing one's own concerns, cooperation comes to mean sacrifice, and asserting one's needs; ("standing up for one's rights") comes to mean putting up a fight.

Returning to the five orientations in Figure 4, the competitive orientation represents a desire to win one's own concerns at the other's expense, namely, to dominate. In the context of labor relations, Donnelly (1971, p. 373) refers to relationships which are based upon this orientation as "conflict" relationships: "...both parties desire to exercise whatever legal bargaining power they have in a given situation. No quarter is yielded...." Blake et al. (1964) refer to such relationships as "win-lose power struggles."

By contrast, an accommodative orientation focuses upon appeasement—satisfying the other's concerns without attending to one's own. Under such an orientation, a party may be generous or self-sacrificing for the sake of their relationship. Donnelly refers to relationships in which this orientation is common as "accommodation" relationships: "...long-run motives center around the desire for agreement." Blake et al. refer to this pattern as "peaceful coexistence." Interestingly, Follett (1941) did not explicitly consider this orientation, but revealed her attitude toward it when she referred to being "mushy" during negotiations.

The sharing orientation is intermediate between domination and appeasement. It is a preference for moderate but incomplete satisfaction for both parties—for compromise. Party gives up something and keeps something. Horse-trading in union-management negotiations reflects this orientation (Patten, 1970). Blake et al. refer to this orientation as "splitting the difference," since Party seeks an outcome which is intermediate between the preferred outcomes of both parties.

In contrast to sharing, the collaborative orientation represents a desire to *fully* satisfy the concerns of both parties—to integrate their concerns. Donnelly describes collaborative union-management relationships as "cooperative": "Neither party is interested in the exercise of advantage; rather, both parties are seriously intent upon reaching a mutually beneficial agreement." Blake et al. (1964) and Walton and McKersie (1965) refer to collaborative orientations as "problem solving" orientations.

The remaining orientation, avoidance, reflects indifference to the concerns of either party. Blake et al. describe this orientation as an instance of withdrawal, isolation, indifference, ignorance, or reliance upon fate. The words "evasion," "flight," and "apathy" have also been used to describe this orientation. Stagner and Rosen (1965) have discussed the prevalence and consequences of this orientation in the work setting.

Let us now consider the cooperative dimension in Figure 4 in more detail. Karen Horney's (1945) categorization of interpersonal behavior into movement toward, against, and away from the other appears

relevant here. Cooperation involves movement toward the other—attempts to satisfy other's concerns. Collaboration and accommodation are certainly cooperative in this regard. By contrast, competition and avoidance are uncooperative, involving movement against and away from the other, respectively. Sharing is moderately cooperative, since it contains a limited amount of movement toward the other as well as a limited amount of competitive movement against. Thomas's (1971) findings seem to support this classification. In a study of interdepartmental relations, managers rated their peers on a number of items, including conflict-handling behaviors and measures of cooperativeness. Ratings of cooperativeness varied negatively with ratings of behavior associated with competition and avoidance, and positively with behavior associated with collaboration and accommodation.

The cooperativeness of Party toward Other is to a large extent a function of his identification with Other. Party's identification may range from positive identification through indifference to hostility. Attention to Other's satisfaction through collaboration or accommodation appears to be a manifestation of identification. If two parties have agreed upon important issues in the past or agree on common ends, then they may feel sufficient goodwill toward each other to approach disagreement cooperatively. An uncooperative orientation, on the other hand, may stem from indifference to the other's outcomes or from a desire to injure the other. In the former case, frustration of the other's concern is an incidental by-product of Party's motives: the conflict remains impersonal (Coser, 1956) or "object-centered" (Fink, 1968). In the latter case, however, intended frustration is part of Party's motivation. The conflict is personalized or "opponent-centered," and competition and avoidance may constitute aggression for its own sake (Dollard et al., 1939; Berkowitz, 1962).

The second dimension in Figure 4, assertiveness, was referred to by Blake et al. (1964) as the active-passive dimension. It represents the extent to which Party is interested in satisfying his own concerns.[8] The assertiveness of Party's orientation is in part a result of the strength of Party's concern, or what Blake et al. (1964) call Party's "stakes" in the conflict. The most assertive orientations, competition and collaboration, require the greatest immediate outlay of energy—to compete and problem-solve, respectively. Hence, they require some degree of commitment to one's concern. By contrast, avoidance and accommodation require less energy —Party has only to do nothing or go along with Other. In matters of little import to Party, he is, therefore, apt to drift into avoidance or accommodation. Sharing is intermediate in assertiveness and energy expenditure.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES. As the discussion shifts to strategies and tactics, it will be useful to think about the joint outcome space in still another way—as composed of an integrative and a distributive dimension.[9] (See Figure 5.) Any point (outcome) in the space can be thought of as having an integrative and a distributive component. The integrative component is, roughly speaking, the total amount of satisfaction for both parties. The distributive component is the proportion of that satisfaction going to each party. In other words, the integrative dimension represents the size of the pie available to both parties; the distributive dimension represents the way they divide it up.

Party can be thought of as having some notion of what is feasible along both of these dimensions. His notion of the degree of integration possible is implied by his conceptualization of the issue, namely, the

[8] This dimension corresponds to the instrumental meaning of "aggressiveness" used by Storr (1968)—attempting to overcome obstacles to one's satisfaction. I have not used this term here because the word "aggression" has unfortunately been restricted by most psychologists to denote intentionally injurious behavior.

[9] Although they did not explicitly use the joint outcome space, the terms "integrative" and "distributive" were used by Walton and McKersie (1965).

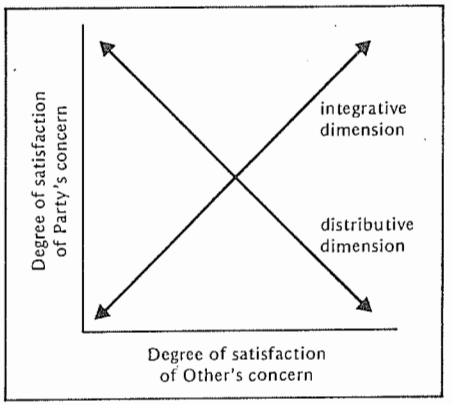

Figure 5. Integrative and distributive dimensions in the joint outcome space.

type and degree of conflict of interest which is present. His assessment of the power and commitment of Other influences what he can hope for along the distributive dimension (Donnelly, 1971).

In the process model, these notions of feasibility interact with Party's preferred outcomes (orientation) to result in some sort of strategic objective. For example, if Party would prefer domination but finds his opponent strong, he may decide to aim for a compromise of some sort. No matter what his preferences, if Party conceptualizes the issue as unresolvable, he is likely to settle for no decision. If Party prefers integration and has an indeterminant conceptualization of the issue, he may search for an integrative solution. And so on.

TACTICAL BEHAVIOR. An exhaustive treatment of specific tactics is beyond the scope of this chapter. Space does not permit consideration of tactics for avoiding issues, appeasing Other, or striking equitable compromises.[10] Rather, attention will be restricted to competitive and collaborative tactics—distributive tactics intended to increase one's own satisfaction at Other's expense, and integrative tactics intended to increase joint satisfaction. These are the tactics which have received most attention in the literature. They are also the tactics most likely to occur on issues which are important to a party.

First, let us consider competitive tactics. These tactics come in a number of forms because Party may have a variety of power bases which can be used to influence Other. French and Raven (1959) identified six such bases of power: information power, referent power, legitimate power, expert power, coercive power, and reward power. The use of these power bases in conflict situations is discussed by Raven and Kruglanski (1970). Briefly, Party uses information power competitively when he furnishes information to convince Other that Party's preferred alternative should be chosen. This may involve selective or misrepresentative information (Walton & McKersie, 1965) and may degenerate into win-lose arguing (Blake & Mouton, 1964). Party uses referent power by appealing to Other's attraction to Party. Legitimate power, which depends upon accepted rules or principles of proper behavior, is especially relevant in formal organizations: supervisors may "pull rank" on subordinates, the union may appeal to contract clauses, etc. Expert power is used when Party uses any superior knowledge which Other may attribute to Party: "Take my word for it—I know about these things." Coercive power is based upon threats of punishment—strikes, lockouts, sabotage, withdrawal of cooperation on other issues, etc. Finally, Party uses reward power by promising rewards if Other complies—cooperation on later issues, promotions, etc.

Walton and McKersie (1965) lump together the competitive use of these tactics under the heading of "bargaining." Assume that each party has a preferred outcome or "target" along the distributive dimension. Then, paraphrasing Walton and McKersie, Party's competitive use of the above tactics is intended to serve one or more of the

[10] See Blake and Mouton (1964) for a discussion of these tactics in the interpersonal context and Blake et al. (1964) for their equivalents in the intergroup context.

following tactical purposes: (1) to make Party's target appear acceptable to Other: "It wouldn't really be so bad for you"; (2) to convince Other that his target is not worth insisting upon: "You wouldn't really be happy with that anyway, and besides it would cost you to hold out for it"; (3) to present Other's target as unacceptable to Party: "Under no circumstances could I settle for X"; and (4) to persuade Other that it is worthwhile to Party to hold out for his target: "I'm willing to stay here all night."

Bargaining stances vary in intensity from "hard bargaining" through "soft bargaining" (Walton & McKersie, 1966), depending upon how much one demands and the risks one is willing to take. In moderately strong form, however, bargaining tactics include some characteristic behaviors which have important consequences. First, Party withholds or misrepresents information—the strength of his concern, his preferences for various alternatives, the consequences of alternatives for himself and Other, and so on. This misrepresentation and rationing of information reduces the trust level between parties. Secondly, Party commits himself to his preferred alternative, reducing flexibility and effectively redefining an issue as win-lose. And thirdly, Party may employ threats. Such coercive tactics tend to produce hostility or negative identification toward Party (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970).

Collaborative tactics, called "problem-solving" tactics by Walton and McKersie, involve quite different behaviors. Essentially, problem-solving tactics are designed to increase joint gain by finding alternatives which satisfy the concerns of both parties. Walton and McKersie identify three steps in the problem-solving process: (1) identifying the essential or underlying concerns of both parties, (2) searching for alternatives and identifying their consequences for both parties, and (3) identifying the alternative which is most jointly satisfying.[11]

The specifics of these problem-solving steps will not be considered here. The interested reader should consult Walton and McKersie (1965) or Blake et al. (1964). However, some general characteristics of problem-solving tactics are important here. First, effective problem solving requires the candid exchange of *accurate* information—Party's underlying concerns, his assessment of the probable outcomes of various alternatives, and his satisfaction with those probable outcomes. Second, problem solving requires a flexible, exploratory stance—to redefine issues in the light of new insights, to search for and be open to new alternatives, and to explore their consequences. And last, such behaviors require trust in Other—trust that Other is giving accurate information, trust that Other will not exploit Party's flexibility, and trust that Other will not use his knowledge of Party's preferences to his own bargaining advantage.

It is apparent that bargaining and problem-solving tactics tend to interfere with each other (Walton & McKersie, 1966). Bargaining tends to reduce the trust, candor, and flexibility required for problem solving. Likewise, the disclosures made during problem solving and the positive affect generated by it tend to discourage subsequent misrepresentation and bargaining.

Interaction

The fourth phase of the process model involves interaction. Party's behavior is viewed as initiating a sequence of behaviors from the two parties. Again considering events from Party's viewpoint, Other's behavior is seen as influencing Party's behavior in a number of ways.

The discussion of interaction which follows will examine that process from two different perspectives. First, Party's behavior will be portrayed as strongly influenced by a number of psychological dynamics which are triggered by Other's behavior. This perspective, which is widespread in the psychological literature, focuses upon the "reactive" aspects of Party's behavior. To balance the picture somewhat, attention will then shift to the more self-conscious efforts of the parties to manage the conflict between them.

[11] Follett (1941, p. 36) stressed a preliminary step: "The first step . . . is to bring the differences into the open." This is the confrontation step which precedes problem solving proper. Problem solving is referred to as confrontation by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), although it seems that interpersonal confrontation might also be a first step in a bargaining stance.

Dynamics of escalation/de-escalation. During the course of negotiations with Other, Party's orientation, strategic objectives, and tactics may change as a reaction to Other's behavior. For example, Party's orientation may change when the stakes change or when Other's behavior alters Party's identification with him; Party's strategic objectives may change with his perceptions of Other's power and the degree of conflict of interest between them; and Party's tactics may change to reflect his trust and respect for Other.

Such changes are frequently described in terms of the escalation/de-escalation dimension. Escalation usually denotes an increase in the level of conflict, however that term is defined. Escalation might involve: increasing the number or the size of issues disputed, increasing hostility between parties, increasing competitiveness, pursuing increasingly extreme demands or objectives, using increasingly coercive tactics, and decreasing trust.

This section will cover eleven dynamics which occur during negotiations. Most of these refer to the dynamics of escalation and de-escalation. As such, they have special relevance for mediators and for other third parties who are concerned with conflict management.

1. The first dynamic involves the concept of revaluation. Follett (1941) maintained that parties rarely actually give in to their opponents. Instead, agreements usually accompany changes in a party's conceptualization of an issue. Coming into conflict with Other and hearing Other's arguments may lead Party to "revaluate" his definition of the issue and his preferred alternative. For example, revaluation may occur when Party realizes that his preferred alternative has undesirable consequences for other important concerns. Marketing may stop pressing for short lead times on an order when they learn that such lead times would force Production to neglect other important orders; Management changes its position when it realizes that its preferences would be counter to existing regulations; and so on. While it may occur under any circumstances, revaluation is facilitated by open communication, trust, and the use of persuasive rather than coercive tactics—in short, by collaboration and problem solving.

2. Self-fulfilling prophesies (Merton, 1957) are common in conflict phenomena. The behavior Party receives from Other is to some extent a response to Party's *own* behavior. Walton and McKersie (1965) hypothesized that problem solving tends to encourage problem solving responses and that bargaining tends to elicit bargaining responses. Deutsch (1949) hypothesized the same for cooperation and competition. In the context of interdepartmental relations, Thomas and Walton (1971) found that managers reported using tactics which were similar to those they saw the other party using: forcing was related positively to Other's forcing, and negatively to Other's candor and accommodation; candor was related positively to Other's candor, and negatively to Other's forcing and avoiding. The upshot of this is that Party's orientation toward the other and his trust or distrust toward Other have some tendency to be reinforced by generating the predicted behavior in Other—regardless of the other's original orientation.[12] For example, if a foreman sees a union steward as competitive and, therefore, fights him on every issue, he may actually prod the steward into fighting.

[12] In the experimental gaming literature, players' tactics have been found to correlate highly with the tactics of their opponents (Rapoport & Chammah, 1965). Kelley and Stahelski (1970) found that competitive game behavior elicited responses from *cooperatively* oriented subjects which made the latter appear to have a competitive orientation—even to neutral observers.

Likewise, if a subordinate avoids confronting his boss because he believes the boss would not respond to his needs, the boss, in his ignorance of his subordinate's needs, will not respond to them.

3. A number of biases occur in Party's perceptions of Other. To begin with, Party is largely unaware of Other's motives. Party is familiar with the reasons behind his own actions, since he has planned them himself. But since he is not usually privy to Other's thinking, the reasons behind Other's behavior are often unknown. His own actions, therefore, appear quite reasonable to him, while the behavior of Other often appears arbitrary. What he sees as a necessary move on his part might be seen as an arbitrary and unjustified attack if made by the other party. For example, Defense Department statements frequently contrast the enemy's "arbitrary acts of aggression" with our own "protective reactions." In addition, Party is selective in his perception of Other's behavior. Depending upon his level of trust or suspicion toward Other, he looks for different things (Deutsch, 1969). If suspicious, he is vigilant for signs of threat, competition, hostility, and conflict of interest —which he is then more likely to find. With this bias, he underestimates the commonalities between parties (Blake & Mouton, 1961) and may miss the other's cooperative overtures and signs of goodwill.

4. Another source of bias stems from cognitive simplification. We have already noted that cognitive simplification may result in a win-lose conceptualization of issues. Here, we are more concerned with Party's perception of himself and Other. Party's perceptions tend to become more black-white under stress, threat, and ego involvement; but some of these simplifications also fulfill Party's need for cognitive consistency or dissonance reduction (Osgood, 1961; Festinger, 1964). As these simplifications occur, Party is less able to simultaneously see good and bad qualities in himself or Other—Party becomes good in all respects while Other becomes bad. Blake and Mouton (1961) have demonstrated these distortions in intergroup conflict. To some extent these distortions increase the stakes for Party because he is defending good against evil, and he accordingly becomes more righteous. In addition, Party's identification with Other diminishes as Other becomes less likable. The extreme case of such distortions occurs in holy wars, where defenders of the faith righteously butcher infidels. But a significant amount of these distortions also occurs across bargaining tables, between departments, and elsewhere in organizations.

5. Communication is the medium through which Party's misperceptions can be corrected: Other's communications may lead Party to revaluate his own position, to recognize Other's actual orientation and to revise his stereotype of Other. However, communications tend to become distorted with perceived conflict of interest or with competitive behavior (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970). Trust is diminished as either party uses communications to manipulate or coerce the other or as either party becomes suspicious that the other is doing so. With diminished trust, Other's communications cease to be believed or even listened to, and Party concentrates on getting his own message across. In the context of labor relations, Stagner and Rosen (1965) referred to such communication patterns as the "dialogue of the deaf." After a while, as communication attempts prove fruitless, communications channels cease to be used at all (Deutsch & Krauss, 1962), and both parties may communicate only through their actions.

6. Breakdowns in communications enable both parties to develop and maintain their distorted views of each other and to feed their mutual hostility. Newcomb (1947) used the term "autistic hostility" to describe hostility which develops in the absence of communication, and went on to develop the thesis that persistent hostility varies with the degree to which a party's perception of a relationship "remains autistic, its privacy maintained by some sort of barriers to communication" (p. 69). At the extreme, political assassinations may be performed by parties whose autistic and withdrawn personalities enable them to fantasize their targets as devils and themselves as heroes; and army morale (largely dependent upon hostility) is maintained by preventing fraternization with the enemy.

7. As hostility and distrust increase, Party's tactics tend to become coercive (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970). Each of the remaining bases of Party's power tends to disappear with increasing hostility. Information power becomes ineffective as Other becomes suspicious of Party and ceases to listen to him. Expert power becomes ineffective with Other's mistrust and lack of respect. Party has no referent power, or has *negative* referent power when Other ceases to identify with him. Party's legitimate power becomes ineffective when Other sees him acting arbitrarily. Even reward power may become ineffective when Other views gifts from Party as tainted or as bribes. As Party perceives that these types of influence are ineffective, he tends to fall back upon coercive power—threatening various unfavorable consequences for Other if Other does not comply with Party's preferences: "I've tried to be reasonable with you, but that's over now. If you don't do *X* by Wednesday . . . you'll have to pay the consequences."

8. After competing with Other to satisfy his initial concern, Party may lose sight of his initial concern and simply compete with Other for its own sake. This phenomenon has been called goal substitution or goal displacement. Party's objective becomes beating Other, even if it means sacrificing some of his own concerns. Party may see himself as saving face, getting even, teaching Other a lesson, showing Other he can't get away with it, etc. Like the battered fighter, his satisfaction comes from being able to say, "You ought to see the other guy."

9. Competition between the parties may spread to other issues. This "proliferation" of issues is discussed by Walton (1969) and Deutsch (1969). New issues (or revived old issues) become opportunities for Party to "seize the high ground" (Walton, 1969) in his ongoing struggle with Other: "While we're on that subject, how about the time *you* did such and such." We may find that the parties bicker over issues that they would otherwise have no trouble resolving, and take apparently unreasonable positions merely to oppose the other.

10. As this competitiveness spreads and is accompanied by cognitive simplification, Party may perceive that the basic concerns of the two parties are generally incompatible. At this point, it may appear to Party that the relationship cannot continue: "This organization isn't big enough for the both of us." And Party may try to drive Other away: Production tries to eliminate Maintenance as a separate department, one politician demands another's resignation, management tries to destroy a union, etc.

11. Where substantial hostility and cognitive simplification exist, Walton (1969) notes that the parties must ventilate their feelings to each other and state the issues which divide them before they can begin to seek an integrative solution. In his terms, a "differentiation" phase precedes the integration phase. Ventilating feelings, or "getting it off your chest," produces a catharsis (Dollard et al., 1939) for Party—a reduction in hostility toward Other. In order for catharsis to occur, however, Other must listen to Party's negative feelings. If Other ignores them or counters with abuse toward Party, Party's hostility toward Other will increase. If both parties succeed in ventilating their feelings to each other, the reduced hostility will remove some of the tendencies toward cognitive simplification, allowing the parties to develop a more balanced perception of themselves and the issues. As the parties appreciate similar interests and positive characteristics in each other, the succeeding integration phase may even involve considerable positive feelings: "You know, he's not really such a bad guy."

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE DYAD. So far, the conflict behavior of two interacting

parties has been considered as a reaction to events and conditions, and as influenced by emotional and cognitive forces largely beyond their control. Although the parties to a conflict *are* responsive to a number of such forces, this view of conflict phenomena is incomplete and misleading. In the remaining part of this section, attention will be given to the manner in which parties, during interaction, manage their own conflict behavior.

As mentioned earlier, the view that conflict parties are the pawns of external forces is widespread in the literature (Rapoport, 1966). Probably the most notorious example involves Richardson's (1960) mathematical model of an arms race, in which the rate of armament of each side responds to the other's armaments.[13] The model implies that nations, under many circumstances, will engage in continually escalating arms races. Richardson (p. 12), however, qualified his model by saying: "The equations are merely descriptive of what people would do *if they did not stop to think*" (italics mine).

During interaction, parties *do* stop to think about the consequences of their actions. However, there has been very little research to tell us when, how, and to what extent. As Janis and Katz (1959) noted, social science researchers have tended to focus upon the destructive tendencies in human conduct—perhaps because, like the news media, we find destruction more eye-catching.

Walton et al. (1966) had expected interdepartmental relationships between Sales and Production to polarize toward either collaboration or competition. They reasoned that relationships which combined both would be unstable, since bargaining behavior tends to encourage more bargaining behavior and to discourage problem solving, while problem solving would likewise encourage more problem solving and interfere with bargaining. In a study of six interdepartmental relationships, however, they found that those relationships were spread over the collaborative-competitive dimension, with two in the mid-range. Clearly, one possible explanation is that at least some of those managers had stopped to think about the consequences of competitive behavior and had managed the degree of competition in their relationships.

Within the literature, there is some recognition that conflict parties may anticipate both the long-run and short-run consequences of their behavior. Donnelly (1971) points out that union and management bargaining teams can be viewed as having long-term goals as well as short-run objectives, and that they may restrict their exercise of bargaining power in accordance with those long-term goals. For example, in what Donnelly refers to as the "aggressive" type of relationship, both parties seek the upper hand over the long haul, but also accept the organizational security of the other. Hence they compete, but do not allow competition to escalate to the point of endangering the other's existence. In the "accommodation" relationship, the parties recognize that bargaining power may shift from issue to issue, and adopt the long-term objective of maintaining agreement or harmony. Accordingly, they drastically limit the use of any bargaining power which might create hostility and endanger that long-term harmony.

A party's anticipation of the short-run consequences of his behavior upon the other is a major part of the Walton and McKersie (1965) model of labor negotiations. In that model, Party engages in three types of tactics toward Other—distributive tactics, integrative tactics, and "attitudinal structuring" tactics. In attitudinal structuring, Party uses his knowledge of the effects of his behavior to shape Other's trust, hostility, and orientation during negotiations. The tactics may involve behavior which is unrelated to the issue at hand, such as compliments, expressing common interests, discussing common friends, and so on. However, attitudinal structuring tactics may also involve Party's integrative and distributive tactics. Specifically, since distributive tactics (bargaining) interfere with positive attitudinal structuring, Party may moderate his bargaining tactics in order to maintain Other's trust, identification, and cooperation.

Bales (1950) appeared to recognize that moderating one's competitiveness is often a tactic intended to promote positive interpersonal sentiments in groups. In his process rating system, the Interaction Process Analysis, Bales included passive acceptance and compliance (accommodation) as a positive social-emotional response rather than a task response. Compromise could likewise be included in that category.

[13] Richardson's model is reviewed by Rapoport (1966) and Patchen (1970).

Outcome

The final event in the process model is the outcome of the conflict episode. When interaction between the parties ceases, some outcome has occurred, whether it is an explicit agreement of some sort or a tacit agreement to let the issue drop. In this section, some of the short-run consequences of these outcomes will be briefly considered. Then the discussion will shift to some of the longer-run outcomes of Party's behavior for Party, for Other, and for the organization which includes them both.

CONFLICT AFTERMATH. The outcome of a specific conflict episode involves more than a substantive agreement. There are residual emotions—frustration from the new agreement, and hostility or mistrust stemming from the other party's behavior during negotiations. There may also be stereotypes, perceptions of incompatibility, long-term goals concerning the other, and so on. All of these constitute what Pondy (1967) termed the "conflict aftermath." The elements of this aftermath set the stage for subsequent episodes between the parties.

All of these short-term consequences will not be discussed in detail here. Many are simply instances of dynamics we have already covered. One set of consequences does seem important, however—the effects of the form of the substantive agreement upon subsequent episodes. Follett (1941) noted that an *integrative* agreement constituted a true resolution of the issue: since both parties are satisfied, no issue or problem remains. However, other forms of agreements are apt to be only temporary settlements. In the case of neglect, compromise, accommodation, and domination by one party, some residual frustration remains in one or both parties. Issues settled by such agreements are apt to recur: "The conflict will come up again and again in some other form, for ... we give up part of our desire, and because we shall not be content to rest here, sometime we shall try to get the whole of our desire."[14]

LONG-TERM EFFECTS. Adopting a more general or long-term view, let us now consider the outcomes of Party's behavior with respect to Other's goal attainment, Party's goal attainment, and the goal attainment of the organization which includes Party and Other.

By definition, Other's goal attainment is expected to be furthered by Party's cooperative behavior—collaborative or accommodative. Two studies provide evidence that Other perceives this to be the case. In a study of superior-subordinate relations, Burke (1970) found that subordinates perceived conflict to be handled most constructively when they perceived supervisors as adopting accommodative or collaborative tactics, and least constructively when supervisors adopted competitive or avoidant tactics.[15] Thomas (1971) found similar results in interdepartmental relations, where managers' satisfaction with interdepartmental

[14] Follett (1941, p. 35).

[15] Burke interpreted these responses at face value, as measures of the effectiveness of dyadic decision making. Placing less faith in the respondents' capacity to be objective, and recognizing that their observations are limited to their own frames of reference, these responses are interpreted here as merely the subordinate's satisfaction with his supervisor's behavior and its effects.

negotiations varied positively with collaborative and accommodative behavior by their counterparts in other departments, and negatively with competition and avoidance.

Reinforcement theory would suggest that Other's attraction to Party would increase with Party's collaboration and accommodation, and would decrease with Party's competition and avoidance. This seems to be true with one important exception: accommodation does not necessarily generate attraction. In the context of interdepartmental relations, Thomas (1971) found that managers reported more trust and less annoyance as they perceived other managers to be more accommodating; but no increase in respect for the other's abilities. Laboratory findings by Thibaut and Riecken (1955) suggest that accommodation is viewed more favorably when it is perceived as voluntary and less favorably when it is viewed as compliance to pressure. Accommodation by supervisors (who have power to say "no") may, therefore, generate more attraction than accommodation by peers or subordinates.

In terms of Party's attainment of his own substantive objectives, it might initially be expected that assertive behavior—collaboration and competition—would tend to produce successes, whereas unassertive behaviors would not. Again, however, the relationship is more complex. A number of studies have demonstrated a relationship between collaboration and promotability in organizations—Blake and Mouton (1964), Thomas (1971), and Dutton and Walton (1966). On the other hand, although competition may produce short-run advantages for Party, the long-run consequences of competition may involve hostility and competition from Other, with accompanying delays, deadlocks, and inefficiencies in their joint decision making. Dutton and Walton (1966) report that supervisors were unhappy with managers whose interdepartmental relations evolved into mutual competition. Thomas (1971) found no relationship between competitive behavior and promotability. Blake and Mouton (1964), however, concluded that competitive tactics may be a useful backup approach when collaboration fails to be effective.[16]

The literature also provides some indication that collaboration, in addition to promoting substantive achievements, promotes the satisfaction of personal needs. In a study within research and development teams, Aram et al. (1971) found that team collaboration was positively related to several measures of member self-actualization and well-being. By contrast, Dutton and Walton (1966) observed that managers involved in competitive interdepartmental relations experienced considerable frustration and anxiety. No comparative data are available for the effects of accommodation, compromise, and avoidance.

In terms of organizational goal achievement, Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) found that organizational performance was related to inter-unit collaboration in three different industries. Since an organization is the composite of its sub-parts, it makes intuitive sense that behavior which meets the needs of both parties to an inter-unit conflict would produce more aggregate goal attainment for the organization. For example, consider the case where Sales and Production are in conflict over delivery dates: Sales desires to please customers by promising quick delivery while Production is concerned with preserving an efficient production schedule (which is often disrupted by emergency runs). If the two departments succeed to some degree in finding an integrative solution which allows quicker delivery at no added production costs, then the organization has become that much more effective and has developed a comparative advantage over its competitors. The same reasoning could be applied to the confederation consisting of management and union.

[16] Clearly, more research needs to be done on the relationship of conflict-handling behaviors to individual performance. Blau (1955) found that the relationship of competition to performance within a department was mediated by work-group norms, with competitive behavior being negatively related to performance where cooperative norms existed. Similarly, although Thomas (1971) found accommodation to be negatively related to promotability in his study, frequent accommodation might be more functional in organizational climates with strong cooperative norms. Other mediating variables might include: one's supervisor's values, the ability of Other to retaliate, and any intrinsic conflict of interest in the central issues.

Third Party Process Interventions

Before proceeding to the structural model, some attention will be given to the implications of the process model for third party process intervention. This section is not intended to be a survey of the literature on process intervention, but rather a brief discussion of the salient implications of the model.

COLLABORATION. The material in the "outcome" section implies that, on the whole, mutual collaboration is a desirable state of affairs—for the organization and for the parties themselves. To be sure, there are exceptions. Schmidt and Tannenbaum (1960) argue that there is no single "right" way to handle conflict—that the third party may occasionally avoid or repress conflicts which appear unresolvable in the time available, for example, or that he may choose to sharpen some issues into more intense "conflict" (competition). Clearly, more research needs to be done in this area. On the whole, however, the model and the data suggest that joint collaboration toward integrative outcomes is frequently a worthy objective for the third party's efforts.

DE-ESCALATION. The dynamics of escalation suggest a number of tactics aimed at reducing competition and encouraging problem solving. They involve: motivating the parties, establishing communication, reducing hostility and distrust, and aiding problem solving.

The third party may attempt to provide incentives for resolving or de-escalating the conflict by pointing out the costs of continued competition. To the extent that the parties are interdependent, the impracticality of severing connections can also be stressed.

The third party may also reopen communications, serving as a communications link himself until he can bring the parties together. Many of his efforts will need to be directed toward getting the parties to listen to each other and to perceive the other's points accurately. A variety of techniques have been used to increase the accuracy of Party's perception of Other's position. The third party may restate or translate Other's points to Party. He may also ask Party to paraphrase or repeat Other's points (Rogers & Roethlisberger, 1952). Going somewhat farther, he may ask both parties to exchange roles and play the other's part during dialogue (e.g., Johnson, 1967).

Reducing hostility and building trust are often referred to as "conciliation" within labor-management negotiations (Rehmus, 1965). The third party may question the black-white stereotypes of Party. He may interpret Other's behavior and rationale, and point out Other's cooperative gestures toward Party. He may also show Party how Party's own behavior is influencing Other. Finally, the third party may encourage both parties to work through their hostile feelings. This encouragement may involve: being authentic himself, providing supportiveness toward the speaker, and ensuring that the other party listens.

Acting as mediator during the more substantive aspects of negotiations, the third party may encourage problem solving. He may help the parties voice and define their underlying concerns. This may involve separating issues and searching through the underbrush of proliferated issues until the central issues can be identified. He can question win-lose assumptions and pose the issue as an integrative problem. Finally, he can help the parties find integrative solutions.

CONFRONTATION. In addition, however, the material on conflict management within the dyad suggests that the parties may avoid,

accommodate, or compromise on some issues as a way of maintaining harmony. Where the third party perceives that some important issue is being dealt with in this manner, he may attempt to move the parties towards a more collaborative or problem-solving approach to the issue. As in the case of de-escalation, the third party may attempt to build trust, provide a model of collaborative behavior, and aid in substantive problem solving.

Another tactic, however, is to increase the parties' perceived stakes in the issue as a way of eliciting more assertive behavior from them—pointing out the frustration of each party, defining an issue in larger terms, etc. The third party may even appeal to the self-respect of Party: "Are you going to let him do that to you?" This may amount to "sharpening an issue into conflict," in Schmidt and Tannenbaum's (1960) terms, or inducing a "differentiation phase" in Walton's (1969) terms. However, the third party's eventual objective here is to achieve collaborative or problem-solving behavior after the issue has been confronted.

STRUCTURAL MODEL

In contrast to the process model, the structural model of dyadic conflict is relatively unconcerned with discrete conflict episodes. The structural model gives up some clinical understanding of specific episodes in order to highlight the central behavioral tendencies within a given dyadic relationship. Thus, the model is concerned with the aggregate mix of behaviors used by the two parties during negotiations—the prevalence of collaboration, competition, avoidance, etc.

Furthermore, rather than identifying the events within conflict episodes, the structural model is concerned with the underlying parameters which shape those episodes. Specifically, the model is concerned with a number of pressures and constraints upon the parties. Each party's behavior is viewed as the resultant of those pressures and constraints, and behavioral change is seen as the consequence of changes in the configuration of these variables.

The structural model is represented in Figure 6. Briefly, the two circles represent the two interacting parties in the dyad. The conflict behavior of the two parties is seen as shaped by four types of structural variables. First, both parties are seen as having behavioral predispositions which stem partially from their motives and abilities. Second, both parties are subject to pressures from their surrounding social environments. Third, the parties respond to the conflict incentives in the situation—the conflict of interest between them, and their stakes in the

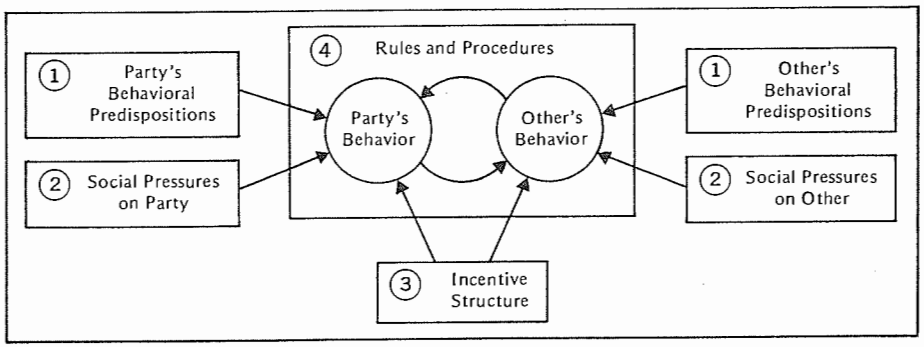

Figure 6. Structural model of dyadic conflict.

relationship. Last, the interaction of the two parties is seen as occurring within a framework of rules and procedures which constrain their behavior—decision rules, negotiating procedures, and procedures for third-party involvement.[17]

Let us now consider in greater detail these four components of the structural model and their effects upon conflict-handling behavior. In discussing each of these categories of structural variables, I have not attempted to cover all the relevant research findings and theoretical speculations in the literature. The literature on personality alone would be overwhelming. Rather, I have tried to give the reader a feel for the variety of structural variables which shape conflict episodes, and to cite some of their more salient influences upon behavior. Where findings and theory are sketchy, I have also tried to provide some theory.

Behavioral Predispositions

The first variable which shapes Party's behavior is his own set of behavioral predispositions. For example, Stagner (1962) demonstrated that labor relations at the plant level were to some extent responsive to the personalities of stewards and managers. This is not to say that Party has inflexible traits and that his behavior does not vary from situation to situation. Rather, Party is assumed to have some *tendencies* in his behavior.

Berkowitz (1962) noted that individuals can be thought of as having a hierarchy of responses for dealing with conflict situations. At the top of that hierarchy is what Blake and Mouton (1964) call a "dominant style" of response. This is the behavior which Party tends to use habitually and feels most comfortable with. If that behavior seems inappropriate in a given situation or fails to work, Party may fall back upon the next response in his hierarchy—his "back-up style." And so on down the hierarchy. For example, a given supervisor may tend to be collaborative, approaching issues with his subordinates in a problem-solving manner. However, when he feels that one subordinate is taking advantage of him, or when no integrative solution can be found on a given issue, he may fall back to a more competitive stance and attempt to use his power to suppress the subordinate's objections. If that does not work, he may withdraw. And so on. In the same situation, different supervisors would be expected to vary in their selection of behaviors.

Party's response heirarchy can be thought of as partially shaped by his motives and abilities. For example, problem solving is easier for creative people (Follett, 1941) and people who can deal cognitively with complex issues (Schroder et al., 1967). Competition is an outlet for individuals with high needs to exercise power or dominance (Stagner, 1962; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970). Managers with high affiliative or interaction needs may be more sensitive to other's feelings and may, therefore, lean towards accommodation (Stagner, 1962; Bass & Dunteman, 1963). And managers who are "task-oriented" may be more interested in confronting and solving problems (Bass & Dunteman, 1963).

Some evidence from the experimental gaming literature suggests that personality differences are most likely to show up in behavior under relatively non-threatening circumstances. In a comprehensive review of personality studies involving experimental games, Terhune (1970) found that high conflict of interest, anticipated threat from opponents, and actual competition from opponents tend to minimize the effects of personality. It is as if threat tends to reduce us all to a common denominator. Under such

[17] This model does not concern itself with feedback effects. In actuality, the interaction of the parties and the outcomes of their conflicts alter the predispositions of the parties, social pressures, incentive structures, and decision mechanisms. See, for example, Newcomb et al. (1965, pp. 12–15), Dubin (1957), and Thibaut (1968).

circumstances, the noncoercive responses in an individual's response hierarchy may seem ineffective (Raven & Kruglanski, 1970), leaving coercive tactics and a competitive orientation.

Social Pressure

The second set of influences in the structural model are social pressures from outside the dyad. During conflict episodes, Party's behavior may be influenced by social pressure from a number of directions. In this section, we shall consider two sources: from groups which Party represents, and from neutral parties or bystanders. These two sets of pressures will be called "constituent pressure" and "ambient social pressure," respectively.

CONSTITUENT PRESSURE. Blake et al. (1964) distinguish between conflicts over "personal matters," in which Party is acting for himself, and "group matters," in which Party is acting as a representative for a group. They point out that, as a representative, Party is often not free to negotiate according to his own preferences and judgments. Rather, as a group representative, Party is subject to the group's evaluation of him as a hero or as a traitor. Group norms sanction representative behavior which the group perceives as contributing to group goals, and punish other behavior.

Such sanctions may vary from group to group. The effectiveness of many informal sanctions, such as social isolation, is apt to vary with the attractiveness of the group to Party (Festinger et al., 1950). In formal groups, representatives may also have to contend with formal sanctions. For example, Megginson and Gullett (1970) note that unions are "quasi-political" organizations: union representatives must maintain popularity in order to retain office, and contract agreements reached by representatives must be ratified by the electorate.[18]

Representatives are not bound to the preexisting expectations of their constituents, of course. They may play an active role in modifying those expectations. This process is referred to as "intra-organizational bargaining" by Walton and McKersie (1965, Chaps. 8, 9). The interested reader may refer to Walton and McKersie for a more detailed account of the dynamics and tactics involved in this process. In the present section, we shall restrict attention to the broad implication of constituent pressure for Party's behavior.

One would expect that the added responsibility of representing others would increase Party's assertiveness in negotiating with Other. The literature more specifically suggests that social pressure from constituents is usually toward *competitive* behavior. In part, this competitive tendency may reflect the effect of group interaction upon attitudes toward risk. The competitive bravado sometimes observed in group strategy-setting meetings is reminiscent of "risky shift" phenomena. In a number of experiments, Wallach and Kogan (1965) and their colleagues[19] have frequently found that group discussion of an issue produces shifts in individual preferences toward riskier behavioral strategies.

There is another important set of group influences upon competition, however. Competition with other groups tends to serve a number of functions for the internal dynamics of a given group. Perhaps most important, competition and hostility toward other groups tend to strengthen the leadership hierarchy within a group, and to increase cohesion and unity of purpose (Coser, 1956; Blake & Mouton, 1961). The common goal of defeating an enemy tends to produce ingroup collaboration, and the group tends to close ranks behind its leadership. Coser (1956) notes, therefore, that a group may have some motive to search for and maintain enemies. In unions, Megginson and Gullett (1970) note that union officials have a vested interest in maintaining hostile relations with management in order to reduce inter-member bickering and to ensure their own continued support.

Once the hostility and competitive orientation exist, constituents may demand strongly competitive stances from their representatives. Walton and McKersie (1965, p. 350) state that constituents may be unsatisfied with agreements which have been reached by problem solving, quoting one union negotiator as saying, "The boys will only accept a contract when they are convinced I have taken a 'pound of flesh' from the company." Likewise, Stern and Pearse (1968) cite a case in which the attempts of union representatives to de-escalate competition with management led union members to question the integrity of those representatives.

Walton and McKersie (1965, p. 351) suggest that problem solving may be reconciled with constituent pressures by "bringing the constituents face to face with the realities of the situation," thus increasing communication between representatives and membership, and involving the membership in informed problem solving activities on issues. Stern and Pearse (1968) report a case in which these tactics were successfully utilized within a union, enabling the collaborative negotiation of a contract while increasing membership confidence in their representatives.

AMBIENT SOCIAL PRESSURE. Party may also be exposed to social pressures from various more-or-less neutral observers or bystanders —pressures regarding proper conflict behavior. These pressures may reflect the norms, values, and interests of some larger system of which the dyad is a part—for example, cultural values, organizational and work group norms, and public interest. To a large extent, it is the existence of bystanders, together with their ability to employ sanctions against the two parties, which gives strength to these standards of behavior.

Some pressures come from formal authorities. In the case of labor-management negotiations, for example, the government may employ moral suasion (Megginson & Gullett, 1970, p. 502) to end strikes or to encourage the parties to adopt softer bargaining positions. The government may also threaten the use of sanctions, such as fines, or threaten to intervene through legislation or compulsory arbitration. The possibility of such actions lends weight to the government's pressures. The case is similar for formal authority within an organization. A supervisor may employ suasion to influence conflict-handling behavior between subordinates. For example, Thomas and Walton (1971) found that supervisory emphasis on cooperation tended to be accompanied by more collaborative and accommodative interdepartmental behavior by subordinates. Underlying this suasion is the supervisor's ability to impose formal sanctions upon the subordinate or to impose new policies to settle the conflict issue.

Other pressures have less formal sources. Public opinion may be a factor in labor disputes—solely because both parties wish to avoid public disapproval or because such disapproval may have adverse economic effects upon the company and union. Within an organization, conflicting managers and workers are subject to peer pressures. Peers may employ social sanctions such as isolation, but may also withhold substantive aid. For example, Blau (1955) found evidence which suggests that cooperative norms within one work group were enforced by diverting work from workers who competed with others, thus lowering their performance.[20]

The most common objective of ambient social pressure appears to be the prevention of disruption for the larger system. Thus, there are commonly norms within the system forbidding violence and constraining the

[18] Recently, Stern and Pearse (1968) noted that rank-and-file rejections of settlements had been increasing in frequency, underscoring the importance of constituent pressures upon union representatives.

[19] A description of the early risky shift research is contained in Jones and Gerard (1967, pp. 628–639). Recent reviews of research on this topic (Pruitt, 1971a, 1971b; Cartwright, 1971), while not questioning that risky shifts are frequent, have stressed that their occurrence is contingent upon various factors.

[20] Blau's findings are summarized and interpreted in Zaleznik and Moment (1967, pp. 362–365).

use of coercive power. For example, March and Simon (1958, p. 131) predict that organizations encourage persuasive and problem-solving approaches to internal conflicts to the exclusion of bargaining behavior. They also predict that there will be less pressure toward these "analytic" approaches to conflict *between* organizational systems: open bargaining and the use of coercion are more likely between company and union, for example, than within either. Even here, however, there remains some public and governmental pressure within the larger system that the parties seek agreement rather than resorting to force, that is, that they bargain "in good faith" (Blake et al., 1964).

Beyond restricting coercion and violence, however, norms sometimes generalize to the point of discouraging *any* assertive conflict-handling behavior. Storr (1968, Chap. 8) observes that our Western civilization encourages the repression of aggressive feelings—that we are used to thinking of aggression as "bad" rather than regarding it as a drive which is necessary for gaining mastery over the environment.[21] Litwin and Stringer (1968) note that organizations vary in the degree to which they encourage conflict to be accepted and dealt with, including this variable as one dimension of "organizational climate." Blake and Mouton (1964) note that some supervisors create work group atmospheres in which interpersonal conflicts are avoided or smoothed over. Finally, Bennis and Shepard (1956) argue that small groups, in their development, tend to pass through stages in which interpersonal conflicts are seen as threatening to group harmony and are suppressed.

Using Walton's (1969) terminology, such norms constitute "barriers" to the expression of assertive conflict behavior. These barriers will sometimes provide cooling off periods and prevent competition and escalation on what appear to be unresolvable issues (Walton, 1969; Schmidt & Tannenbaum, 1960). However, they also discourage the confrontation of issues which could be resolved by problem solving. In controlling conflict behavior, then, such norms tend to discourage resolution of underlying conflict issues. Moreover, Walton (1969, p. 90) notes that these norms may drive conflicts underground to take less overt but more destructive competitive forms, and that suppressed issues and feelings may accumulate to make an eventual confrontation more intensely violent and destructive.

Dysfunctional norms are susceptible to change. Several authors have stated that norms function as though they are based upon shared, but often unvoiced and unexamined assumptions. Bion (1961) noted this in therapy groups, and Freire (1970) observed the same for culturally shared norms. In the case of organizational or group norms which suppress assertive conflict behavior, it is as though members have reached an implicit consensus that such behavior is threatening or dangerous to them. A third party may succeed in altering dysfunctional norms by making these assumptions explicit to an organization or group and having that body examine their validity and consequences (Schein, 1969, Chap. 6).

[21] Storr uses the term "aggression" to refer to behavior directed against obstacles to one's satisfaction. Thus, aggressive behavior, in his sense, would include problem solving as well as competition. He does not restrict the use of this term to behavior which is directed against others.

Incentive Structure

The third source of influence upon the behavior of the conflict parties is what we shall call their "incentive structure." "Incentive structure" is used in a very broad sense here to mean the interrelationship between the concerns of the two parties—the manner in which the satisfaction of Party's concerns is linked to the satisfaction of Other's concerns. For example, two executives may find themselves in competition for promotion to a single vacant position. Union and management may both desire to keep a company in operation, but the union's overriding concern for higher salaries may be incompatible with management's great concern for increased dividends to stockholders. And so on.

In the process model, we were concerned with a party's conceptualization of issues as a determinant of his behavior. That conceptualization was one event in the sequence of events involved in a conflict episode. In the structural model, however, we are concerned with the effect of various *conditions* upon emergent behavior. Therefore, we are concerned with the "realities" of the issues which affect the concerns of both parties. Subjective reality seems more relevant to the process model, while objective reality seems more relevant to the structural model.[22]

In the structural model, we shall view the mix of conflict behavior used by a party as influenced by two aspects of the incentive structure—the stakes involved in the relationship, and the extent to which there is conflict of interest between the concerns of the parties. The stakes for Party are defined loosely as the importance to Party of those concerns of his which depend upon the behavior of Other. This importance is considered in relationship to the importance of other concerns which Party holds. For example, an executive's stakes in his relationship with his janitor may be relatively low, involving the tidiness of his office; while his stakes in his relationship with the company president are considerably higher, involving job security, pay, etc. Likewise, the Sales department may have high stakes in their relationship with Production, involving their ability to honor sales orders, while they have lower stakes in their direct relationships with Maintenance, involving only occasional repairs of office equipment.

In this context, conflict of interest refers to the general degree of incompatibility versus compatibility between the concerns of Party and Other. For example, our executive may have no conflict of interest with his janitor over the tidiness of his office, since the janitor is paid on the basis of office tidiness. By contrast, there may be a great deal of conflict of interest between Sales and Production over the acceptance of unusual orders, the acceptance of small production orders, and scheduling of production runs. In most real-world situations, the conflict of interest in a relationship may be subject to only gross estimation.

Axelrod (1970) develops a fairly detailed definition of conflict of interest and hypothesizes that conflict of interest, so defined, tends to produce "conflictful" (competitive) behavior. In a review of Axelrod's work, however, Tanter (1971) takes Axelrod to task for not considering the impact of stakes upon the relationship between conflict of interest and behavior. In the present model, stakes and conflict of interest are viewed as interacting in their effects upon behavior. High stakes could lead to either competition or collaboration, depending upon the conflict of interest present; and conflict of interest would not be expected to produce competition if the stakes were trivial. We shall discuss this interaction in more detail after considering stakes and conflict of interest individually.

STAKES. In the literature, the notion of Party's stakes in a relationship has often been phrased in terms of Party's *dependence*

[22] This helps to explain Bernard's (1951) observation that "conflict," by which she seems to mean conflict of interest, has tended to be defined subjectively by psychologists and objectively by sociologists. Bernard argued for the adoption of an objective definition. For our purposes, however, objective and subjective reality are both necessary to understand the course of events in a dyad. Subjective reality has the more direct influence upon behavior, and one would often be naive to assume that subjective reality is an accurate representation of objective reality. However, one cannot understand the origins of subjective reality without taking objective reality into account. Objective reality, unfortunately, is not directly observable. In this sort of research, objective reality must often be operationalized as the subjective reality of the researcher. If the researcher perceives underlying concerns which the parties are unaware of, then those are treated as the objective, underlying concerns of the two parties. Likewise, if the researcher perceives an integrative alternative which the parties overlook, then he concludes that there is no necessary objective conflict of interest between the parties.

upon Other.[23] Essentially, the more Party depends upon Other in some way for the satisfaction of important concerns, the greater are Party's stakes in his relationship with Other. This dependence may take a variety of forms. In relations among individuals, the satisfaction of many of Party's interpersonal needs may be dependent upon Other's behavior. For example, if Party has high affiliative needs, he may be dependent upon Other for friendly behavior. Work-flow patterns and responsibilities within an organization determine functional dependence—the extent to which Party's adequate performance of his job depends upon the adequate performance of Other (Kahn et al., 1964). For example, it may be vital to Accounting to receive accurate information from Sales, and a supervisor may be almost totally dependent upon his subordinates' performance of a number of tasks. The necessity of distributing resources among parties creates another type of interdependence. For example, the allocation of company funds is vital to union and management; two executives may each have some stake in getting their share of work from a secretary whom they share; and Sales and Production may each have to adjust their budget requests to the requests of the other. Finally, the necessity of coordinating work between two parties may create interdependence around the timing or scheduling of activities (March & Simon, 1958).[24] For example, it may be necessary for Sales to coordinate sales orders and promised delivery dates with Production's scheduling.

Other things being equal, Party is expected to be more assertive in those relationships where stakes are highest. In such relationships, Party is more likely to invest the time and energy required for the bargaining or problem solving necessary to obtain satisfactory outcomes. Based upon data on functional dependence between managers, Kahn et al. (1964, p. 212) concluded:

> Role senders who are dependent on the focal person's performance are usually unrelenting in their pressures on him because diminishing the pressures would jeopardize their own job efficiency . . . their personal investment in the performance of the focal person is too great for them to relax their pressures.

In addition to being more assertive, Party is expected to be more sensitive to Other's behavior where high stakes are involved. In the context of interdepartmental relations, Thomas (1971) found highest correlations between managers' perceptions of Other's behavior and annoyance with Other under very high functional dependence.

These dynamics suggest some interesting implications for relationships involving asymmetric dependence between parties. March and Simon (1958) note that the decision of whether or not to negotiate a given issue can itself be a conflict issue in organizations. Such issues would be likely to occur in relationships with asymmetric dependence, where the parties have different stakes and, therefore, different motivation to negotiate. For example, a local union might be presumed to be relatively more dependent upon the company than vice versa: the company mediates nearly all of the union's concerns, while the company is also concerned with customers, suppliers, competitors, stockholders, etc. Under these circumstances, we would expect the union to get more emotionally involved in labor-management issues, to be more assertive in addressing issues, and to prefer more frequent negotiations. By contrast, the company management might be more likely to feel that the union was "getting upset over nothing" and to frequently react by avoiding contact or attempting to smooth over an issue—less assertive behaviors. One could hypothesize similar tendencies in superior-subordinate relationships where the superior has several subordinates, or in interdepartmental relationships with asymmetric dependence.[25]

[23] See March and Simon (1958), Emerson (1962), Kahn et al. (1964), Pondy (1966), Thompson (1967), Thomas and Walton (1971).

[24] Using Thompson's (1967) categorization, work-flow dependence is a form of "sequential" dependence, resource distribution is "pooled" interdependence, and coordination is "reciprocal" interdependence.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST. The notion of compatibility versus incompatibility of concerns occurs in the literature under a variety of labels. For example, Walton (1970) speaks of integrative versus distributive situations, Deutsch (1949) discusses promotively interdependent versus "contriently" interdependent goals, Blake and Mouton (1961) and Thibaut and Kelley (1959) speak of a state of "competition" between the desires of the parties, Bernard (1951, 1957) uses the term "conflict" to denote incompatibility of values, and so on.

Walton and McKersie (1965, p. 5) differentiate between issues and problems: issues are areas of common concern in which the objectives of the parties are assumed to be incompatible, and problems are areas of concern which do not involve fundamental incompatibilities between objectives. I would like to modify their scheme slightly to define "common problems" as areas of interdependence which largely involve commonality of interest, and to define "competitive issues" as areas which largely involve conflict of interest. Areas which involve a potential for either will be called "mixed issues." Figure 7 shows archetypal representations of a competitive issue, mixed issue, and common problem. The shaded areas indicate possible joint outcomes. In Figure 7a, a competitive issue, it is impossible for both parties to jointly satisfy their concerns.[26] In Figure 7c, a common problem, the two parties have a common stake in attaining favorable outcomes—each party's increases in satisfaction are accompanied by increases for the other. In Figure 7b, however, a mixed issue, there is no necessary relationship between the outcomes of the two parties: integrative solutions are possible but so are wins and losses, depending upon the conceptualizations and behaviors of the parties.

First, let us consider competitive issues. The conflict of interest in competitive issues appears to have two sorts of origins, both involving scarce resources. The most straightforward form occurs when two parties have to allocate resources between them—money, promotion, status, work force, committee speaking time, etc. Here, conflict

[25] In many situations of *highly* asymmetric dependence, however, the more dependent party may exercise some caution in his assertiveness. Here, the greater dependence of Party upon Other gives Other a source of coercive power which he may use upon Party. Kahn et al. (1964, p. 212) concluded that highly dependent managers may mitigate their assertiveness "for fear of the consequences." In many settings, however, we would expect organizational norms and third-party pressures to restrict the exploitation of dependent parties by parties with such power advantages.

[26] Competitive issues are represented in their most general or inclusive form here—to include possibilities of deadlocks and other sub-optimal outcomes. In order to simplify presentation here, strictly zero sum issues and either/or issues are regarded as more specific forms of this general pattern.

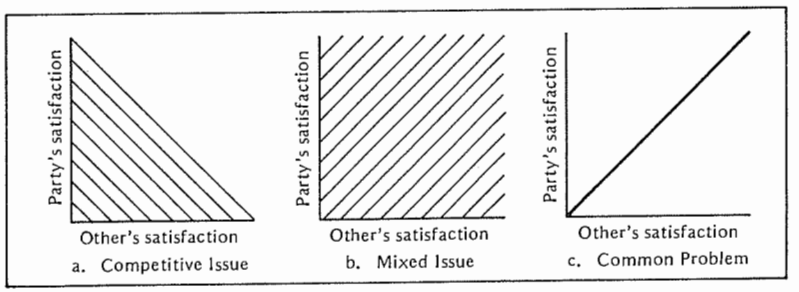

Figure 7. Three types of decision areas.

of interest exists to the extent that the summed aspirations of the two parties exceed the quantity of resource available (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). For example, Walton and McKersie (1965, p. 18) note that in union-management negotiations, the most basic conflicts of interest often center around incompatible desires for economic resources, and White (1961) found chronic interdepartmental conflict of interest where different departments desired jurisdiction over programs. However, conflict of interest may also occur when parties have different, or "differentiated" concerns—different individual motives, different departmental objectives, interest in different topics, etc. Differentiation itself does not imply conflict of interest: people with different knowledge and interests may learn from each other, relationships can meet several needs and objectives, and so on. Rather, it appears that differentiation involves conflict of interest only when there are insufficient means or resources to meet both parties' concerns at a given time—when time is too scarce to enable one party to attend to the other's concerns, when there is insufficient money or manpower to achieve two departmental goals simultaneously, etc. For example, Collins and Guetzkow (1964, Chap. 5), in reviewing the effects of personality differences upon group decision making, conclude that such differences tend to create most conflict under time pressure—when there is insufficient time to satisfy the differentiated concerns of the parties. Resources like time and funds, however, tend to be generally scarce in organizations, so that Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) found that, on the whole, differentiation between organizational units posed an obstacle to integration. Because of the crucial role played by resource availability in creating conflict of interest, Cyert and March (1963) identified organizational "slack"—an overabundance of organizational resources—as an important factor in reducing inter-unit conflict.

Research has tended to link conflict of interest to uncooperative behavior. In his classic field experiment, Sherif (1958; Sherif & Sherif, 1956, Chaps. 6, 9) created intergroup conflict of interest in a boys' camp by establishing competitive sports events for desirable prizes. As a result, each group developed hostile attitudes toward the other and, even outside of the sports events, adopted uncooperative behavior—ranging from assertive and hostile (competitive) behavior to avoidance. In a laboratory setting, Blake and Mouton (1961) created conflict of interest between pairs of groups by asking the two groups to evaluate the relative quality of papers written by each group. The resulting behavior was markedly competitive: group members sought to undermine the other group's position without understanding that position, and group representatives took unyielding negotiating postures. In a study of interdepartmental relations in industry (Thomas & Walton, 1971), managers indicated that competitive and, to a lesser extent, avoidant behavior was more common in relationships where conflict of interest was prevalent.

By contrast, the commonality of interest in common problems is expected to produce cooperative behavior. On such problems, Party's own outcomes become more satisfactory when Other's outcomes become more satisfactory. It is thus to Party's advantage to help, or at least not interfere with, Other's efforts (Deutsch, 1949). This formulation suggests that Party will tend to either collaborate with Other or go along with Other's wishes (i.e., accommodate).

In his previously mentioned field experiment, Sherif (1958) created commonality of interest between groups after they had become competitive and hostile. His "superordinate goals" encouraged *active* collaboration by both groups, since the goals, which were highly desired by both groups, could not be attained by either group's individual efforts. With this change in incentives, the two groups collaborated to achieve the superordinate goals; and a series of such tasks succeeded in reducing intergroup hostility. In the area of labor relations, the

Scanlon Plan (Lesieur, 1958; Lesieur & Puckett, 1969) appears to have produced some increase in union-management cooperation by creating commonality of interest in the form of profit-sharing plans.[27] The Tavistock Institute has pioneered a form of collaborative incentive within work groups (Emery, 1959; Trist et al., 1963): reversing the trend toward differentiation of job responsibilities between workers, this approach has encouraged shared responsibility between work-group members for various group tasks.

In contrast to common problems and competitive issues, mixed issues may permit either cooperative or competitive behaviors. One can think of competitive issues as encouraging uncooperative behavior and of common problems as encouraging cooperative behavior (Deutsch, 1949). However, mixed issues do not appear to encourage either; rather they *allow* either. For example, consider a disagreement over which course of action to follow. Each party is assumed to have some concern that the insights which have led him to his position be reflected in the dyad's decision. The parties may adopt either cooperative or uncooperative behaviors: they may, for example, attempt to integrate their insights into a decision which is at least as good as either party's position, or each party may attempt to impose his position upon the other.

The parties' selection of behavior on mixed issues is asserted to be influenced by the relative importance and frequency of competitive issues versus common problems in the relationship as a whole. Through the dynamics described in the process model, behavior on any mixed issues which arise is assumed to respond to the identification, trust, and other results of cooperative or uncooperative behavior in other decision areas. Thus, the same substantive disagreement would be more likely to be approached cooperatively by parties with mainly common interests than by parties with mainly conflicting interests. One tends to discuss issues with allies and to debate them with enemies.[28]

JOINT EFFECTS OF STAKES AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST. The predicted joint effects of these two variables upon Party's aggregate conflict-handling behavior in a relationship are shown in Figure 8. Here we are concerned with Party's predominant behavioral mode or behavioral tendency, recognizing that his behavior will vary to some extent from issue to issue. Basically, since higher stakes are expected to result in more assertive behavior while common interests result in cooperative behavior, Figure 8 is quite similar to Figure 4 in the process model.

Briefly, considerable conflict of interest is expected to produce competition when Party has a great deal at stake.[29] However, when he has relatively little at stake in a relation-

[27] The use of profit-sharing plans, along with some of their shortcomings, is discussed in Stagner and Rosen (1965, pp. 126–128).

[28] At this point, I feel a need to clarify the relationship of common problems to the present conflict models. I have assumed that conflict phenomena are a *subset* of decision-making phenomena. Specifically, as long as decision making is seen by both parties as progressing toward resolving common problems, I have chosen to exclude such phenomena from the scope of conflict. Conflict occurs when some sort of interference takes place between the parties—when one party frustrates some concern held by another. These disruptions and the concerns which underlie them constitute the issues which are conceptualized and dealt with by the parties in the process model of conflict. Therefore, the *process* model excludes the conceptualization of common problems. In seeking an integrative outcome to a conflict, the parties may redefine an issue as an integrative problem, but it is not common problems themselves which spawn conflict episodes. Likewise, a conflict issue may arise while two parties are discussing a common problem, but it is not the common problem itself which constitutes the conflict issue. However, the presence within a relationship of decision areas which are characterized by common interests is assumed to influence behavior in the conflict episodes which *do* occur. Thus, the presence of common problems in a relationship is included in the structural model as an influence upon conflict-handling behavior.

[29] Conflict of interest and high stakes may also create competitive deadlocks between the parties. Under these conditions, the parties may engage in avoidance (withdrawal), if this is feasible. See, for example, Pondy (1966, p. 249) and Blake et al. (1964, Chap. 6).

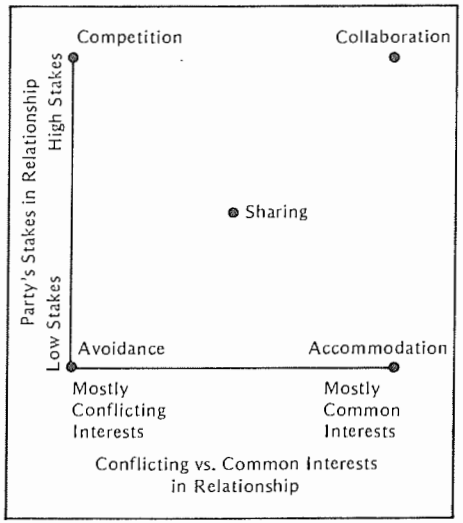

Figure 8. Predominant conflict-handling behavior of Party as a function of stakes and aggregate conflict of interest in a relationship.

ship in which there is considerable conflict of interest, he is expected to be more likely to avoid issues. Essentially, such issues may constitute minor annoyances in his routine which he may neglect in favor of matters which are more important to him. Viewing Other as an unpleasant source of minor irritations, he may physically avoid Other or at least avoid confronting those issues. For example, a busy Maintenance supervisor may avoid one Production foreman who often wants his men's services; a supervisor may discourage subordinate complaints by keeping his door shut; and so on.

Likewise, considerable commonality of interest is assumed to produce collaboration in relationships where Party has a great deal at stake. However, when Party has relatively little at stake in a relationship in which there is commonality of interest, he is expected to engage in more accommodation. Again, he is expected to devote his energy to relationships in which he has greater stakes. With common interests, he can generally trust Other's intentions and may lose little by deferring to Other's wishes. For example, if a researcher is engaged in several joint research projects, he is likely to devote the least energy to the least important of them, relying upon his colleague's judgment and generally accommodating his wishes.

Little systematic data on sharing (compromise) are available in the literature. A predisposition toward sharing would appear to be most frequent in relationships with intermediate stakes and intermediate conflict or commonality of interest. With intermediate stakes, Party may be willing to give up some satisfaction, but not all; and Party may, therefore, invest the moderate time and energy required for compromise, but not the greater time and energy required for more assertive behaviors. Proposing compromises has elements of both cooperation and noncooperation, yielding something to Other but also holding out something for oneself, so that it would appear to be less likely in the cooperative climate created by extreme commonality of interest or the uncooperative climates created by extreme conflict of interest. To be sure, compromise may be an eventual *outcome* of competitive processes where neither party can win, but a preference for compromise as a behavioral *orientation* would appear more likely in these intermediate situations.

Rules and Procedures

The final set of influences upon the behavior of the parties stems from the rules and procedures which are relevant to their joint decision making. These rules and procedures make up the established decision-making machinery which governs the negotiations of the two parties. At any given moment, this machinery serves to constrain and shape the behavior of the parties who interact within it. I have tried to sort out three components of this machinery: decision rules which dictate substantive decisions on issues, negotiation procedures which constrain the interaction of the two parties, and procedures for the involvement of third parties to resolve conflict issues through mediation or arbitration.

Decision rules. By "decision rules" is meant those mutually accepted rules that specify which alternatives are to be selected or avoided when issues arise. These decision rules contrast with procedural rules, which specify how one negotiates rather than what one decides. Decision rules might include the formal rule that Sales must allow a five-day lead time on Production orders; the informal agreement that two departments share responsibility for certain types of errors; the norm that a supervisor should give his subordinates a chance to develop professionally; and so on. In his treatment of industrial relations systems, Dunlop (1958) visualized the actors as surrounded by a "web of rules" which stem from management, workers, and government.

Rules tend to arise or to be created to cover sensitive issues between parties (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959, Chap. 8). If Sales and Production frequently come into conflict over the length of lead times on production orders, then a number of rules will tend to emerge to govern this issue. Such rules might take the form of formal agreements between the two departments, informal expectations on the basis of past precedent, or organizational rules imposed upon the two departments to manage their conflict. Dubin (1957) spoke of informal rules as the "common law of the plant."

In their most effective form, rules serve to prevent conflict behavior. Both parties yield some of their personal power and freedom as an accepted rule acquires influence over them both (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). When issues arise which are clearly covered by an accepted rule, both parties follow the rule rather than using tactics to try to satisfy their own concerns. In time, the behavior dictated by the rule may become automatic, so that a situation is no longer even conceptualized as a conflict issue. For example, Sales personnel may automatically tell customers that orders cannot be filled in less than five days, no longer recognizing any conflict with Production over lead times. Such rules are often efficient in the sense that they avoid the time, energy, and potential hostility of conflict episodes.

When they do not eliminate awareness of conflicts, rules still tend to transform the base of power used in a conflict episode. During negotiations over an issue covered by a rule, either party may appeal to the rule as an impersonal source of legitimate power (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Raven & Kruglanski, 1970).[30] Raven and Kruglanski (1970) note that exercising such power is less likely to generate hostility than is coercive power.

However, rules also have a number of drawbacks in their effects upon conflict behavior. First, rules discourage problem solving in individual cases. Over time, accepted rules take on a quality of moral obligation (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Deviations from the rule are often regarded as wrong, even though a particular case might be more satisfactorily handled for both parties by coming to some other agreement. Essentially, as the rule becomes stronger, the merits of a particular case and the degree to which both parties' concerns are satisfied become less relevant.

Second, it is my observation that rules promote black-white thinking which may encourage win-lose competition on issues. For some reason, applying rules to behavior seems to generate two-valued thinking: right-wrong, correct-incorrect, should-shouldn't, guilty-innocent. Inevitably, rules are ambiguous—the implications of one rule are unclear, or it is unclear which rule to apply. In such cases, disagreements over rules are

[30] This behavior—invoking established decision rules—is difficult to classify in our five-category scheme of conflict behavior. Blake and Mouton (1964, Chap. 6) associated such behavior with the sharing (compromise) orientation, possibly because reliance upon established rules and traditions prevents integrative solutions and tends, over the long haul, to result in only moderate goal satisfaction for both parties.

apt to be conceptualized as "either/or" issues and are likely to result in competitive arguments: "That's the right way" versus "That's the wrong way"; "Yes I should" versus "No you shouldn't"; and so on. Because the functionality of alternatives for both parties becomes irrelevant, few criteria exist to resolve the dispute.

Third, formal rules may proliferate. While general guidelines and informal agreements tend to occur in low threat situations, formal rules are most likely in situations of higher threat (Thibaut, 1968). In the context of interdepartmental relations, for example, Walton et al. (1966) found more formalized decision rules in competitive relationships. In such situations, decision rules may proliferate as each party seeks to control the other and protect himself. As disagreements occur over ambiguities in the rules, more detailed rules may be established to attempt to cover those ambiguities. Patten (1970) notes that continued collective bargaining has resulted in longer and more detailed labor contracts. The bureaucracy literature (e.g., Merton, 1957), likewise, notes the tendency for rules to proliferate as supervisors seek to control subordinates and subordinates seek clarification of existing rules. One cost of such proliferated rules is that an inordinate amount of time and energy may be required to deal with these rules: the parties must spend time scanning and mastering the rules before acting. Also, special legalistic machinery may have to be created to deal with interpreting rules and handling disputes.[31] Finally, if there are too many rules for a party to master, he may be unwilling to take positions on issues for fear of violating some rule (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and may thus adopt a conservative, avoidant orientation toward issues.

NEGOTIATION PROCEDURES. The two parties are not likely to interact randomly. More frequently, there are procedures which govern their frequency of interaction, the sequencing of issues, length of sessions, formality of presentation, number and composition of people present, and so on. These procedures may vary in formality from convenience and habit to elaborately formalized regulations. For example, all issues between R&D and Accounting may be filtered through the two department heads, who meet only monthly when they present formal proposals to a company-wide budget committee. Union-management negotiations may occur every few years between a fixed set of representatives who begin negotiations by reading formal proposals covering a large number of issues. Each morning, a Maintenance supervisor may meet informally with a Production supervisor to consider maintenance issues. Sales personnel in a given plant may interact informally with Production supervisors whenever important issues arise. And so on.

As a vehicle for considering the effects of negotiation procedures upon behavior, let us look at common procedures in labor-management contract negotiations.[32] First, the long period between negotiations discourages collaboration by allowing hostile stereotypes to develop (Newcomb, 1947), by preventing consideration of issues when facts are fresh, and by allowing issues to accumulate. Second, formal presentations encourage competition by increasing each side's commitment to their stated position. Third, consideration of several issues during a given negotiation tends to prevent settling each on its own merits: each tends to be seen as linked to the others (Fisher, 1964), so that they may be used in horse trading rather than problem solving (Patten, 1970). Fourth, filtering issues through a fixed set of representatives tends to discourage problem solving if those representatives are less knowledgeable concerning the facts of specific issues (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967).

Considering such influences leads Patten (1970) to observe that the structure of collective bargaining is itself the source of a great deal of competition. However, he also noted that the structure of collective bargaining is seldom questioned, so that the adversary viewpoint it produces is often taken for granted—even in the literature. Kerr (1954) also noted that labor-management negotiation procedures tend to become complex and rigid over time, until conflict negotiations become stylized and even ceremonial.

However, a number of procedural innovations *have* been tried which have succeeded in increasing the level of union-management collaboration in different organizations. For example, the Rogers Company[33] pioneered a form of open-ended bargaining in which either side could initiate negotiations whenever problems arose, thus preventing issues and hostilities from accumulating until the contract expiration date. An important feature of the Scanlon Plan (Lesieur, 1958; Lesieur & Puckett, 1969) was the creation of union-management contact throughout the organization. McKersie (1964; McKersie & Shropshire, 1962) reported a reduction in the competitive use of grievances in relations between International Harvester and the United Auto Workers when grievance-handling procedures were changed. Under the new procedures, grievances were handled when they arose, by the people directly involved, and with no written records. The quickness of action appeared to prevent hostilities from building and allowed settlement when the facts were still available; restricting negotiations to people directly involved meant that an issue could be considered on its own merits rather than in the context of other issues between union and management; and the informality and lack of written materials served to increase flexibility and reduce concern with precedent.

Blake et al. (1964, Chap. 12) reported that more integrative settlements were reached during contract negotiations when negotiation procedures were altered to encourage problem solving. Small union-management teams were formed for fact-finding on individual issues under consideration. Then larger groups met to generate alternatives, examine their implications for the concerns of union and management, and rank the alternatives in order of preference. Only then did the entire group of negotiators meet to determine the final settlements on the several issues. This procedure prevented premature commitment to alternatives, encouraged the consideration of each issue on its own merits, and fostered an exploratory, problem-solving orientation. The early collaboration on fact-finding may also have generated mutual trust and identification between the parties.

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION MECHANISMS. When a dyad is unable to reach agreement on an issue, there are apt to be mechanisms by which third parties may become actively involved in the decision-making process in an attempt to reach a settlement. Such mechanisms may be voluntary or compulsory. Prolonged competitive conflict episodes have costs for a system, so that the system has a vested interest in developing mechanisms to terminate such episodes (Galtung, 1965). Moreover, the parties themselves have some interest in avoiding the costs of a prolonged conflict episode (Coser, 1961; Blake et al., 1964, Chap. 4; Stagner & Rosen, 1965, Chap. 8).

Mediation and arbitration mechanisms are perhaps most formally developed and most noticeable in union-management relations. For example, many union-management contracts provide for binding arbitration of disputes over the interpretation of the contract's terms (Stagner & Rosen, 1965, pp. 112, 113), while state and federal governments provide mediation services for the negotiation of labor contracts. However, mediation and arbitration mechanisms are also prevalent within organizations, although they may be less formal. For example, Blake et al. (1964, Chap. 4) note that supervisors in an organization are frequently called upon to mediate or arbitrate conflicts between subordinates. In addition, members of the Personnel department may be avail-

[31] Patten (1970) observed that the labor relations literature is becoming increasingly legalistic.

[32] For a discussion of the relationship between procedures and behavior in interdepartmental relations, see Walton et al. (1966).

[33] Cited in Walton and McKersie (1965, p. 45).

able as mediators in interdepartmental conflicts; and unresolved issues may sometimes be arbitrated by ad hoc or standing organizational committees. Finally, Scott (1965) notes the prevalence of formal and informal appeals systems in organizations for settling superior-subordinate conflicts.

Let us consider mediation first. In mediation, the third party's role is that of helper or consultant to the dyad. The mediator does not impose a settlement upon the dyad. Rather, his role is to help the two parties locate and agree upon some mutually acceptable alternative. As such, he may utilize tactics similar to the third-party tactics covered in the process model or those suggested by Walton (1969). As Rehmus (1965) pointed out, little systematic data have been collected on the behavior of mediators, or the effects of mediators upon negotiations. Still, the behavior of the mediator is apparently directed towards eliciting problem solving or compromise from the conflict parties. Through his behavior, the mediator may also help the parties arrive at a more productive and less competitive pattern of negotiation for their relationship as a whole (Walton, 1969, Chap. 13).

In contrast, arbitration is expected to be rather mixed in terms of its effects upon conflict behavior within the dyad. In arbitration, the parties yield responsibility for arriving at an agreement, and a settlement is dictated by the arbitrator instead. First, let us consider the positive side of arbitration. Most importantly, arbitration terminates competitive deadlocks on specific episodes and may thus prevent escalation beyond acceptable levels. Secondly, however, an insightful arbitrator, by virtue of his experience and relative objectivity, may also be able to identify more integrative settlements than the parties themselves are able to perceive (although this is also true of mediators). For example, Mason (1969) recommended a corporate planning method in which the advocates of two competing plans debate in front of a planning group: essentially acting as an arbitrator, the planning group uses the debate to identify the key insights of each plan and attempts to integrate them into a final plan.

On the negative side, however, I would expect arbitration to do little to reduce existing hostility between the parties and would expect frequent arbitration to actually promote some degree of competition. Relieved of the responsibility for arriving at ultimate decisions with the other party, each party may be less concerned with the effects of his behavior before the arbitrator. This behavior would be analogous to disputing children accusing each other in front of their parents; or to a separated couple fighting via their attorneys during divorce litigation.

In addition, the intergroup research of Blake and Mouton (1961) demonstrates the likelihood of negative reactions to arbitrated decisions: to the extent that the decision favors one group over another, the "losing" group tends to view the decision as invalid and the arbitrator as unfair. In the case of labor relations, Stagner and Rosen (1965, Chap. 8) note that unions may ignore arbitration decisions when the arbitrators appear unfair. Blake and Mouton (1964, p. 54) quote one experienced arbitrator as saying that "the best arbitration judgments are ones that make neither group feel like winners." In any case, gaining the commitment of the parties to arbitrated settlements is apt to be a difficulty, so that arbitrated settlements may frequently be only temporary respites.

RECAP OF THE CONFLICT MODELS

Conflict can be represented by two different models which focus on separate aspects of conflict phenomena and have complementary uses for the practitioner:

1. *The Process Model.* Focuses upon the *sequence of events* which transpire within a conflict episode, and is particularly useful when one is faced with the need to understand and intervene directly into the stream of events of an ongoing episode.

2. *The Structural Model.* Focuses upon the *conditions* which shape conflict behavior in a relationship, and is useful in restructuring a situation to facilitate desired kinds of behavior patterns.

The two models suggest different sets of diagnostic questions for practitioners interested in understanding and managing specific conflicts. Those diagnostic questions are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

STATE OF THE LITERATURE

Thus far conflict has been defined, its functionality and dysfunctionality discussed, a model of the conflict process in dyads developed, and a model developed of the structural variables which shape conflict behavior in relationships. At this point, it seems fitting to conclude by making some general observations on the state of the conflict literature. Briefly, I shall note that research is noticeably lacking in some specific areas, that there is a need for more integrative theory and systematic research, and that validated instruments for measuring conflict behavior are needed.

Specific Areas for Research

Reviewing the literature for the process model turned up three general areas which seem particularly in need of further research:

TABLE 1
DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS FROM THE PROCESS MODEL

Key Questions	Relevant Conflict Events
1. What perceived loss or threat of loss has led each party to perceive a conflict?	1. Frustration
2. How does each party define the conflict issue? • Does each party have an accurate perception of the other's concerns? • Is the issue posed superficially rather than in terms of underlying concerns? • Would alternative definitions of the issue be more helpful in suggesting integrative solutions to the conflict?	2. Conceptualization
3. How does each party pursue his objectives in dealing with the other party? • What is his underlying orientation in approaching the conflict issue—competitive, collaborative, sharing, avoidant, accommodative? • What assumptions underlie his choice of strategies and tactics?	3. Behavior
4. How is each party's behavior influenced by the behavior of the other? • What ongoing dynamics seem to be producing the escalation or de-escalation? • Is each party aware that the other's behavior is partly a response to his own? • What efforts are the parties making to manage their own conflict?	4. Interaction
5. If things proceed as they are going, what are apt to be the short-term and long-term results of this episode—both substantive and emotional? • What foreseeable effects will this episode have upon subsequent episodes?	5. Outcome

TABLE 2
DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS FROM THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

Key Questions	Relevant Conditions
1. Does the general makeup of either party predispose him toward the use of specific conflict-handling modes? • Are those predispositions compatible with the requirements of his position? • To what extent could his behavior be changed through training experiences?	1. Behavioral predispositions
2. (a) Is either party acting as representative for a larger set of individuals? • What expectations do they have of his behavior? • How much power do they have over him? • To what extent can they monitor his negotiating behavior?	2. (a) Social pressures: constituent
2. (b) Who are the other, relatively neutral, onlookers? • What sort of behavior will they encourage or discourage? • How much power do they have over the parties?	2. (b) Social pressures: ambient
3. (a) How much is at stake for the parties in this relationship? • In what ways is each party dependent upon the other? • Is either party more vitally concerned with the outcome of negotiations than the other?	3. (a) Incentives: stakes
3. (b) What is the relative importance and frequency of competitive issues versus common problems in the relationship as a whole? • To what extent have resource scarcities created conflict of interest between the parties? • In what ways have differentiated responsibilities created conflict of interest?	3. (b) Incentives: conflict of interest
4. (a) Are there many rules which dictate or constrain settlements on specific issues? • To what extent are the parties free to problem-solve on important issues?	4. (a) Rules and procedures: decision rules
4. (b) How are the behaviors of the parties shaped by the format of their negotiations? • How frequently do the parties interact? • When and where are meetings held? • What are the number and composition of people present? • How formally are the negotiations conducted?	4. (b) Rules and procedures: negotiation procedures
4. (c) What provisions are there for involving third parties? • Are skilled third parties available to help the parties resolve their own disputes? • Does the larger system have provisions for terminating conflict episodes by imposing settlements when the parties deadlock?	4. (c) Rules and procedures: mediation and arbitration mechanisms

the functionality of various conflict-handling behaviors, conflict management within the dyad, and the parties' conceptualization of issues.

FUNCTIONALITY OF CONFLICT BEHAVIORS. It is only relatively recently that researchers have come to realize that conflict could have functional outcomes. Our notions concerning the functionality of conflict-handling behaviors are still relatively primitive and undifferentiated. For example, a disturbing amount of research in experimental gaming concerns itself with the simplistic dichotomy of cooperative behavior versus uncooperative behavior, and is directed at identifying factors which increase cooperation. Underlying this research, there appears to be a basic assumption that cooperation is good and noncooperation is bad.

The five-category classification for conflict behavior used in this article appears more useful for investigating the functionality of conflict behaviors in organizations. But here still, it is relatively easy to latch on to one behavior, collaboration, as the functional or "white hat" behavioral mode. To be sure, the research cited in the process model shows that collaboration tends to be related to managerial promotability and to organizational effectiveness in some settings. However, the general issue of functionality appears much more complex.

First, Pondy (1967) noted that functionality must be judged according to a set of criteria, and that the functionality of a given behavior may well depend upon the criteria adopted. Many international relations researchers, for example, appear to regard international goodwill as a value in its own right, leading them to consider joint cooperation as functional.[34] By contrast, organizational researchers and consultants are more apt to adopt organizational criteria related to performance—to getting things done. Thus, it is important for organizational research to take assertiveness into account as well as cooperation, so that joint collaboration or problem solving tends to be regarded as functional. From this perspective it is tempting to view non-collaborative behaviors as irrational behavioral mistakes or miscalculations made by parties who lack our own behavioral science insights. However, it is apparent that the conflict parties themselves have their *own* set of objectives or criteria, and that their selection of conflict behaviors is more likely to be understood in terms of their functionality for meeting those objectives. We have noted, for example, that competition with outgroups may be functional for ingroup harmony, and that different behaviors may be instrumental in satisfying different interpersonal needs.

Second, it is apparent that the functionality of a specific conflict-handling behavior may vary over issues and situations. For example, consider the functionality of a manager's behavior for his own promotability in the organization. The manager should not expend much time or energy on issues where little is at stake. He would be wise to avoid confronting issues which would escalate into costly or unresolvable conflicts. In dealing with competitive others, or in situations with high conflict of interest, competition may result in more favorable outcomes. The manager may be especially cooperative in his handling of conflicts with those who rate his performance. And his conflict behavior with peers and subordinates may vary with his supervisor's notions of proper behavior.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE DYAD. It was noted during the discussion of the process model that conflict research has tended to focus upon destructive tendencies in conflict episodes—tendencies toward escalation, for example. By contrast, we know relatively little about the conflict management practiced within the dyad—the avoidance of some issues, conciliation activities,

[34] This observation, together with the fact that experimental gaming is often used in peace research, may help to explain why the cooperative-uncooperative distinction has been retained in the experimental game literature.

attempts to de-escalate competition and convert competition to collaboration, etc. Everyday experience suggests that such activities are common, even though they are sometimes ineffectual.

CONCEPTUALIZATION. It is surprising that so little research has been done concerning a party's conceptualization of conflict issues. Party's behavior is based in large measure upon his conceptualization: his definition of the issue appears to determine his view of the stakes involved, and his awareness of alternatives appears to determine his view of the conflict of interest present. Moreover, there is no necessary relationship between objective reality and Party's conceptualization (Deutsch, 1969). Hence, Party's conceptualization of a conflict issue appears to be a key leverage point in conflict management.

In the two conflict models, a number of influences upon Party's conceptualization have been hypothesized and Party's conceptualization has been hypothesized to influence Party's behavior in a number of ways. The investigation of these influences and of third party influences upon Party's conceptualization appears to be a critical area for empirical research.

Conflict Theory as a Whole

The organizational conflict literature is largely specialized according to organizational arena, and research studies are often focused upon narrow sets of variables. This pattern seems understandable for an applied field where researchers are often concerned with specific problems. However, I would like to stress the desirability of developing more integrative theory and more comprehensive research strategies.

INTEGRATIVE THEORY. The theory and research relating to organizational conflict seems largely segmented and unintegrated. Although there are several pieces of quality research and many important theoretical insights, the theoretical ties between them are often unclear. Researchers look at different manifestations of conflict, different independent variables, and so on. It is easy to get the impression that conflict is a general label for a number of largely unrelated phenomena—strikes, absenteeism, arguing, budget disputes, religious schisms, tensions, and so forth.

This chapter met a need of mine to begin integrating insights in that scattered literature—to look for those basic events and structural variables which appear helpful in understanding the various manifestations of conflict in dyads. It is my opinion that the literature would benefit from more of this theoretical integration. An established body of integrated conflict theory would be useful in relating the different conflict literatures and in suggesting applications of findings from one organizational arena to another. A general integrated theory would also be helpful in generating research hypotheses, diagnosing conflicts, and in teaching.

COMPLEX MODELS. It is also my opinion that our conceptualization of conflict phenomena would benefit by becoming more complex. In assembling the structural model, it became apparent that conflict-handling behavior is shaped by a variety of structural variables—by personal predispositions, rules, procedures, incentives, organizational norms, constituent pressures, and so on. This complexity is seldom reflected in the theory and research in our field. In approaching a conflict relationship, the practitioner and the researcher apparently tend to take many of these variables for granted. The result is likely to be that the researcher develops an oversimplified view of the determinants of behavior in a setting, and that the practitioner overlooks some possible change strategies—or some variables which will interfere with his change attempts.

I view the structural model in this chapter as a first step toward a more complete and useful model. The present model designates several categories of variables which influence conflict behavior and specifies the expected form of some of those influences. It needs to be tested and expanded. What variables have been omitted, what influences oversimplified? How do the structural variables interact to influence behavior? How does behavior feed back to influence the structural variables? And how do the structural variables tend to vary together? If expanded by answering these questions, the structural model would eventually become a systems model of conflict with strong predictive power, and with implications for system change strategies.

As it is now, I hope that this model may serve to generate comprehensive research which can begin to answer the questions above by addressing structural influences in their complexity.

Validated Instruments

Finally, despite its popularity as a topic, empirical research on conflict behavior in organizations is still somewhat sparse. Progress in research and theory would be aided greatly by the availability of validated instruments for measuring conflict behavior.

Self-assessment measures for behavioral classification schemes similar to the one in this chapter have been used by Blake and Mouton (1964), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), Hall (1969), and Thomas and Walton (1971). However, at present, there is little in the way of validity data on any of them. Thomas (1971) discusses the validity problem in some detail. Essentially, there is some evidence that subjects have difficulty comprehending and distinguishing some of the behavioral categories, and some evidence of a strong social desirability response bias. Clearly, more care needs to be devoted to developing and validating these instruments.

But in addition, there is a need to develop scoring systems for coding ongoing conflict behavior. Freed from the biases inherent in self-assessment measures, such scoring systems would ultimately provide the most objective data on conflict-handling behavior.

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