

What is "Occupy"? A Conflict Analysis Perspective

By Richard Rubenstein, Professor of Conflict Resolution and Public Affairs, rrubenst@gmu.edu

The advent of unexpected forms of social conflict challenges conflict analysts to answer two hard questions. The first is "What's really going on here?" What are the underlying causes, current dynamics, likely outcomes, and possible options for resolving this conflict? The second is, "Why have these events surprised us?" Since we are conflict analysts, why didn't we see this struggle coming and recommend creative ways to deal with it? The answers to these queries are closely related, but let's start with the issue of surprise.

An uncomfortable fact: new eruptions of large-scale social conflict almost always take most academic experts and policymakers by surprise. Virtually no one anticipated the civil disorders of the 1960s and 1970s in North America and Europe, the global rise of religiously-motivated conflict in



Protesters rallying near New York police headquarters.
Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

the years following the Iranian Revolution, the great massacres in Rwanda, the Congo, and Darfur, the uprisings of the Arab Spring, or the eruption of more than 2,500 mass protests in some sixty nations under the Occupy banner. Conflict specialists are equally taken aback when expected struggles fail to materialize – for example, when the

Soviet Union collapses or South Africa dismantles its apartheid system without a bloodbath. While some commentators consider recurrent surprises of this sort a result of the inherent unpredictability of human behavior, others, such as our late colleague, John W. Burton, attribute them to our faulty understanding of society and conflict. To paraphrase Shakespeare: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our nature, but in our theories, that we are taken unawares."

Burton, it seems to me, had it mostly right. Although the timing of mass protest movements is notoriously

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Commentary

S-CAR Doctoral Graduates in the Field

By Sandra Cheldelin, Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution and Ph.D. Program Director
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The hallway conversations are always fun when we hear from colleagues and students of another academic job offer for one of our grads. We even enjoy bemoaning—not-so-veiled bragging—the “burdensome” task of submitting letters of recommendation to university search committees. These personal exchanges, along with the timing of the important upcoming 30-year celebration of our School’s existence, raises the obvious questions: where are our PhD graduates, and have they been doing since graduation?

We were the first conflict resolution graduate program standing as an independent academic field. Today, S-CAR is one of only three stand-alone academic institutions housed within a university, offering the original of only four PhD programs dedicated solely to the study of conflict. We brag that our independence allows us to embrace an interdisciplinary study reflected in the curriculum—theories, methodological approaches, and practices from a range of disciplines. We offer hands-on, in-the-field opportunities. Clearly it has worked. Thirty years later, more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs in the field exist, and our graduates staff many of them.

Our grads are also of course, engaged in important work outside the academy. Our alumni serve in various branches of government—in the US, the Departments of State, Health and Human Services, Education, Environmental Protection Agency and the like, and in other countries, often in their militaries and governmental organizations. Our graduates hold key positions at the World Bank, the World Health Organization, the UN, USAID, USIP, the Peace Corps, ACCORD, and a variety of internationally-based NGOs that intervene in conflict. Several of the NGOs were established by graduates themselves.

A majority of our PhD program alumni, though, have chosen the path of working in the academy: teaching in universities around the globe, actively engaged in creating or staffing new conflict-related programs. Though we do not have all the data, what we have collected is impressive. Seventy-three are employed as full or part-time faculty in colleges and universities. Fourteen of these are outside the US: University of Winnipeg, Canada; University of Peace (3), Costa Rica; American Lebanese University, Lebanon; Sabanci (2) and Balikasir Universities, Turkey; University of Cape Town, South Africa; Colombo University, Sri Lanka; Sumatra University, Indonesia; Seoul National University, Korea; Hiroshima University, Japan; and Javeriana University, Colombia.

Our graduates are employed in 33 US colleges and universities. Public higher education institutions include Adams State College, George Mason, James Madison, Kennesaw State, Kent State, Plattsburgh State, Portland State, Salisbury University, Towson, and the Universities of

Baltimore, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico and North Carolina-Chapel Hill. The private colleges and universities include: American, Arcadia University, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, Champlain College, DePauw, Eastern Mennonite, George Washington, Georgetown, Goucher, Guilford College, Harvard, Middlebury College, Monterey Institute of International Studies (graduate school of Middlebury College), Notre Dame, NoVa Southeastern, Seton Hall, St. Paul University, Swarthmore, and the University of San Diego.



Saira Yamin, Ph.D., teaching at George Mason University. Dr. Yamin has just been appointed as Associate Professor at Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) in Honolulu, Hawaii. Photo: S-CAR.

We have insufficient data regarding our graduates’ titles, tenure-track or term appointments, but of those we know, the range is broad including Lecturer, Assistant, Associate and Full Professorships as well as Academic and Program Directors. Most of the graduates are in programs of conflict resolution. A few exceptions include Gender and Women’s Studies; the University Honors Program; Justice Studies; Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice; and various Schools including Government, Public Policy, Diplomacy, and International Affairs.

As the field evolves over the next thirty years and additional undergraduate and graduate programs emerge, it will be interesting to see how the curricula of these programs reflect the education and training of the faculty—graduates of institutions like S-CAR, and with degrees from CAR. Stay tuned. ■

For our growing list of alumni in academia, please visit:

<http://scar.gmu.edu/people/alumni-in-academia>

Send your updates to scarlib@gmu.edu

network

The S-CAR Practice Project

By Thanos Gatsias, S-CAR Ph.D. Candidate, agatsias@gmu.edu and Yves-Renee Jennings, Drucie French Cumbie Fellow, Special Assistant to Drucie French Cumbie Chair, yjenning@gmu.edu

Practice has occupied a special place in the field of conflict analysis and resolution since its very inception. Practice has also been an integral component of the S-CAR legacy. Multiple conflict resolution initiatives have been carried out by faculty members who have been engaged in practice in a plethora of ways. The S-CAR Practice Project emerged from a realization that, despite the continuous engagement of our faculty in conflict resolution work, a comprehensive ‘map’ of S-CAR practice had been missing. Equally absent has been a systematic way of communicating practice both within and outside our community. As a result, practice has remained unnoticed and partially recognized and appreciated. For these reasons, Dean Andrea Bartoli and a number of faculty suggested the initiation of the S-CAR Practice Project to share within and outside our community a series of issues related to conflict resolution practice.

The basic idea was to interview faculty members to elicit their views about their practice experience and their opinions on a suggested format or template that they would use for the systematic communication of their practice initiatives. The underlying premise of the project was initially to gain a comprehensive view of how practice has been carried out at S-CAR and to explore ways to systematically and effectively communicate this work. Furthermore, underpinning these objectives was the facilitation of self-reflection about practice at the institutional level while identifying areas requiring improvements. It was therefore hoped that the S-CAR Practice Project initiative would establish the foundation

for a dialectic process, and increase S-CAR self-awareness and intentionality in embracing and supporting practice initiatives carried out by faculty and students. This is meant to be a broader organic and dynamic process, and the practice project initiative, which was launched at Dean Bartoli’s request during the Fall of 2010, was one step toward reaching such objectives.

The research for this project was carried out between October 2010 and May 2011 in collaboration with S-CAR graduate research assistants. We interviewed 17 S-CAR faculty members to elicit their views on a series of issues related to conflict resolution practice as they have experienced it. Interview topics included: definition of conflict resolution practice, methods, scope, levels of intervention, partnerships, resources, challenges, ethical concerns, evaluation and attempts to define ‘successful’ practice.



Experiential Learning trip to Liberia, 2011. Photo: S-CAR.

Methodologically, we adopted a qualitative exploratory approach and, thematically analyzed the data collected through structured interviews based on a series of open-ended questions. Findings resulting from S-CAR faculty members’ diverse conflict resolution practice experience, based on the data themes and patterns, included the following:

- Any attempt to define S-CAR conflict resolution practice was complex, given the extensive diversity in how our scholar-practitioners consider practice and the multiplicity of ways in which they have engaged with different stakeholders. Furthermore, challenging the traditional definition of conflict resolution practice was a central theme in many interviews because no clear-cut separation of scholarship and practice can be considered as being relevant in the field of conflict resolution, where scholarship of engagement is a key concept.
- Scholarship of engagement has transformative potentials, for instance, through teaching, publishing, and media appearances. This type of practice centers on sharing insights of conflict resolution expertise so people can incorporate them in their own thinking and ethos.
- Within the frames of engaged scholarship, research is seen as a form of practice and a dialectic process. Thus, social actors can get from the researcher-intervener insights on conflict resolution, allowing them to consider new ways to deal constructively with the issues they face. At the same time, the engaged scholar would benefit from being involved with social actors while acquiring insights that would render his/her practice more relevant to existing social concerns.
- Reflective practice is considered an essential component of conflict resolution practice, as reflection has the potential to increase self-

initiatives

Award Announcement!
MEJDI Tours, an organization founded by Dr. Marc Gopin, Professor at S-CAR, is the first winner of the Intercultural Innovation Award, a partnership between the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the BMW Group, which aims to select and support the most innovated initiatives that encourage intercultural dialogue and cooperation around the world.

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Working in the Field (If They Let You In)

By Linda Keuntje, S-CAR M.S. Student, lkeuntjie@gmu.edu and Agnieszka Paczynska, S-CAR Associate Director and Undergraduate Program Director, apaczyns@gmu.edu

EVENTS

On February 9th, the Central Asia, Africa and Latin America Working Groups co-hosted a conference, “Working in the Field (If They Let You In): The Many Challenges Conflict Resolution Professionals Face Practicing or Conducting Research in the Field.” The event explored a number of challenges and in particular focused on the issue of ethics in research and practice, assessment of data reliability, and physical dangers of working in the field.

The idea for the conference emerged out of discussion among members of the Central Asia Working Group (CAWG) at a time when one member was preparing to leave for Afghanistan and another was exploring literature on corruption in preparation for a course on Conflict and Development. Although the discussion began with an off-the-cuff observation—that most people involved in international work seem to know a



The conference was hosted at GMU's Arlington campus. Photo: S-CAR.

cynical or humorous story about corruption—it soon turned to a more serious exploration of the difficulties encountered when working in the field. CAWG members agreed that although stories of such challenges abound, many conflict resolution researchers and practitioners go to the field with little or no preparation in how to deal with the ethical challenges they are likely to confront. Those participating in this discussion noted that a number of issues seem to be especially problematic. These included how to deal with corruption in its many forms that the researcher/practitioner is likely to encounter; how to ensure the safety of the people and community with whom you are working and how to ensure your own safety in a dangerous environment; and how to assess the credibility of the data you are collecting in conflict, post-conflict, and authoritarian settings.

The CAWG was keen on bringing a more in-depth discussion of Central Asian issues into S-CAR and was exploring possible topics for a conference topic that would explore regional dynamics. The discussion around the challenges researchers and practitioners face in the field convinced CAWG members that examining issues of ethics in practice and research as well as of

corruption and working in difficult environments would be a fascinating lens through which to examine Central Asian political and social contexts. At the same time, CAWG members quickly concluded that the challenges they were interested in exploring were ones researchers and practitioners in other conflict, post-conflict, and authoritarian settings also faced. Organizing this conference in collaboration with the Africa and Latin America Working Groups provided an opportunity to examine the common challenges researchers and practitioners face when working in these regions. It also provided an opportunity for students, researchers to discuss ethical issues that may affect their current and future work.

The conference had three main objectives. The first was to give students from S-CAR and surrounding universities an opportunity to meet with field professionals and become better prepared for working in the future as conflict analysis and resolution professionals. The second objective was to promote and deepen discussions at S-CAR on practice and practice-related issues. Finally, the conference aimed to broaden the discussion of the importance of ethics in fieldwork. As in many other fields, conflict analysis and resolution researchers and practitioners work directly with vulnerable populations. For this reason, it is extremely important that as researchers and practitioners, we are aware of the risks we are taking when we attempt to help and the potential danger we may put people in. For some well-intentioned individuals, the idea of refraining from action in order to avoid additional harm may not be an easy decision to make, and yet that is precisely the decision many of us will face in the course of our work. Furthermore, corruption and associated issues are sometimes the reason theories do not seem to apply well and why, sometimes, the best-planned interventions go awry. A better understanding of the challenges can help practitioners to be prepared with alternative plans when things start to go wrong.

The response to the call for papers confirmed that this topic is on the minds of many researchers and practitioners, not just in conflict resolution but in other fields such as geography, anthropology, and sociology. The range of topics covered in the abstracts included the use of social media to collect data and the ethics behind it, integration of field experience issues into curriculum, working with individuals labeled as “terrorists,” as well as a submission looking to question the basic principles underlying our notion of ethics in field work. ■

Read more and view some of the presentations:

<http://scar.gmu.edu/event/13498>

By Eric Johnson, S-CAR M.S. Student, ejohns21@gmu.edu

I recently had the privilege of attending an event sponsored by The Aspen Institute's Justice and Society Program entitled, "Targeted Killings and the Law of War." The roundtable discussion brought together leading experts in law and foreign policy, each of whom addressed whether and how U.S. and international law apply to the practice of targeted killings. It was obvious from the nature of the questions and a quick glance through recent headlines that drone strikes would dominate the debate – rightfully so given the onset of the new, advanced technology and the ease with which it can be utilized on (and off) the battlefield.

So far, drone strikes have reportedly been carried out in six countries:

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, and Libya. According to the New America Foundation's drones database, which analyzes U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, "283 reported drone strikes in northwest Pakistan, including 70 in 2011, from 2004 to the present have killed approximately between 1,717 and 2,680 individuals, of whom around 1,424 to 2,209 were described as militants in reliable press accounts."

Two main themes are immediately clear. First, if you accept the premise that the U.S. is engaged in an armed conflict with non-state actors domiciled in foreign countries which are unable or unwilling to respond to an imminent threat of violence (however one defines "imminent"), do drone strikes adhere to international law according to the Geneva Conventions? Second, according to U.S. law, what rights, if any, are guaranteed to those individuals being targeted, especially if they are U.S. citizens as was the case with Anwar al-Awlaki? Should they be afforded an opportunity to surrender? What about due process and the role of the courts?

The event at The Aspen Institute made it clear that the answers to these questions remain unclear at best and non-existent at worst. Targeted killings will no doubt be a policy – covert or not – that faces increasing legal scrutiny at home and abroad. For this reason, and because after-the-fact adjudication is unlikely to happen in the near future, many experts are urging the executive and legislative branches to clarify the substantive and procedural law surrounding the use of targeted killings – before others attempt to do so for us. ■

Follow Eric on Twitter: [@ejohnsonaz](https://twitter.com/ejohnsonaz)



The New America Foundation drones database analyzes the reported number of U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan since 2004. Photo: New America Foundation.

Selected S-CAR Media Appearances

Analysis of Middle East Hot Spots

Aziz Abu Sarah, Co-Executive Director of Middle East Projects at the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University
Fox 5 News, 02/07/2012

Implications of potential strike on Iran by Israel

Michael Shank, S-CAR Ph.D. Candidate, US Vice President, Institute for Economics and Peace
Al Jazeera, 02/03/2012

Congress makes Elmo cry by defunding Palestinian 'Sesame Street'

Ibrahim Sharqieh, S-CAR Alumnus, Deputy Director, Brookings Doha Center
The Christian Science Monitor, 01/31/2012

A Different Approach to Russia, China, in terms of Syrian and Global Governance

Marc Gopin, James H. Laue Professor of World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, Director, Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University
Marc Gopin Citizen Diplomacy, 01/31/2012

Letter to the Editor: EU as a model for peace

Dr. Dennis Sandole, Professor of Conflict Resolution and International Relations
Christian Science Monitor, 01/30/2012

<http://scar.gmu.edu/media>

press

Ahmad Shami, S-CAR M.S. Student

By Catherine Ammen, S-CAR M.S. Alumna, Knowledge Management Associate, cammen@gmu.edu



Ahmad Shami Photo: A. Shami

Education is a constant theme for Ahmad Shami, a Master's student at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, at George Mason University. Ahmad believes that "education for Palestinians is a tool of resisting, education is a tool of creating more options and more hope." Growing up in Ramallah, Palestine, Ahmad studied Business Administration in undergrad but was inspired by the resilience of his grandfather, who lost three sons to the conflict, and who instilled in his family the desire to be involved in peacebuilding and create change especially through education. The Shami Foundation, founded by Ahmad's family, worked in Beit Ur Al-Tahta Village in the West Bank to develop infrastructure, set up a girls' high school, and offer scholarships for girls to attend higher

education in their community. Ahmad strongly believes that it is essential to provide equal educational opportunities for all Palestinians, to build Palestine through Palestinian minds.

Ahmad has been a participant and facilitator of dialogue sessions since the tender young age of 14, and came to S-CAR to shift from years of practice to focus on a more academic and theoretical approach to conflict resolution. At S-CAR, Ahmad is especially interested in connecting his classes on theory and social change to his work with the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution (CRDC) to show the different narratives of the Palestinians-Israeli conflict.

Eventually, Ahmad wishes to return to Palestine and teach after one day pursuing his PhD; but recognizing the need to adapt to what is needed depending on the circumstances, his ultimate goal is to use education to develop perspectives and, ultimately, to create a turning point in the conflict. Ahmad adds, "as my father always told me: 'we Palestinians lost our land, but because we've managed to educate ourselves we have not disappeared.'" ■

Shane Smith, CAR Student

By Brydin Banning, Director of Undergraduate Student Services, bbanning@gmu.edu

Shane Smith, a junior from Dallas, TX, has been interested in foreign affairs since high school. After working with two "lost boys of Sudan," he realized his desire to work in that field, particularly on issues relating to Africa. Initially a government and international politics major, he learned about conflict analysis and resolution while training to be a Mason Ambassador, a student representative of the university tasked with assisting the Admissions office with welcoming and assisting prospective undergraduate students and their families. Attracted to the youth and vitality of the CAR program, Shane changed his major and hasn't looked back.

During the fall semester, Shane was selected by the Center of Global Education at Mason to travel to London to take part in classes, as well as an internship at Peace One Day, a non-profit organization that aims to promote peace through arts and education. At his internship, he was responsible for assisting with communication and outreach efforts. While in London, he was also able to attend events with human rights activists, Parliament members, and other peacemakers.

Shane understands the value of this international work experience and hopes to leverage it one day for a career at the U.S. Department of



Shane Smith. Photo: S. Smith.

State. In the meantime, he has recently accepted an internship offer with the Office of the Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education for the spring semester. Grateful for these opportunities, Shane acknowledges the importance for S-CAR students to gain experience outside of the classroom and hopes to continue to do so throughout his remaining time at Mason. ■

What is "Occupy"? A Conflict Analysis Perspective

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difficult to specify (one recalls a disheartened Lenin complaining that the Russian Revolution would not occur in his lifetime), they can be predicted with rough accuracy, provided that the analyst is paying close attention to relevant social and psychological factors.

The Occupy movement is the product of changes in social organization and human motivation that largely escaped analysis because prevailing theories directed our attention elsewhere. Most of those theories, to speak of them generally, were of two types. Stability theories, emphasizing the factors that make for social integration and political adaptation, viewed Western society (in particular, the United States) as "post-ideological," and therefore no longer subject to intense internal conflicts of the sort that produced the labor-management struggles of the New Deal era or the mass protests of the decade following John F. Kennedy's assassination. Conflict theories, while focusing on failures of integration and adaptation, took as their main text the story of social identity – the struggles of oppressed or marginalized ethnic, racial, religious, gender, and cultural groups for recognition and fair treatment, and the need for established systems to accommodate their demands.

These theories seemed diametrically opposed, but under the surface there were links. Many analysts of both schools assumed that, since the underlying socioeconomic system ("late capitalism" or "finance capitalism") was either stable or irreplaceable, basic questions of social order involving class structure and ranking, social equality, and the control of politics by major financial interests, were "off the table." When they spoke about basic human needs at all, the analysts tended to focus on people's needs for identity, recognition, and autonomy – not for jobs, effective participation, and social justice. Even when the economic system plunged into its worse crisis since 1929, these mindsets persisted. Stability theories were so strongly held that few scholars believed that the Arab uprisings of 2011 or even the Greek and Spanish demonstrations provoked by the economic crisis could help inspire protests in "mature" capitalist nations like the United States. Identity theories were so strongly held that the re-emergence of social inequality, corporate corruption, and the need for economic democracy as crucial issues for Westerners went largely unnoticed.¹

What, exactly, do conflict studies specialists need to know? What "research questions" should we be addressing? First, I believe, we need to know what made so many people long quiescent, where matters of public policy were concerned, adopt a highly activist mode and turn out not just to protest injustice but to participate in acts of civil disobedience. Assuming that many activists were mobilized, in part, by their direct exposure to the economic crisis, what other factors came into play to translate economic pain into a craving for radical change? The received wisdom used to be that

economic downturns dampened protest movements rather than generating them. In this case, however (as in certain previous cases of mass mobilization for change), lowered satisfactions seemed actually to engender radical hopes. Despite Ted Robert Gurr's pioneering work, this phenomenon is still poorly understood.²

Second, we would like to plot possible future trajectories for the protest movement and for counter-movements of the Center and the Right. Although numbers are hard to come by, the total number of activists participating in occupations in the United States probably does not exceed a few hundred thousand. Yet polls conducted by Pew and other reputable organizations establish that more than 60% of Americans are in sympathy with their basic egalitarian, anti-corporate, pro-democracy sentiments. Does this mean that the movement is fated to become larger and more important in the coming years? Or is it likely to be divided, co-opted, and weakened by the political dynamics of a presidential election?

Authorities have now evicted occupiers from public parks in New York, Oakland, Denver, Salt Lake City, Portland, Boston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and other cities. Evictions notwithstanding, protestors in virtually every location have declared that they will continue to engage in occupations (for example, of foreclosed or abandoned homes) and other acts of nonviolent civil disobedience, as well as working to build a movement for radical social and political change. According to the steering committee of one Washington, D.C. organization,

Shifting power to the American people requires much more than an occupation. The Occupy Movement needs to build on four strong components – (1) non-violent protest and civil resistance, (2) non-participation in the existing corporate finance-dominated economy, (3) the development of concrete plans and policies to transform the corporate economy into a people's economy, and (4) ending government dominated by money by shifting political power to the American people.³

What everyone would like to know is whether this movement has "legs," and, if so, what its future direction and function are likely to be. The point originally made by many critics that the protestors had no political program had some apparent validity at first, but now seems increasingly less germane. Movement representatives have called not only for a renewal of occupations on a large scale in spring 2012, but also for a series of conferences to discuss concretizing political policies. Already, there is considerable discussion of demands for a tax on financial transactions, elimination of the capital

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gains tax preference and other loopholes for the wealthy, creation of a federally-funded and popularly controlled jobs program, development of community alternatives to the corporate economy, eliminating the private financing of political campaigns, and more.

There is a good deal of theoretical confusion about what demands like this mean. When some commentators criticize the movement for not making "concrete, realistic demands," what they are really criticizing is the unwillingness of the occupiers to play the political game according to conventional political rules (for example, by picking major party candidates for office and supporting them). Most occupiers are not interested in making demands that are relatively easy to realize because they are consistent with existing structures of power and privilege. Most are even less interested in becoming part of the base of either major political party. The great question is not whether they will have political influence; they have already helped move issues of social class and inequality to the center of national consciousness. The great question

is whether they will have the sort of independent influence enjoyed by certain previous movements of mass protest in America, from the Abolitionists of the 1840s and labor radicals of the 1930s to the antiwar/civil rights/cultural liberation movements of the 1960s.

Are we, in fact, at the beginning of another one- or two-decade period of mass protest in America? Or is this movement already "history?" Belatedly, in the search for convincing answers to such questions, we are finally getting around to studying crucial social structural issues and their political/cultural implications.

Happily, it's never too late to begin. ■

Endnotes:

- 1 Students seeking enlightenment on these issues in the days before the Occupy movement emerged would not find very much to inspire them in the traditional Conflict Studies canon. This is why so many of them found themselves watching Slavoj Zizek, Jacques Ranciere, and other critical thinkers lecturing on YouTube or creating new journals of their own, like the S-CAR on-line journal, unrestmagazine.com
- 2 Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Paradigm, 40th Anniv. Ed., 2011)
- 3 Statement by The National Occupation of Washington DC (NOW DC). See www.October2011.org advert.

The S-CAR Practice Project

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awareness and help scholar-practitioners identify potential inadequacies of existing practices, explore new possibilities, and develop innovative perspectives. Thus, reflective practice has an evaluative dimension through which individuals can assess the effectiveness of existing paradigms in light of new insights.

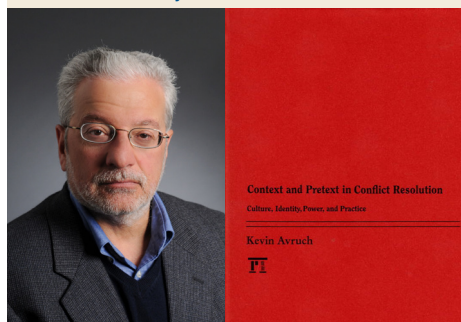
- Many S-CAR faculty members have used elicitive processes in their practice because they believe that those who have experienced a conflict have a better understanding of the conflict dimensions and that such insider's knowledge can inform their intervention process.
- The question of how to systematically communicate practice through a flexible template that would be part of the S-CAR online platform generated a wide range of views among the interviewed faculty members, some of whom have been involved in traditional forms of practice and argued that such a template might facilitate the systematization of practice communication. Others were hesitant because they perceived that such a template would pose ethical issues due to the

confidential and delicate nature of their practice. Still, others believed that the form of practice they have been engaged in could not be framed through the traditional practice lenses of such a systematic template.

Overall, the study reveals that any template adopted as a communication mechanism would need to provide sufficient flexibility to permit S-CAR scholar-practitioners to communicate about their practice initiatives based on their own judgment. ■

Book Announcement!

Context and Pretext in Conflict Resolution:
Culture, Identity, Power, and Practice
by Kevin Avruch



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