

moment is only a "damage limitation strategy" which may entail its own costs and further exacerbate the problem. Mandell concluded by advocating that mediation be complimented with other forms of intervention.

Toward a Contingency Approach to Third-Party Intervention in Regional Conflict

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The presentation outlined the social-psychological side of conflict by examining the impact of our fundamental assumptions about the nature of conflict, including the influence of perception, on the process of conflict.

Two contending approaches to the definition of the nature of conflict were presented--the objectivist and the subjectivist. Each was argued to entail different views on the role of third party intervention in conflict resolution. The former argues that objective incompatibility exists between parties in a conflict, whereas the latter emphasizes the impact of the perception of incompatibilities on the conflict process. It was argued that mediation has tended towards the objectivist view of conflict, and to the extent that we buy into this objectivist view, we select only those third-party intervention strategies that reflect this orientation. For example, the objectivist view (framing resolution in terms of a "balance of settlement") would tend to see compromise, yielding, or winner-take-all, as possible outcomes. The subjectivist view, on the other hand, seeks through consultation to open up a range of outcomes and possibilities (such as the accommodation of all demands) by facilitating shared perceptions and common definition of the problem and issues. Although these two views are not mutually exclusive, the presentors argued that we have tended to emphasize the