
PARENTS OF THE FIELD PROJECT

Interviewee; Dr. Morton Deutsch.

Date:

Venue: Colombia University, New York.

Interviewer; Dr. Chris Mitchell.

Interviewer: We're here up in New York City at Teachers College, Columbia University to interview our friend and colleague, Professor Morton Deutsch, as part of the Parents of the Field interview series... And it's very nice to be here...it's nice to see you again looking so fit and well, even though you are officially retired.

I have a series of questions here.

Morton Deutsch: Sure.

Interviewer: Take your time and we're very interested in your ideas and your memories. But looking back to the early days of... what became the peace and conflict studies field, people tended to come in from all sorts of different intellectual and other backgrounds. What was yours? How did you get involved in the field and how did you get interested?

Morton Deutsch: Well, I've been thinking about that and I grew up in the '30s, in a sense. I went to college in 1935 to 1939, at City College. And it was a time that there was a great deal of turbulence, as you well know, and Freud - Sigmund Freud - and Karl Marx were, as well as Albert Einstein, were very important intellectual figures in that time period. And at City College - well, I had read Freud, I think, even when I was a high school student, because I - somehow his work appeared [relevant] to me and probably in terms of my inner conflicts.

And when I went to City College my original aim was to become a psychiatrist because I was interested in Freud. But then I... you know, in biology lab I had to dissect a guinea pig and that turned me away from the idea of being a doctor. But I was still

interested and I decided to continue as a psychology major. And that was part of a background of my interest.

But also, at that time, you know, Karl Marx was a very important influence, particularly at City College - in the alcoves of City College - which was where the lunch room was. There was one corner where the First International representatives were, another where the Second, the Third, and the Fourth International. So you...got exposed a lot to the different versions and different ideas of Karl Marx.

So I was interested in conflict very early on. But I was better off to become a clinical psychologist. And I had a Masters and an internship in clinical psychology just before going into the Air Force in World War II. And I served a combat tour in the Eight Air Force flying out of England.

Interviewer: In England ?

Morton Deutsch: Yes, during World War II. And when I came back I had the question of where to resume my graduate studies. I had taken a Masters at the University of Pennsylvania and had a clinical internship. And being fresh out of the Air Force with my combat ribbons I was able to interview Carl Rogers at University of Chicago, Don Marquis at Yale, and Kurt Lewin, who was just then going to establish a center at MIT.

Interviewer: Yes.

Morton Deutsch: And I, frankly, was most impressed by Kurt Lewin. I decided that I would go up and study with him. I had read some of his work when I was an undergraduate at City College, and his dynamic theory of personality, and his interest in conflict, which was really inter-personal conflict but in the "field theory" context.

So that was the background and when I got to my dissertation the U.N. had just finished...the atomic bombs had [been dropped] just prior to that - and that was Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And I had an image of the five permanent members of the Security Council either cooperating together, dealing with the issues of nuclear weapons and issues of war and peace, or competing. And I turned that into a theoretical dissertation and an experimental study of the effects of cooperation and competition upon group process. And in a sense I've been stuck in a rut ever since.

Interviewer: A productive rut.

Morton Deutsch: Yes. Because after doing that research, well, I was also impressed in the whole area of prejudice. That was a very natural thing after the World War, after the Holocaust, and after –

Interviewer: Gordon Allport's work ?

Morton Deutsch: Gordon Allport's work ! And I knew Allport up at Harvard when I was taking my Ph.D. at MIT with Kurt Lewin and Kurt died in the midst of it - in 1947.

Another thing I did after – the first job I took after I got my degree was with Stuart Cook... a psychologist, who was interested in prejudice. He was from the south and he was... He had a commission of [enquiry] in the relations in the Jewish Congress. And I was hired to do a study of interracial housing. And that was the first book that I published. It was a study of the facts of segregation and integration. And so there was conflict, of course. You know, race relations were a big area of conflict, the whole issue of desegregating at that time. This was before the Supreme Court decision, and just my study and other studies were used in that decision.

Interviewer: Yes.

Morton Deutsch: So I had that background. But in doing my analytical research on cooperation and competition, I became interested in what initiates cooperation - or competition. And it became - I don't know - it became of interest to me to study it in conflict situations. I may have gotten stimulated to do that, in part, by Howard Raiffa. He was NYU and at that time I was NYU. I met Howard, he was working on, I think, his book was with Duncan Luce.

Interviewer: Yes - the Theory of Games and Decisions.

Morton Deutsch: And he introduced me to the Prisoner's Dilemma Game. And I saw that as a wonderful experimental tool to study conflict, to study the initiation of cooperation and competition. So I started doing research with the Prisoner's Dilemma Game. Did a whole series of studies - and then somewhere along the line I moved to Bell Labs and there, I don't know, I felt the Prisoner's Dilemma Game was too narrow, in a sense. So I developed another game, the "Acme-Bolt Trucking Game".

Interviewer: Yes, I remember that one.

Morton Deutsch: And did a lot of research with that. And out of that research, and other research that I started here at Teachers College, I developed... a theory of conflict resolution and what are the factors that contribute to either constructive or destructive resolution of conflict. So it's a long wandering path, starting with my interest in Freud and Marx, then to Kurt Lewin, who in a sense seemed to represent a combination of that. His work on democratic versus autocratic and laissez-faire small groups represented... more a democratic thing. And Anatol Rapoport - not Anatol Rapoport, David Rapoport - was a fan of Kurt Lewin. And, of course, he was very much involved in psychoanalytic theory.

When I was ... a doctoral student there was a conference held, I think it was at Smith College, I think Fritz Heider maybe hosted it, and a lot of former people that used to work with Kurt Lewin came to the conference, including people like Homans, Rapoport, and Adams, and other people of that sort. And there were a number of graduates from MIT in Lewin's program at MIT.

And we found it a very stimulating interaction - psychoanalysis, learning theory, group experiments. A common theme running through that was a lot of work on change and conflict. So that's all part of the background of influences that operated on me to... lure me in the direction of studying conflict.

Interviewer: In those days the field was really very... I'm not quite sure - not exactly amorphous, but there were people doing work "all over the place". It wasn't very organized. Were the conferences that you began to go to, where you bumped into people or...

Morton Deutsch: Well, there was a Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, you see, and I think it was even prior to World War II that they did some work in the area of labor relations. I think there was a book published on... conflict. I don't know - I forgot the title of it, and I don't even think it had "conflict" in it. But it had to do with, you know, that turbulence in the '30s. About unions, and organizing, and strike breakers from Ford, and all that sort of thing. So that... at City College some of the people [who] were very active in the Society were on the faculty and I had contact with that through them.

Interviewer: And... they participated in general social issues, of course...? And there were several...that focused on social conflict?

Morton Deutsch: Right. Absolutely.

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- Interviewer: Did you have any contacts at all with the group that began to develop in the '50s down at Ann Arbor to develop conflict resolution - or does that come later?
- Morton Deutsch: No, I had contact with them. See, Lewin's group, the Research Center for Group Dynamics at MIT, after he died...in 1947 (I got my Ph.D. in 1948) and they moved to the University of Michigan in 1948, the Research Center for Group Dynamics.
- Interviewer: Okay.
- Morton Deutsch: So it became part of the Institute for Social Research in which **[inaudible]** had a Survey Research Center and the Research Center for Group Dynamics. So I had continuing contact with the people at Ann Arbor.
- Interviewer: And you mentioned getting interested in game theory. The person I always associate with game theory - aside from yourself, aside from Anatol [Rapoport] - is Tom Schelling. Did you ever have contact with Tom Schelling?
- Morton Deutsch: Oh, yes. I'm trying to remember when I first met him. I met him a couple times. It was [at] a conference sponsored, I think, by Berkeley that was held up in a very lovely conference center about 100 miles north of San Francisco, I think. And Anatol Rapoport was there, I was there, Tom Schelling was there, Harold Kelly was there. It was a diverse group of people from... more strategic international background and some of the experimental social psychologists, like myself. And while we were there, before we went up to that place in San Francisco, Albert Wohlstetter, and Tom Schelling, Anatol Rapoport, and myself were on a radio program that was hosted by... ? His name is...? The guy was the Defense Secretary during the Reagan administration.
- Interviewer: Melvin Laird ?
- Morton Deutsch: No.
- Interviewer: Schlesinger ?
- Morton Deutsch: Weinberger !
- Interviewer: Oh, Cap Weinberger ?
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Morton Deutsch: Cap Weinberger !

Interviewer: All right.

Morton Deutsch: It was on the war in Vietnam. Anatol and I were against it, Wohlstetter and Schelling were for it, and we had a debate on the radio about the war in Vietnam. I had always thought that Tom Schelling was brilliant, and certainly deserves the Nobel Prize. But he was more interested in how you win a conflict. I was more interested in how you get a constructive agreement so that both sides win. And that was a difference between his approach to conflict and the kind of interest I had in conflict.

Interviewer: Well, your idea came through very clearly in the development of the conflict resolution field... that was your book's title wasn't it?

Morton Deutsch: Yes. "Constructive and Destructive Processes".

Interviewer: Looking at the thing from Britain and from Europe, there seemed to be two very diverse strands that were developing there. One was... conflict studies, [or] conflict research, and the other was... peace studies and the peace research. Was there a similar kind of a movement over here that was...separate or related to conflict studies that took on the title of "peace" ? ...there was a very strong peace studies element in Scandinavia but was there something similar over here?

Morton Deutsch: Well, I think the difference was... yes, there was a clear difference here... even at Teachers College. Do you know Betty Reardon?

Interviewer: Yes.

Morton Deutsch: Well, Betty had a peace studies program. (Actually, I served on her dissertation committee.) But she was vastly under-appreciated at the College. And I was always one of her strong supporters. But our program was separate from her peace studies program. It was more part of social psychology. And as a theoretical and research base, our program, of course, is...multi disciplinary in its orientation, as it has to be. If it's going to be concerned with peace you have to have an interest in economics, and social relations, political science - various things. I had interest in those areas, as you know... but my intellectual home was psychology.

Interviewer: Psychology. Yes. Well, my intellectual home is originally as a historian so that's a nice launching pad to become an amateur in all sorts of things...!

Morton Deutsch: Well, the same with social psychology. We're sort of "imperialist". We move into a lot of different domains.

Interviewer: Let's go back a little way. How did you come here? What was the step that got you here? ...How did you actually come to Columbia?

Morton Deutsch: Okay. The chronology was - after my degree I was at the New School for one year with Stuart Cook. Stuart Cook then moved over to NYU and became chair of psychology and I moved over to NYU and was on the faculty at NYU until 1956. And then Carl Hovland [who] was at Yale, was a consultant to the Bell Laboratories and AT&T personnel department, and they were starting to establish a research group in... psychology. And Carl invited me to join that research group to become head of... research on interpersonal processes. I joined them partly because the McCarthy period had cut back funds for research, particularly in the areas that I was interested in, like prejudice, conflict... and even Foundations started to become anxious about funding research that might be "controversial". And so, while I had research money, the offer from Bell Labs was really very generous and tempting both in terms of what they were providing in the way of research facilities, and salary, and travel, and all the other goodies that they could provide, which universities don't provide.

Interviewer: Yes.

Morton Deutsch: So I went over to Bell Labs in 1956, and I stayed there for seven years. And I did a lot of the research on "Acme-Bolt" and other studies at Bell Labs. And it was, in some ways, a very good environment. I had a good guy working with me to put the Acme-Bolt Game into... good physical system.

Interviewer: Yes.

Morton Deutsch: And I had a full time secretary who kept my files in order ...and I had travel money. It was wonderful. It really was. So I think I did well. I had contact with really good people like John Tuki [sp ?], who was interested in what I was doing, and I was very interested in what he was doing. He was doing this research on detection of

underground atomic explosions. He was really - and the Bell Labs were really - involved in high-level Defense Department stuff. and at the Bell Labs - partly in response to Herman Kahn's "On Thermonuclear War"...there was a young sociologist, Bill Evans, and I decided to do a book on "Preventing World War III" (This was at the height of the Cold War.) And then we got Quincy Wright to give us his blessing and he became one of the co-editors. At this same time I was doing research, and I became known as "the peacemaker" at the Bell Labs ! And I was very involved during this time. I was invited to a lot of conferences, some very high level, with the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and other State Department people, and stuff like that. And we had a wonderful conference right during the height of the Berlin crisis when Kennedy was President - it was sponsored by the American Friends Society... it was in Capon Springs [sp ?] , West Virginia - a very nice resort - and we had the Deputy Russian Ambassador, the Under Secretary of State, Senator... oh, I forgot his name now ! ...but I just met with Kennedy, the Ambassadors from Poland, France, and other countries. And we talked about this book, "Preventing World War III" [and] some proposals. In the course of it I arranged to have a debate between the Russian Deputy Ambassador, and the Under Secretary of State. And role reversal on Berlin, at that time. It was really fascinating. They were really good at stating each other's positions... These were serious... professionals and knew what they were doing. But then the Ambassador from France, Germany, and Poland said: "You guys don't understand anything about what we *feel*...!" It was a very interesting discussion.

Interviewer: So the European guys told the super power representatives what it was like to be –

Morton Deutsch: - To be caught in their embrace, so to speak. A deadly embrace, yes. Well, as I said, there were a number of psychologists and others. There was Charlie Osgood, Jerry Frank, Ralph White, Herb Kelman, and myself - who were often in these meetings of one sort or another - that weren't in this meeting ... So at that time I was quite active in international things and I was quite active against the war in Vietnam when that came on the scene.

Interviewer: So you stayed with the Bell Lab until about 1960...?

Morton Deutsch: I went to the Bell Labs in 1956 and I left it in 1963 and came here. And I came here partly because [of] several reasons. One, I was

tried of commuting. I lived in New York City and commuted to Murray Hill every day by car. The whole Research Unit was caught in a battle between Bell Labs and AT&T personnel. AT&T personnel wanted us to be doing “applied” research for them. Bell Labs were happy to support what we were doing. And we had innumerable people come to inspect us, so to speak - presidents of different telephone companies, the president of Western Electric. And we had to put on “dog and pony shows” constantly of what we were doing - and why we were doing it. It was very fortunate that our research on bargaining got the AAAS prize when one of the groups was there. But, you know, it got to be burdensome.

And then the other thing was, I missed working with graduate students. I mean, I missed that aspect. I taught some, of course, theories on graduate faculties. You know... supervising the dissertation, working closely on this and that. So I got an offer - I don't know, suddenly I got offers from Yale, from the Yeshiva [?], and from Teachers College. Yeshiva Department of Psychology wanted me to...

You see, the other aspect of my complex...was ... I went to Bell Labs, I had started psychoanalytic training. And I went to a psychoanalytic institute. And I was doing therapy from 1957 on. And so that's how they were interested in me in the psychiatry department. And Yale - Shubik, you know -

Interviewer: The game theorist? Martin Shubik ?

Morton Deutsch: Yes. He wanted me to come to Yale to work with them.

Interviewer: You had a good set of options.

Morton Deutsch: Yes. And then Teachers College - Godwin Watson was a professor here, and he was retiring, and they wanted somebody to replace him. And I entered into conversations with...the people here. Decided - even though, in a sense, this was the least generous offer in many different ways - it had the most freedom to do what I wanted.

Interviewer: Well, that was nice - and it was in New York !

Morton Deutsch: It was in New York City, which was very important to me and my wife.

Interviewer: So you retained an interest in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, did you, at this stage?

Morton Deutsch: Yes. Well, as I told you, I started off with an interest in clinical psychiatry. I was going to go into psychiatry because of my interest in psychoanalysis. Then I went into clinical psychology, got account of a Masters, and had an internship in **Rockhorn** [sp?] State Hospital, and Warwick for Delinquents, and that's for the mentally retarded.

And even after my combat tour, when I came back to the States, I was assigned... as a clinical psychologist. And I worked as a clinical psychologist in the Air Force convalescent hospitals for a while before getting discharged. I got discharged early because I was the only combat veteran with all of the "points" - discharge points - who was not a patient at the hospital.

Interviewer: I was in the South of England around about that time. We used to watch you guys go over every day and [some of you] come back.

Morton Deutsch: I was stationed outside of Norwich in **Eastwich**.

Interviewer: There are still a lot of the old airfields there.

Morton Deutsch: Yes. For a while it was pretty rough.

Interviewer: Let me go back to the question Jannie wanted to ask, which was - you talked about Kurt Lewin, and Marx, and Freud. We talked about a lot of colleagues, Charles Osgood. Who else - at this stage when you were just coming to Teachers College here - who else was influential in developing your thinking and the work you were doing? ... you had mentioned Martin Shubik ? Martin Shubik wanted you to go to Yale?

Morton Deutsch: Yes.

Interviewer: Who else, at that time, were you in contact with and who else was ...?

Morton Deutsch: Well, there was this meeting that...they called "Swim for Peace" we had in Hyannis Port. It was sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. It was concerned with social science and peace and there were a lot of people. Roger Fisher was there, Anatol Rapoport, Eric Erickson. Lester **Goodenspoon** was a psychiatrist, David **Abilear** he was an anthropologist. And we had extensive discussions and we met a very interesting array. This was during the war in Vietnam and the Under Secretary of

Defense came up to meet with us. And it was interesting to see how he bonded out with everybody. A kind of bonding was there.

Interviewer: Was this a regular thing or a “one off-er” ?

Morton Deutsch: It was a one shot thing. I think it lasted several weeks. I remember we stayed in a rented cottage. It happened to be the cottage of a minister - and so I ended up writing a paper on “changing the devil”. There was a book put out - I think Roger Fisher was the editor of it – “The Craigsville Papers”.

Interviewer: Yes, I remember that.

Morton Deutsch: But I was influenced by all of the religious material that was in the library of this minister, and it was really fascinating. And I thought, well, people were thinking of the Soviet Union as “the devil”. Well, how would you change the devil? You know, and then using some game theory [inaudible] I thought assuming that the devil was corrigible rather than incorrigible... because there was no hope if the devil was incorrigible. Then if you made the assumption that the devil was corrigible how you influence the devil? I wrote a paper dealing with that.

Interviewer: That’s interesting - does the devil learn?

Morton Deutsch: Yes.

Interviewer: It’s rather like Ralph White’s idea about empathizing with – well, I mean he wrote that nice thing about empathizing with Saddam Hussein (I think was one of the last things he wrote.) So the Craigsville Papers came out of that...meeting ?

Morton Deutsch: Yes.

Interviewer: ... that’s interesting. I didn’t realize that. We talked to Roger [Fisher] about it a few months ago and he had a memory of it but he couldn’t actually quite connect it with –

Morton Deutsch: Yes. It was wonderful because the Kennedy Compound was ...I mean, we didn’t have any contact with them, but it was right across from us.

Interviewer: So possibly a few “vibrations” ?

Morton Deutsch: Yes. We hoped that it would influence them away from the war in Vietnam.

Interviewer: A lot of people have said to us that the war in Vietnam was very influential in developing *their* thinking. We're also interested, though, in developing the field. So when you came here, was there a "center for the study of conflict" - or anything at all?

Morton Deutsch: No.

Interviewer: Was that your creation?

Morton Deutsch: Yes, it was my creation. That came later, after... I established the Center here in 1986 when I was thinking... what kind of legacy I wanted to leave here. What I did here was I became head of the program in social psychology. And my work was in the area of conflict/conflict resolution and it attracted students to come here for that. And I had a very... good group of students who really – I mean, people like Jeff Rubin, Roy Lewicki...

Interviewer: Oh, Jeff was one of yours?

Morton Deutsch: Yes. And there were a lot of others that probably – Barbara Bunker, Harvey Hornstein, people like that. Peter [Coleman], of course...more recently... Michelle Fine. I don't know if you know her work. She's a distinguished professor of Cuny Graduate Center.

But in any case, I started the program here. It was relatively small and most of the students initially worked with me. And gradually – one of the first students was Harvey Hornstein. When I was still at Bell Labs he knew I was coming to Teachers College and cornered me... to supervise a dissertation on bargaining.

And we had a small intimate group that we used to go out to lunch together and it was a very productive group.

Interviewer: Yes ?

Morton Deutsch: We did a lot of research together. And matter of fact, I remember the group was so cooperative and they all would help one another doing the research. You know, I mean, learning subjects. And one summer I had to go to conferences in Europe I let Harvey, who was an advanced graduate student at that point, supervise what was going on.

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- Interviewer: Yes - it is nice when you've got a group together like that, and they have the same "mindset" and they help each other. When the group was here, what other centers or people did you pull in and have contact with? Was it making in Psych or was it in the context of -
- Morton Deutsch: You mean the College itself?
- Interviewer: Either here, or in New York, or... generally, what was the developing network which extended from your group?
- Morton Deutsch: A lot of different ways. I mean, students of mine became very active in different groups. Then things like the International Association of Conflict Management. Very early, I was invited to give the keynote address and another couple of addresses. And then students of mine and then students of students of mine, like Dean Freud [sp ?] who is a student of David Johnson, became very active. And Jeff Rubin was quite active in it. And Roy Lewicki and the others have been quite active in it.
So that happened. I was, also, involved in the area of justice, social justice and political psychology at the International Society of Political Psychology. Do you know that?
- Interviewer: Yes. I remember going to... one of their conferences in Manheim. Were you there at the Manheim conference?
- Morton Deutsch: I think so. I was one of its early presidents and I remember the woman who really started it.
- Interviewer: Very dynamic lady !
- Morton Deutsch: Yes. She committed suicide - and I was president at the time. We held a meeting - it was supposed to be a meeting in California that she was organizing - and so instead we met in my apartment and... planned how it would continue and how we would get a sponsor for the Journal - and things like that.
So I was active in the International Society of Political Psychology, which is a different group but that's more interdisciplinary, involving historians, political scientists, and some government people - psychiatrists.
- Interviewer: Yes. I remember - I think it may have even been at the Manheim meeting - that she had just been into Northern Ireland and it was the year of the hunger strike. And I remember her coming and
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doing a most powerful, moving talk about what was happening in Northern Ireland, and why it was happening, and how there were these people ... Bobby Sands and some of the others... and what they were doing and why they were doing it. And I guess it was supposed to be the psychology of sacrifice - or something like that.

Morton Deutsch: Yes - she was a terrific lady. Unfortunately, she had a – I didn't know it before, but I learned afterwards - she had depressive episodes...

Interviewer: Dean [Pruitt] now [who] has retired, but he's [still working] and he's with us at the moment.

Morton Deutsch: Yes. I know. I actually – we're putting out a second revised addition of the Handbook of Conflict Resolution and he's written a very good chapter on what research is needed.

Interviewer: That's what he's been doing? He says that it's so nice being retired because now you can write what you want to write and... do what you want to do.

Morton Deutsch: Yes.

Interviewer: I'm hoping to find that out pretty soon. But the name that I've always associated with...studies of cooperation using game theories was Bob Axelrod. Was he one of yours?

Morton Deutsch: No.

Interviewer: You know his work, of course.

Morton Deutsch: Actually I've never met him. That's interesting. But... I know his work but I've never met him.

Interviewer: I first knew him when he was doing work on cognitive maps, which I thought was interesting but somehow never seemed to take off after he published his book.

Let me see, where are we? You came at the field obviously from clinical psychology. And it always...

Morton Deutsch: Clinical and social.

Interviewer: Clinical and social psychology. There are so many people who come from different disciplines and it [conflict and peace research]

has always been characterized as being “multidisciplinary”. Speaking as a clinical and social psychologist, were there other ideas - not from psychology - which were very influential in your thinking, aside from... game theory and the use of structured simulations ?

Morton Deutsch: Yes, game theory, certainly. Well, Freud, Marx were very influential in my early thinking. And you know, Tom Schelling... I read his stuff and was very stimulated by it. [Donald] Campbell, Anatol Rapoport...these people - I had a lot of contact with them. Partly at that Craigsville conference but otherwise our paths would cross.

Interviewer: Were you part of the advisory board on the Journal of Conflict Resolution ?

Morton Deutsch: I probably was – yes.

Interviewer: Because that’s something which I was very much influenced by in the ‘60s and ‘70s. But then there were the Scandinavians...I’ve always thought the Journal of Peace Research out of Oslo was a kind of response to the Journal of Conflict Resolution. Was that something that you used to read at all ?

Morton Deutsch: Yes. I think I met Galtung years and years ago, and we met at a number of different conferences. And yes, I thought his work was very important and very interesting. Actually, another prize was established in my name at the Division of Peace Psychology of the American Psychological Association, and Johan was the first one to get that prize. It’s in the area of conflict resolution specifically. John Paul Lederach has gotten it, too.

Interviewer: What always struck me was that you would go to these large conferences - in my case in International Studies or the American Political Science Association conferences - and there would always be a part of it that was to do with conflict and peace studies. So there was never quite a conference - an annual conference - of conflict researchers. But you’d always find them in psychological conferences, and political conferences –

Morton Deutsch: Right.

Interviewer: ...and international studies conferences. So the whole thing seemed to have a tentacle into all sorts of things.

Morton Deutsch: That's true. I think I've written in a lot of different journals... including political science. But I think the International Association of Conflict Management and the International Society of Political Psychology - they were good, smaller groups, where basically conflict was a very central topic in both of the groups.

Interviewer: Yes, that's true. And certainly the...I can never actually remember the [name]...the Society for Social Responsibility- , the one that did the journal issue [on conflict].

Morton Deutsch: Social Responsibility. Yes. Well, also...just thinking of my own activities in it, a lot of it centered around prejudice, and some centered about international conflict. I mean... also President of that Society at one point.

And in the early days it was around prejudice. I was on the committee that helped the lawyers who were preparing the brief for the 1954 Supreme Court case. And then I was on the International Relations Committee... that also did a lot of things. And then APA [American Psychological Association] had an international committee and there were a number of people on that. I'm trying to remember, frankly, who was on it. Charlie Osgood probably was on it, maybe Herb Kelman but I don't think so. It's a long time ago.

Interviewer: Yes, it is...unfortunately a lot of things are a long time ago now ! Let's go back to Kurt Lewin and his practical theories. One of the things...that has always characterized the field - if it is a field [and] maybe we could come back to that "If it is field". But one of the things that ...it has always claimed [is] that part of it has to be *practical*. How that it has to be taken out to the real world. Part of it has to make a contribution to affecting conflicts and produce peace. Looking back, how successful do you think we've been? And if we've been successful, in what regards and what respects?

Morton Deutsch: I think it's a mixed bag. I think we have been successful in certain respects. I think people, practical people, diplomats, people in industry, people in education are much more aware that there is an area of intellectual work that's relevant to their practical work. And we even have UN Secretary, Kofi Annan and others, using the term "conflict resolution"...

And for a while - I've spoken at the U.N. a couple of times and I've been involved in some activities at the Arms Control and Disarmament things - UNITAR. And there are groups now and

NGOs that are very much aware of these kinds of things. And we...the Center here has done a lot of training at the U.N., and, also, with U.N. development programs.

The U.N. has a lot of organizational problems, as you know, and so we have done some training. I don't know. I personally have not been involved in that so much.

Let me summarize. There's been really a tremendous upsurge of application of conflict resolution. I can speak most knowledgably about education - and maybe industry. In education 15 or 20 years ago there weren't any conflict resolution programs in elementary, and high school, and colleges. Now, there are at least 10,000 in schools across the country and across the world. I mean, there is just an explosion of interest in helping students learn how to manage their conflicts more constructively.

And in industry, I know some of my former students are very active consultants. They run workshops for industry on various aspects. Everything from just conflict resolution in general, but also diversity issues, male/female minority issues, and things like that, and that is quite widespread in schools and business now. There are many more such programs and than there used to be.

And of course, we know that just in terms of conflict resolution sectors, research, and other academic centers have grown. Not only in the United States, but in different parts of the world. So there is a very active application.

The problem is there is not very much good research on the *consequences* about application. I mean, I know we were given a contract to every high school in the City of New York to train at least two people and to have the principals go through training. One person would be trained in doing education in conflict resolution - in other words, helping to establish a mediation center in the school. And the principals were also for it.

And we wanted to just do some systematic research to find out under what conditions that really took hold and what worked effectively. And under what conditions, it didn't. But we never got support for the research.

Interviewer: Yes. It's been one of the big weaknesses that people have wanted out of the evaluation. What works, what doesn't work, what are the circumstances? But...tell me a little bit more about why you think the field has succeeded.

Morton Deutsch: Well, I know it has now become part of the everyday language - "conflict resolution" so it's...You see television programs on it. And it's become a popular term. But, as I said, I'm not sure how

well such programs are run. I'm not sure under what conditions they are effective. And people who are interested in conflict resolution should also be interested in programs to evaluate the effectiveness and weigh the conditions that are necessary for those programs to be effective.

Interviewer: ... I agree with you. I am astonished at the way in which the field has "arrived" to where it is at the moment. Do you think that there were major points at which we broke through into people's consciousness, were there turning points, or were there key figures? How do you think all of this has come about?

Morton Deutsch: Well, in education there were issues of violence in schools. And as people started to be interested in doing something proactively with regard to preventing violence, conflict resolution became an area of potential interest.

And then, in addition, there was the area of cooperative learning. One of my former students, David Johnson, has been very active in developing the field of cooperative learning and he's become interested in conflict resolution, and has also worked with literally thousands of teachers.

So whether it came out of violence, whether the whole Cold War, whether the greater concern for us internationals, domestic strife has driven the field, that may be the reason. I'm not sure. But I hope it's not simply a fad.

Interviewer: Well, it's certainly a major fad - if it's a fad.

Morton Deutsch: But the other is, intellectually from a purely theoretically point of view, I've always thought that two of the very central processes of social life of all kinds are cooperation and conflict resolution. Because there's always conflict and you need cooperation to deal with conflict, and for society to function adequately.

Interviewer: My impression - it may be the wrong impression - is that the field has very, very much emphasized understanding conflict and conflict resolution. And to some degree there has been some relative neglect in the processes of cooperation and what engenders cooperation. Is this the wrong impression, or do you think that that's the case, and if so, why has it been?

Morton Deutsch: I think you're right. I've always been puzzled because cooperation obviously is one of the fundamentals of social processes. And though I understand the conditions which lead to cooperation or

prevent cooperation would be very important. I think, strangely enough, now - because there have been so many bitter destructive conflicts - that people have become aware of a need for reconciliation between the parties has become important because the two [are connected] How to live together in Rwanda and how to establish cooperation between former bitter enemies has ignited some interest in that area.

Interviewer: Can we go back a little bit, if I may ? We started talking about the beginnings of the field, and how it developed, and now it's mushroomed into its present situation. We were talking earlier about the various inputs of different ideas into the field. Looking back at the very beginning, what did you think you were entering when you started to do your work on conflict ?

... how did you think of yourself? What was your self-image? A psychologist who was interested in conflict, or as a social psychologist who was interested in aspects of education, or - as I think you described yourself - as a resident "peacemaker" at one stage in the Bell Laboratories ?. What did the field look like at the very beginning? What were you trying to do? What was your inspiration?

Morton Deutsch: Apart from the field, I'll tell you my development. As I said, I had done this dissertation on the effects of cooperation and competition. And then I became interested in what led to cooperation or competition. And it became a good research instrument to focus on conflict because conflict is usually a mixture of cooperation and competition, particularly in bargaining and negotiation. And so I got interested in it from a theoretical point of view.

Morton Deutsch: And when I moved to Bell Labs it became useful... to use the terminology "bargaining and negotiation" rather - not only "conflict". So it became somewhat sexier to think in terms that my research was on conflict rather than on the conditions which led to cooperation or competition. So that's how I got into the area of conflict. It was really theoretical interest into trying to understand the conditions, which give rise to cooperation or competition.- and using conflict as the area for studying that.

Interviewer: Then - still back in the early days - you talked about the effects of the Vietnam War and you talked a little bit about the Second World War. And you came into the field with a whole set of really

very famous names who made the field. Did they have a... particular vision of what they were trying to do and what they were trying to achieve? Did they have a “destiny” towards which they were moving or is that too high falutin a way of describing it?

Morton Deutsch: I don't think we talked about it that way. But I think there was a common vision among people that I mentioned. We were all interested in preventing a nuclear holocaust. We were interested in developing more humane, sustainable, cooperative, peaceful world. And many of the conferences that we went to that involved dealing international relations - or had – that was our implicit viewpoint. And as I mentioned earlier, the difference between Schelling and myself; he was interested in winning, how do you win conflicts. And we were - those came out social psychology particularly, but [had] known social psychology - we were interested to establish win-win relations between people who are having a conflict, where both sides could profit from the conflict. Conflict can be a very productive, stimulating, creative process for the people involved. It doesn't have to be destructive. And that's what we were for and towards.

Interviewer: A very Lewinian idea, if I remember ...

Morton Deutsch: Yes

Interviewer: Where we've just...looked back a lot, let's look forward a bit. Where do you think the field is likely to go in the next 10 to 20 years? What are the lines of development over the next ten years or so? Or, what would you like to *see* happen?

Morton Deutsch: Well, I think as people develop ideas and as they get involved in practice, they realize that conflict can't be separated from its larger social context, and that issues of social justice are very central to the whole process of developing conflict and resolving conflict. And so it's not as though you can isolate the process of conflict and conflict resolution from the large social context.

Interviewer: Yes. It's interesting; that whole stream has come back into the field. This whole idea of peace *with* justice –

Morton Deutsch: Yes.

Interviewer: – and the fact that... social change... has to be carried out if you're going to get a win-win solution.

Morton Deutsch: Yes. And I think that's a very central aspect, too. If you're interested in working in the field of conflict and conflict resolution, you have to be interested in the whole process of social change. Often, you have to help produce a culture of change in order for that to be a possibility of a constructive resolution of a conflict. And so we find that it is useful for people to become knowledgeable about organizational change processes.

Interviewer: And what about *your* plans for the future ? What are you going to be working on for the next few years?

Morton Deutsch: At the moment I've been working a revision of the Handbook of Conflict Resolution, the second edition. And in thinking about the revision, we felt it was important to try to deal with some of the very difficult kinds of conflicts - moral conflict or religious conflict. So that we start to understand how you approach some of the difficult conflicts that exist in the world today. And so we're developing chapters in those areas. And of course, given the fact that we live in a world that is not only changing rapidly but has so many different cultural variants, it's obviously very important for people to understand how culture affects one's approach in conflict and trying to get more of that into the Handbook.

But I think it's still a very young field and it has a lot to develop in there. So I am very happy that Dean [Pruitt] has written a chapter about what's needed in the way of basic research. And it's important to realize that it's not only the immediate practical problems that have to be addressed. There are basic ideas that we have to work on and understand both fully, as well as more practical issues that are to be addressed in a fruitful way.

Interviewer: My finishing questions are really rather straightforward. One is: who else do you think we ought to talk to as part of this project? Who do you think is an important figure that we should get on tape and get his views, or her views? Who would you recommend?

Morton Deutsch: Well, one thought is that in addition to pioneers, you ought to have some younger people who are approaching some of these issues in a different way. Like my colleague Peter Coleman has a different approach than I have. But in terms of people, there are a lot of really good people. Do you know the Burgesses, Heidi and Guy ?

Interviewer: Heidi and Guy ? Yes.

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- Morton Deutsch: You know, they have this enormous project that they've been involved with and they have some contact, I would imagine, with...most of the people in the field.
- Interviewer: Anybody from the old days?
- Morton Deutsch: Let's see. Well, you've had Herb Kelman. Charlie Osgood's dead. Elise Boulding. Certainly you should get Betty Reardon. I'm trying to think of who was involved. Amitai Etzioni.
- Interviewer: Of course ! Yes, good idea. He's here?
- Morton Deutsch: No, no. Amitai is in Washington. I'm not sure what his affiliation is. He was, for a while, at the Brookings [Institute] But he has this communal thing.
- Interviewer: Yes. Yes, he has moved on, hasn't he? But that's a very good idea.
- Morton Deutsch: Yes. He was at the Craigsville Papers.
- Interviewer: Okay. Then he wrote that nice paperback... called A Hard Way to Peace. Do you remember that one ?
- Morton Deutsch: No political science people ? Over here... there are a number of people. There's Jack Snyder. Well, he's notably young. He's just published a book on why emerging democracies go to war.
- Interviewer: The other name that suddenly popped into my head - and you probably know him - Tom Millburn? Is he still around? He used to work at China Lake, I believe.
- Morton Deutsch: I haven't had any contact with him in years.
- Interviewer: Now, this is the end of my list... But if you had been doing what we are doing, is there a question you would have asked that we haven't asked ? And if there's a question you would have asked, what would it be?
- Morton Deutsch: Oh, I can't think of any particularly at this moment. I think you've asked a lot of good questions. And I wandered off into other areas.
- Interviewer: That's the name of the game. That's what we were hoping you would do. [But]...we're backtracking now. I think I asked this
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question before. Let me ask it in a slightly different way. I think before I said: "Is conflict resolution a field?" - or are we all just historians dabbling in conflict resolution. Do you think...have we produced a coherent field? What are the core ideas in that?

Morton Deutsch: I think there *is* a field of conflict resolution. I think it's a field, which is central to the social sciences, to all of the social sciences. So you have it being approached in a lot of different ways. There are economists that are approaching conflict and resolution, there are political scientists, and sociologists, there's psychoanalysis, there are psychologists, social psychologists. So there are a lot of different approaches. The approaches probably haven't all been integrated yet - but I think there's clearly a field, which is multi-disciplined on its face. And the question - an intellectual, theoretical, as well as a practical question - is, how do you integrate the different perspectives. I mean, I primarily have worked at the interpersonal and small global level.

I've been grandiose in the sense that I've been willing to say, the ideas that I am concerned with at that level may have relevance to conflicts at other levels, the national, the international, or organizational levels. You know, one has to really be much more careful about the conditions under which the ideas from one area are applicable to another. So there's still a lot of intellectual work. But nevertheless, I think there is a field of clear interest but it's not a field that belongs to any single discipline.

Interviewer: Okay. Again, looking backwards, let me ask this question. Are there any things that you look back on that you are disappointed about - and you think we could have done that better? Or; "If I had known then what I know now, I would have done things differently!" Or: "The field really missed out at that particular point." ... This is sort of a negative question, but what do you think we did wrong and we could have done better? Anything that strikes you particularly?

Morton Deutsch: Well, I think it's very nice when you've been lucky and successful in the sense that you have a lot of interdependent disciplines in one center [ICAR]. I don't know how well you integrate. But I would have liked, frankly, to have a more integrated center with different disciplines represented and I've thought about how one could have a foot in a discipline and a foot in conflict resolution, and you could work trying to develop theory - and practice - that cuts across the disciplines. I don't think we have done that well. And I

think it's very important to do well because conflicts don't come in the form of disciplines, they come as complex problems.

Interviewer: Oh, yes. And I sometimes feel that we leave the integration to our students and we really ought to be doing it ourselves.

Morton Deutsch: Yes. In a way, I'm fortunate that most of us have come out of specific disciplines and so we're limited by that. But I think foundations, and research grants, and others have not been the support for that kind of development, so far as I know... I don't know whether they did that.

Interviewer: Let's turn the question around. What has surprised and pleased you in a positive way...since the 1960s, 1970s?

Morton Deutsch: Well, what has surprised me is how rapidly the field has developed and how popular it has become. And in how many areas there have been useful for applications. That's been a very great and pleasant surprise for me. I mean...just in terms of my former students, I know many of them are involved in doing practical things that have put them in great demand.

But, as I said, I'm concerned there's not enough research going on about the effectiveness of what we're doing.

Interviewer: That is one of the nice, surprising things, isn't it? About... your students and now the students of your students...beginning to get the same thing.

Morton Deutsch: Let me talk about this. I don't think it's only a problem for conflict resolution and politically it's the same. Unfortunately, most universities are very much limited by their... strict disciplinary organization. And it's hard from somebody who crosses disciplines, especially when they're at the beginning of their career, to find a home unless there is an active center very specifically related to their already disciplined orientation. So that's a problem with universities.

...I proposed a school of applied social science in which... you would have... a multi-disciplined, problem-oriented center. I think that there has to be some sort of development along those lines. But fortunately, in terms of disciplines, if people do have a good background - say in a discipline, like in psychology and conflict resolution - they can then often go into a psychology department and be a specialist in conflict resolution, because more and more departments are interested in that as an area.

And there are programs like this. There is a new program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. I don't know what it's called but it's something like "peace and conflict". And I know that they're looking for two faculty members who have a special orientation. But it's true - they have to be in psychology, as well as this other area. The research has to be related to this other area but they have to be able to able to teach other psychology [courses]. You see, I had no problem in the '70s because I was well established in psychology and social psychology. So I could wander off and work in the sort of area that was out of the mainstream at the time - and now it's become more a part of the mainstream.

: ... if you [at ICAR] can get the resources to set up a library, to have conferences, pulling people together, I think it would be a very big addition to the field. I think it would help make the field more visible and help institutionalize the field in a way. And being so close to Washington, it might even - hopefully - have some desirable affects. That would be good.

[End of Audio]

Duration: 112 minutes