

ICAR News

A Publication of the Institute for
Conflict Analysis and Resolution

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

ICAR Becomes a School: Reflections on the past and looking to the future

By Kevin Avruch, Ph.D., Professor of Anthropology and Conflict Analysis and Resolution, kavruch@gmu.edu

In December, 2010, the University Board of Visitors, following similar action by the Faculty Senate and with the support of President Merten and Provost Stearns, voted to change the name of ICAR from Institute to School. In one sense, this marked the end of a decades-long journey of ICAR's growth and development.

I arrived at George Mason University in 1980, as an assistant professor hired to teach undergraduate anthropology. I joined a faculty group from all the various social science departments (save economics),



Director Andrea Bartoli at ICAR's 2010 Graduation, soon to become Dean of the School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Photo: A. Martin.

who were considering the possibility of starting the first post-graduate program in the world devoted to conflict resolution. The group was chaired by Thomas Rhys Williams, then graduate dean, and had the crucial support of the canny chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Joseph Scimecca. The patronage of the graduate dean

and the support of a key social science chair especially in a new, tradition-free and institutionally pliant university, meant that what was then the Center for Conflict Resolution would grow very quickly. The new program was incubated and nurtured inside Scimecca's department in its formative years, and he became ICAR's first director. In 1981 Dennis Sandole arrived from the UK to be appointed the Center's first dedicated faculty member. By 1982, the Master of Science degree had been approved, a curriculum was in place, the first cohort of master's students arrived, and some faculty began to orient their research and writing specifically toward the emergent discipline. The PhD degree followed in 1988.

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Commentary

History and Conflict Conference: ICAR collaborates with George Eckert Institute and USIP

By Karyna Korostelina, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution ckoroste@gmu.edu



Karyna Korostelina, ICAR Professor, facilitating a meeting at Point of View. Photo: ICAR.

Between December 2-4 2010, ICAR's Program on History Memory and Conflict organized a conference entitled "History Education in Conflict and Transitional Societies." The conference was sponsored by the Frederick Ebert Foundation and co-hosted with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). The conference brought together twenty scholars from the U.S. and Europe to discuss the role of history education in post-conflict and divided societies. In the introduction to the conference, Pia Bungarten, the representative of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) to the U.S. and Canada, stressed the importance of history for the understanding of current tendencies in society. Andrea Bartoli, Director of ICAR, pointed out that choices that are made to understand and share history require a level of integrity that is hard to acquire in the midst of violent confrontation of destructive conflict. Thus, history education is not only a shared responsibility of remembering but also a chance to learn collectively, to make steps toward reconciliation and creating functional states.

During the first day at USIP participants presented papers that discussed issues reformation of the education system in conflict or post-conflict societies, history education in conflict societies, politics and the teaching of history, textbook revision, bilateral textbook commissions, and joint textbooks. During the following discussion sessions at Point of View the participants of the conference analyzed the relations between history education, formation of identity, justice, loci of power, and representation of voices.

The participants stressed that the elimination of contentious issues from the textbooks is problematic. Instead

the goal of history education should be the legitimization of differences, not their elimination. More specifically, it is important to analyze the role privileged groups play in the production of the post-colonial discourse; how authoritarian societies use history education to promote their legitimacy and power over people. Subsequently, the power structure and structure of history education system - vertical, hierarchical direction of power v. horizontal, multiple levels - defines different approaches of educational initiatives. In societies where history education is a subject for constant control, training and evaluation of teachers that empowers them to become agents of change can be a possible alternative for policies imposed by the state.

The participants discussed the place of history education in reconciliation processes stressing that justice should be a part of historic narrative that moves a society forward and confronts the grievances of those affected by conflict. Whilst justice provides mechanisms that uncover crimes, injustices and violations committed in the past, history education ensures a record of accountability for these events and provides a platform for societies to move forward. However, the acknowledgment of past events is not the conclusion of reconciliation, it is important for history education to acknowledge existing injustices. Furthermore, to support the reconciliation process, history education should include visits to memorial sites. Such visits play a role in uniting the public sphere of historic narrative and a student's personal level of the comprehension of history and identity.

A key challenge to history education is its use by politicians to promote specific political agenda. To represent different voices in society teachers have an important role in the formation of curricula that enable students to think critically. Instead of promoting consensus in the public sphere, history education should encourage open debate, tolerance, and multi-perspectivity.

During the concluding session, the participants discussed future activities and perspectives for research that will explore specific issues of history education including multi-perspectivity, evaluation, creation and re-creation of identity, and transitional justice. Each of the meetings will include analyses of case studies, types of educational initiatives, the role of history education in conflict resolution processes, and the impact of conflict resolution studies on the content and structure of history education. Future meetings will broaden their scope to not only include academics, but also practitioners in conflict resolution, educators, and developmental psychologists. The meetings will endeavor to produce specific recommendations for trainings of teachers and curriculum development. ■

network

Theories and Indicators of Change: ICAR hosts workshop to develop peacebuilding evaluation tools

By Tamar Palandjian, ICAR M.S. Student, tpalandj@gmu.edu

Over the past twelve months Susan Allen Nan has led a collaborative initiative among ICAR faculty, the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and USAID's Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) office in spearheading the THINC Initiative, "Theories and Indicators of Change Initiative." THINC was initiated by Tjip Walker at CMM, and supported in part by USAID funding. Most recently, the collaboration culminated with a two day workshop on "Theories and Indicators of Change" that took place at Point of View in Lorton, VA on October 25-26, 2010.

ICAR's involvement with the THINC initiative began with hosting a workshop in December 2009. During the initial workshop, leading scholars and practitioners in the field of Conflict and Peacebuilding Evaluation came together to discuss Theories of Change and Indicators of Change. The report of the December workshop is available online at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADS460.pdf

The goal of THINC was to collect, organize and analyze the numerous Theories of Change - or the underlying logic in a program intervention - in conflict and peacebuilding programs. Building from existing literature and work of scholars and practitioners in Conflict and Peacebuilding Evaluation, the initiative sought to bridge the gap between theory and practice in order to understand how organizations, practitioners and the field use theories of change as well as indicators as tools within program or project evaluation.

Following the initial workshop in December 2009, ICAR faculty members - including Chris Mitchell, Karyna Korostelina, Mara Schoeny, and Thomas Flores - have helped to further advance the initiative by continuing to gather the theories, working in collaboration with each other, and seeking the advice from individuals and organizations.



Workshop Participants at Point of View. Photo: M. Eliatamby.



Susan Allen Nan, ICAR Professor, at Point of View. Photo: M. Eliatamby.

Nan led a consultative meeting in Cambridge, MA bringing together the Boston area's leading practitioners and academics which included individuals from CDA Collaborative Learning Projects Inc., Mercy Corps, Harvard Law School Program on Negotiation, and the Fletcher School at Tufts University.

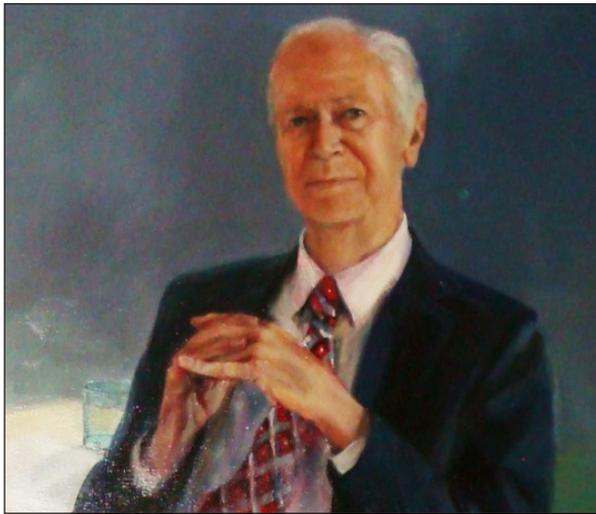
Following these efforts, ICAR organized a two day workshop, which was held this past fall on October 25-26 2010, at Point of View. The workshop focused on presenting the progress made on the initiative, ways to apply various tools within program evaluation, as well as case studies drawing on field experience. Participants in the workshop included USAID CMM's Director Neil Levine and ICAR Director Andrea Bartoli who both gave opening remarks on the first day of the workshop. Workshop participants were practitioners working in the field of Conflict and Peacebuilding evaluation and came from organizations and institutions such as AED, US State Department, Search for Common Ground, Mercy Corps, CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, as well as scholar practitioners from Tufts Fletcher School, and University of Denver's Conflict Resolution Institute.

The two day workshop in October included mind mapping sessions as well as presentations given by representatives from the respective organizations on their own monitoring and evaluation initiatives. The workshop was an opportunity for practitioners and scholars to learn collectively and discuss relevant projects, examples of good practice and challenges to practical work. The THINC initiative represents a leading example of efforts to develop methods to measure success in programs focused on conflict resolution and peacebuilding. ■

initiatives

Remembering John Burton: ICAR celebrates the life and work of a dear friend

By Chris Mitchell, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, cmitchel@gmu.edu



A portrait of Dr. John Burton. Photo: ICAR.

At the beginning of December ICAR held the first of two events planned to commemorate the passing of Dr. John Burton in Canberra last summer. John Burton was Associate Director of what was then the Center for Conflict Analysis and Resolution between 1985 and 1991. After which he “retired” to his native Australia with his wife Betty Nathan (who was present for the commemoration) to run yet another farm, which he always did in what he called his “spare” time.

John was a part of ICAR when it launched its doctoral program in 1988, accepting only ten students in the first year. He was instrumental in shaping that program and helping to expand the

Master’s program, which in those days numbered between thirty-five and forty members. A far cry from ICAR’s current annual in-take of forty-five certificate students, seventy masters students, and fifteen Ph.D. students.

The commemoration held on December 2, 2010, was a very informal gathering of John’s friends, colleagues and former students. Speakers reminisced about different stages of John’s various careers – diplomat, professor, author, and farmer. Chris Mitchell, who had been one of John’s students in London during the 1960s, talked about John as a teacher, and Dennis Sandole about John as an academic colleague. Rich Rubenstein and Kevin Avruch reminisced about John’s influence on ICAR, Kevin laying particular emphasis on how the Burtonian idea of basic human needs had provided the Institute with an intellectual focus during the 1980s and 1990s.

Ambassador John McDonald talked about working with John while he himself had been the head of the State Department’s “Foreign Service Institute” - and about the problems they had faced jointly in getting some of their “new-fangled” ideas into print. Frank Dukes, who had been one of ICAR’s doctoral students in the early 1990s, described what ICAR was like in the Burton years from a student viewpoint and talked about working with John on what became the USIP published 4 volume “Conflict Series” which he helped to co-edit. Finally Alan Tidwell from Georgetown University rounded off the formal memories by recalling his own time finishing a Ph.D. and visiting John in retirement in Australia. Others present spoke about John’s time in Washington, including Joe Montville who had collaborated with Ambassador McDonald in developing the original concept of “Track Two”.

The evening was well attended and up-beat rather than solemn, although there was, inevitably, an undercurrent of sadness at the passing of such a unique and influential individual. ICAR Director, Andrea Bartoli, closed the proceedings by commenting how appropriate it was that he could use the occasion to announce that ICAR would shortly become a “School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution” – the first in the country and a pioneering innovation that John Burton would certainly have applauded. ■

Upcoming ICAR Community Events

Tuesday, February 1, 2011

Graduate Education and Professional Practice in International Conflict
United States Institute of Peace
6.00-7.30pm, 555 Truland Building Arlington Campus

Thursday, February 10, 2011

Contentious Conversation II:
Searching for a Research Tradition in ICAR
12.15-1.15pm, 555 Truland Building Arlington Campus

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Book Launch and Discussion:
Peacebuilding by Professor Dennis J.D. Sandole
7.30pm, 555 Truland Building Arlington Campus

<http://icar.gmu.edu/events-roster>

"The Director Made Us Do It": How skydiving bonded Spring 2010 ICAR M.S. students

By Caitlin Currie, M.S. Student, ccurrie2@gmu.edu

Conflict is a universal experience. Skydiving is not." This was one of the first lessons taught to Dr. Bartoli's spring CONF 501 class.

Dr. Bartoli wanted us to appreciate that whether it is interpersonal, intergroup or even international, all of us, on some level, had experienced conflict. Regardless of race, gender, socio-economic status, upbringing or religion, every human being in this world has experienced some level of conflict. Sky diving, on the other hand, is experienced by few; the foolish and the brave.

And, if it weren't for one student muttering to another, we probably would have left it there. However, on a matter of impulse, one student muttered to another: "But, I have been skydiving!" A statement that was met with quiet agreement: "So have I!" That one exchange of words inspired our 501 class. By the end of the mid-class break it was decided that skydiving would become our universal experience of CONF 501 – it would be our mission.

Unfortunately, the spring semester is in anything but the spring. The days of 'Stormageddon' were not suitable for sky diving. So instead of going right then and there, we elected one student to be in charge of research, and elected another to be in charge of communication. Within weeks it was set – Dr. Bartoli's Spring 2010 501 Class would be jumping out of a plane once the weather warmed up.



Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, Arsen Kharatyan, instructor, Carolina Reynoso, Caitlin Currie, Ivon Alcime, Connor Turner. Photo: C. Currie.

Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds, Letters to the Editor, Public and Media Appearances

Only Good Governance Can Defeat AlQaeda In Yemen

Ibrahim Sharqieh, ICAR Alumnus

Global Post, 1/28/11

Paper Presentation: Global Governance and Complex Problemsolving in the Post-9/11 World

Dennis J.D. Sandole, ICAR Professor

University of Western Sydney, 1/19/11

Jerusalem's Potential to Bring Jews and Muslims Together

Aziz Abu-Sara, CRDC Director

Common Ground News Service, 1/14/11

Sudan, After the Breakup: Can violence be prevented?

Ibrahim Sharqieh, ICAR Ph.D. Alumnus

The Christian Science Monitor, 1/7/11

My Brother's Kippa: a Palestinian's Entry to his Hometown

Aziz Abu-Sara, CRDC Director

+972 Magazine, 1/3/11

Unite, Confuse, and Inspire: A Response to the Rise of Racism in Israel

By Marc Gopin, ICAR Professor, and Roi Ben-Yehuda, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate

Zeek, 12/29/10

Objective for Obama in the post-America Future

By Dennis J.D. Sandole, ICAR Professor

The Financial Times, 12/11/10

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

Months went by and it was finally time to put the plan into action. One by one, students boarded the plane and then promptly plummeted to the ground. Some of us laughed, some of us shook with fear and others took pictures. And for me, all I could think was that no matter how we felt about it, we were experiencing it together. And if anyone asked why we thought this was a good idea, we could always respond with: "The Director made us do it." We're officially a class bonded by a Director who had no idea what he was setting in motion on the second day of class. ■

press

Alma Jadallah, ICAR Ph.D. Alumna and Adjunct Professor

By Mara Schoeny, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, mschoeny@gmu.edu

Threaded through her work and scholarship is a commitment to reflective practice and a keen sensitivity to the dynamics of conflict within complex systems. She is well attuned to how culture influences the expression and transformation of conflict and in her consultations and teaching helps others navigate the challenging interfaces between diverse cultures, from worldview to organizational roles, from gender to geography. Her service to the larger field of conflict resolution is broad and deep, and her practice reaches communities both here and abroad.

Dr Alma Abdul-Hadi Jadallah is the President and Managing Director of Kommon Denominator, Inc., providing consultations and technical expertise for organizational development, conflict resolution, and training. Her clients include academic institutions, Fortune 500 companies, government, and NGOs. She has led civil society initiatives related to the Arab world and Islamic communities in the U.S. and abroad, working in Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Israel. She is the recipient of the 2009 Regional Star Business Award and the D.C. Region Top Women Business Enterprise for 2008. Within the ICAR community Dr. Jadallah

wears many hats: adjunct faculty, Advisory Board member, student mentor, and alumna.

She encourages those building a conflict resolution practice to reflect on what they bring to the situation, of how they are impacting the conversation. She notes "It is important to know that people are not operating in a vacuum. Even if they want to change, influence change or protest for change, what they want to do has implications for themselves and those around them. To be effective, you must really understand the positioning of the person and the unstated rules, how are they situated with others within different complex systems." For Dr. Jadallah, a key ethical question is "if you encourage change, will you stand by them?" Yet she has learned that even within such constraints, change happens and one of the greatest satisfactions is to see when people feel more able to act and can see new possibilities. ■



Alma Jadallah, ICAR Ph.D. and Adjunct Professor. Photo: L. Jadallah.

Ibrahim Al-Hajjri, ICAR M.S. Student

By Jacquie Antonson, ICAR M.S. Student and Events Coordinator, jantonso@gmu.edu



Ibrahim Al-Hajjri, ICAR M.S. Student. Photo: I. Al-Hajjri.

While this fall's Master's cohort brought in fascinating individuals from all around the globe, rising second semester MS student Ibrahim Al-Hajjri possesses a particularly interesting story concerning his path to ICAR.

Although born in Yemen, Ibrahim was raised "in scattered areas all around the world." Describing a constant "interest in the dynamics of violent conflicts," he initially pursued a military education, graduating from Zayed II Military College in the United Arab Emirates. After working as a military officer, Ibrahim decided that he was in need of an even greater understanding of violence, and decided to enroll at the Naval Postgraduate School

in Monterey California. At Monterey he earned the distinction of the first Yemeni graduate with a Masters Degree in National Security Affairs, specializing in the Middle East and North Africa.

While he felt his understanding of violent conflicts had grown, Ibrahim sought still wider avenues for learning and exploration. "I returned to DC," he remembers, "where my search began for the best institution that offered advanced studies in Peace Studies or Conflict Resolution." It was in this search that Ibrahim was to encounter adjunct professor Alma Jadallah, and Director Andrea Bartoli, and subsequently "became convinced that [he] had to join ICAR."

About to enter his second semester, Ibrahim is very pleased with his "amazing experience here at ICAR." He plans to continue his education and pursue a PhD, hoping to conduct research that scrutinizes violent conflicts. "I'm not in this program to become something," he explains, "I'm here for the learning experience, and the chance to give and share knowledge." ■

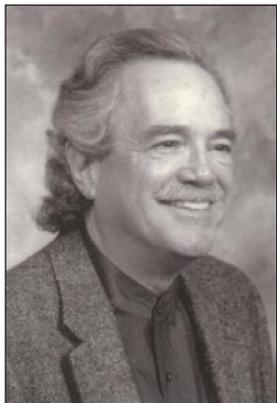
ICAR Becomes a School

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Kevin Avruch, ICAR Professor. Photo: GMU Creative Services.

A key event in the Center's development was its elevation from Center to Institute, coinciding with the formation of several institutes as independent, autonomous academic units at George Mason University. These institutes were created with directors who held the rank and functioned like deans. Rich Rubenstein was ICAR's director at the time (1989-1990), and immediately saw the great advantage to having ICAR function with complete independence from larger college structures, imperious deans, or baronial department chairs with turf to protect – or expand. Over the years some of the institutes created in the early 1990s developed into schools of their own - public policy and visual and performing arts among them - and some, failing to thrive, were absorbed into larger units, or simply disappeared. Yet ICAR remained, until very recently, the only academic



Rich Rubenstein, ICAR Professor, 1998. Photo: ICAR.

institute, the smallest unit on campus to award degrees, hire and promote faculty, and determine its own development and direction. Because of its

institutional independence and extremely flat bureaucratic structure succeeding directors and faculty were able to respond to changes in the emergent field of conflict resolution. Even as, in significant ways, we helped to evolve the field as an academic enterprise.

If it seems as if I'm exaggerating in that last claim it is, I think, only a little. Of course there were scholars interested in conflict resolution, practitioners working as mediators, and a handful of journals devoted to the field. But to start and sustain the first degree-granting program required a vision of a coherent field of study, a conceptual commitment to developing conflict resolution theory based on empirical research, and connecting all this to worlds of practice. From the beginning, ICAR faculty responded by producing research and writing articles and books that literally populated the curriculum and reading lists at ICAR. These documents would become important texts in many other conflict programs and institutions as the field as a whole grew. Examples include the first books devoted to conflict management and problem solving, (Sandole and Sandole-Staroste, 1987), culture and conflict resolution (Avruch, Black, and Scimecca, 1991), and the application of conflict resolution theory to practice (Sandole and van der Merwe, 1993).

Jim Laue joined ICAR as the first Lynch Chair and, along with Wallace Warfield, anchored our commitment to practice. John Burton's arrival to teach here in 1990 brought a major theorist and practitioner, and his three "conflict volumes" (St. Martin's Press, 1990, 1991), completed during a senior fellowship year at the U.S. Institute of Peace. Written with ICAR PhD Frank Dukes, these books helped establish "basic human needs" as ICAR's signature contribution to the field, even as (or especially as)

it gave rise to productive debates within ICAR itself. This tradition of creating the field through writing the field has continued, with work connecting conflict resolution to peace studies (Jeong, 2000), comparative peace processes (Mitchell, 2000), the so-called ICAR textbook (Cheldelin, Druckman and Fast, published in 2003 with a second edition in 2008), the latest comprehensive handbook to review the state of the field as a whole (Sandole et al., 2009), and work on citizen diplomacy and the vicissitudes of practice that holds ICAR to its original commitment of linking theory and research in the academy to conflict resolution practice in the world (Gopin, 2009). Of course, this is just a sample of the important work produced



ICAR Professors Wallace Warfield and Sandra Chendelin with MS students, 1997, including present ICAR professor Mara Schoeny. Photo: ICAR.

over the years by our faculty, and to name and record all of it would make this brief offering of Whig history even more immodest.

Nevertheless, it was not just faculty who did this work. As mentioned, Frank Dukes, just then getting his PhD, worked with Burton on the conflict volumes. Hugo van der Merwe, likewise a doctoral student, collaborated with Sandole on the important 1996 collection, and the co-editor of the ICAR textbook Larissa Fast, has gone on to teach conflict studies at Notre Dame. In many ways, it is the success of our graduates, at both the masters and doctoral levels, and in years to come

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ICAR Becomes a School

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from our much newer undergraduate program as well, more than the publications of the faculty, that testifies best to ICAR's role in helping to birth the academic field. ICAR graduates have gone on to distinguished careers in teaching, research and practice. The first conflict resolution program in Turkey was begun by ICAR graduate Nimet Beriker; the vice president of the UN mandated University for Peace, Amr Abdalla, is an ICAR graduate; the dean of the new Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego, William Headley, also studied here for a time. To try and list all of the graduates of ICAR who have gone on to work in development, education, peacebuilding, human rights, trauma relief, ADR, and other aspect of conflict resolution and transformation, would be an even more daunting task than trying to name faculty.

It would be a mistake to end this article simply reflecting upon past accomplishments, inferring that ICAR's journey is at an "end." Becoming The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution serves to not only institutionally certify what has been the state of affairs for more than two decades. It recognizes the more recent growth of ICAR, with the addition of undergraduate and

certificate programs, into a "full-service" degree-granting autonomous academic unit within George Mason. Designation as a school is a signifier to the outside world, including potential donors and other supporters of our work, that we are a permanent and an integral part of George Mason University's mission. Finally, becoming a school signifies to us, faculty, students, and alumni, the challenges that we continue to face in trying to respond as scholars, researchers, and practitioners, to a world beset by violence and destructive conflict. We struggle with connecting "theory to practice" today, as we did in the early 1980s when the idea of ICAR was first raised, and the first groups of students trusted a new faculty (and each other), with their education. We struggle with making "conflict resolution" make sense in a world that remains dominated by conceptions of power politics and the practice of war. We struggle with genocide prevention in a world where, not so long after ICAR was established, concentration camps reappeared in Europe and millions perished in Rwanda and the Sudan. Becoming a school means, in large part to many of us, asserting that the struggle continues. ■



Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution

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