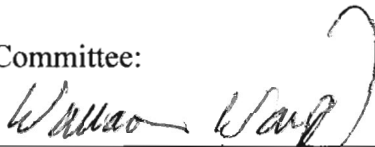


PREVENTIVE RECONCILIATION

by

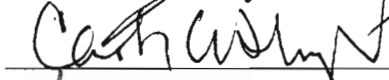
Lindsay Brooke Buffum Jones
A Thesis
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
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in Partial Fulfillment of
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of
Master of Science
Conflict Analysis and Resolution

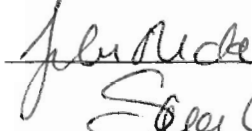
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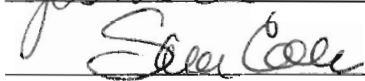
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Spring Semester 2008
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Preventive Reconciliation

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science at George Mason University

By

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my wonderful and caring husband Taylor without whom I could not have completed this project.

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I would like to thank the many people whose support allowed this project to happen. My loving husband, Taylor, rescued me when technical trouble seemed to prevail, aided me in my research and supported me when it all seemed to overwhelm. My parents provided incredible moral support as well as a sounding board for ideas. Many thanks to the incredible individuals in Portland, Dayton, and Richmond whose generosity made this research possible. Finally, thanks to Drs. Warfield, Schoeny, and Sluzki who provided invaluable help in the research process.

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ABSTRACT

PREVENTIVE RECONCILIATION

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George Mason University, 2008

Thesis Director: Dr. Wallace Warfield

This thesis discusses the use of reconciliation processes in areas of latent conflict and their utility in preventing the manifestation of conflict. This study uses a comparative case study of reconciliation in Portland, Oregon, and Dayton, Ohio. During the course of this research the author conducted interviews of community members in each city, reviews of primary and secondary source literature, and a statistical analysis of the cities affected. This thesis should be a reference and resource for practitioners of reconciliation and agents of peace.

1. Introduction

In his preface to *Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu notes “a reconciliation movement is taking place throughout the world. People are beginning to see that there is a way out of the bloodshed, fighting, and violence.”¹ In the last decade of the twentieth century, the immense visibility of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission created the space for a wave of reconciliation movements and an understanding of the need for reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

While Archbishop Tutu notes that reconciliation leads the way out of violence, the field of conflict resolution is moving beyond ending violence to conflict prevention. Many of the successful techniques used in conflict resolution have been altered and utilized as mechanisms of conflict prevention, proving to be a successful means of preventing seemingly imminent conflict. Reconciliation processes, however, have not been utilized in areas of latent or potential conflict as a means of preventing conflict manifestation.

Former United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali emphasized the need for conflict prevention by calling for the creation of a culture of prevention in the

¹ Daly, Erin, and Jeremy Sarkin. 2007. *Reconciliation in Divided Societies: Finding Common Ground*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

international community.² The international community responded to his call with the formation of several commissions on the prevention of violent conflict, greatly increasing the understanding of the components of prevention, and essentially creating a paradigmatic shift toward the framing of conflict resolution in terms of prevention of violent conflict. The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict emphasizes the need for structural prevention, which focuses on the creation of institutions, structures, and norms that counter the numerous factors that contribute to the manifestation of violent conflict.³

In post conflict areas, peace building, of which reconciliation is a key component, has proven a key element in preventing the recurrence of violent conflict. Recognizing the importance of the emerging conflict prevention paradigm, this study examines the utility of reconciliation processes in areas of latent or potential conflict for preventing conflict manifestation.

Through the use of comparative case studies, this research will seek to understand the utility of reconciliation processes as a viable means of conflict prevention in communities exhibiting conflict indicators prior to the implementation of the reconciliation process. Using Dayton, Ohio, and Portland, Oregon, for the cases, this study will measure changes in indicators through pre- and post-test data analysis of demographic data and crime statistics; through analysis of primary and secondary resources such as transcripts and

² Ghali, Boutros Boutros. 1992. *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*, edited by U. Nations.

media reports; through qualitative analysis of changes in attitudes and behaviors; and through a series of interviews with community members and participants of the reconciliation process. The demographic and crime data will examine any changes or trends over the course of the intervention, and the interviews and primary and secondary sources will be used to analyze any shifts in attitudes and behaviors over the course of the intervention.

While theoretically significant to the field of conflict resolution as a new component of the structural prevention paradigm, as practice, the use of reconciliation processes as conflict prevention could provide a framework to address racial conflict, and with further study, perhaps many protracted, not yet violent conflicts around the world. For example, in the southern United States, an ongoing racial divide exists as a result of the oppression of slavery and the segregationist Jim Crow laws that followed emancipation. While this is no longer a manifest, violent conflict, structural violence continues to exist and the possibility of violent conflict manifestation is not incomprehensible, as demonstrated by the violence following Hurricane Katrina as African Americans were afforded less adequate services than others in the aftermath. Even more recently, in Jena, Louisiana, when a group of students hung a noose from a school tree, violent conflict manifested itself from a lack of understanding about race and the deep trauma associated with the hanging of a noose for the African American community in that small town.

3 Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. 1998. Preventing deadly conflict : final report. Washington DC: Carnegie Corp. of New York.

As a result of these incidents, many communities across the United States have seen increased racial tension. While tensions for the most part represent a form of somatic conflict, an incident such as the noose hanging in Jena can provide that tiny spark that is needed for violence to become visible. For communities in the United States, reconciliation could alter the narrative framework that provides a basis for much of the structural violence and lead to the creation of a joint future, in which life is no longer “black” and “white,” but rather one in which individuals can work together supporting each other.

Similarly, this process could be useful in communities around the world where, using conflict indicators, latent conflict can be identified. Racial and ethnic community division is not a phenomenon solely located in the United States. Ethnic conflict has driven genocidal wars around the globe from the treacherous reign of Adolph Hitler, to Yugoslavia under the reign of Slobodan Milosevic, to Rwanda in 1994, to the current conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan. Preventive reconciliation would provide a framework that addresses at a deeper level the relational aspects of those conflicts, in addition to the structural work already being done in the field of conflict prevention.

2. The Theory Behind Preventive Reconciliation

This study works in two key theoretical fields, conflict prevention and reconciliation.

Both fields have been continuously plagued by a lack of consistency in the meaning of key terms. Therefore, an examination of the two fields and the intended uses of those key terms will be helpful in creating a framework for this study.

Conflict Prevention Theory

The field of conflict prevention has been broken down into two key areas, structural prevention and operational prevention. Operational prevention refers to “strategies and tactics undertaken when violence appears imminent.”⁴ Once a conflict is identified and manifestation appears imminent, operational prevention deploys key personnel to address the conflict through negotiations via political, economic, or military force. Operational prevention has also been referred to as “light prevention”, as it does not “necessarily concern [itself] with the root causes of the conflict or with remedying the situation which led to the crisis which the measures address.”⁵ Structural prevention refers to “strategies to address the root causes of deadly conflict.”⁶ These strategies include legal frameworks and dispute resolution processes as well as development. Structural prevention has also

4 Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. 1998. Preventing deadly conflict : final report. Washington DC: Carnegie Corp. of New York. (39)

5 Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. 2005. Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity. (108)

6 Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. 1998. Preventing deadly conflict : final report. Washington DC: Carnegie Corp. of New York. (69)

been referred to as “deep prevention” and addresses “underlying conflicts of interest and relationships.”⁷

In the field of conflict resolution, several models exist which attempt to explain conflict. Louis Kreisberg’s model of conflict as being cyclical holds particular relevance for the discussion of reconciliation as conflict prevention. In this model, Kreisberg posits that conflict develops from bases that then become manifest and escalate. Escalation is the result of changes in relationships and/or perceptions, and such changes can cause a conflict to continue to escalate until it reaches such a point that it can no longer be sustained.

According to this model, de-escalation begins when this point is reached. This point can be reached for a number of reasons. The parties to a conflict may no longer have the resources necessary to sustain conflict or a mutually hurting stalemate may have been reached.⁸ As de-escalation begins to occur movement toward a settlement begins. This process requires both parties to work cooperatively to move toward a settlement. The reached settlement provides the groundwork for a series of consequences. At the point of consequences, the conflict either ends or new bases form providing the framework for further conflict.⁹

7 Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. 2005. *Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity. (108)

8 Pruitt, Dean G., Sung Hee Kim, and Jeffrey Z. Rubin. 2004. *Social conflict : escalation, stalemate, and settlement*. 3rd ed, McGraw-Hill series in social psychology. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Both structural and operational forms of prevention are able to interrupt the conflict cycle by providing catalyst away from the original bases of conflict or consequences, which make pursuance of those bases unfeasible. However, for a discussion of the feasibility of reconciliation as a means of conflict prevention, it is important that the latter form be examined in depth.

9 Kreisberg, Louis. 2003. *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*. 2nd ed. Oxford, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

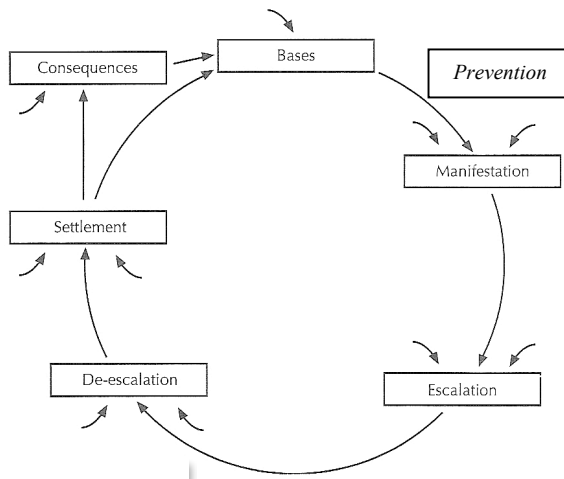


Figure 1: Conflict Cycles Model

Structural prevention or deep prevention focuses largely on the idea that causes of conflict can be determined and thus altered to prevent conflict manifestation.

Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall present several indicators of proneness to conflict gathered from theoretical research across the field of conflict prevention. The first indicator is derived from Ted Gurr's work. He outlines important components to the proneness of a communal group to rebel: the key factors here are collective incentive, capacity for joint action, and external opportunities. Collective incentive to violence, according to Gurr, is proportionate to relative deprivation.¹⁰ Therefore, as a group collectively believes they are denied that to which they perceive themselves to be entitled, their incentive to rebel increases. Capacity for joint action is related to a group's level of social and political organization. The more organized a group, the greater their ability to act as a collective. Capacity for joint action increases with the existence of three criteria: territorial concentration, preexisting organization and the formation of coalitions.¹¹ Finally, external opportunities increase the likelihood of a group to rebel. External opportunities can take four forms. First, "political opportunity" or "external" factors can lead to the making of certain decisions. Second, "durable opportunity factors," such as the group's position in a static political structure can effect a group's planning. Next, "transient opportunity factors" like the government turn-over may provide an opportunity for a different decision in making group plans. Finally, Gurr lists

10 In "Why Men Rebel", Gurr defines relative deprivation as "actors' perceptions of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities."

11 Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall. 2001. *Turbulent peace : the challenges of managing international conflict*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

“international political opportunity structure” or external networks that can support decisions as an influential part of external opportunities.¹²

The second type of indicator is econometric forecasting. This includes an evaluation of per capita income, as areas with low, stagnant and unequally distributed per capita incomes are more prone to conflict. Additionally, econometric forecasting looks at indicators of security and social cohesion as indicators of potential conflict.¹³ Many communities across the United States have turned to using such indicators as a means of understanding the health and sustainability of communities.^{14,15,16}

The final set of indicators they present is better suited to the use of operational prevention. They are indicators of genocide, human rights abuse, state failure, refugee flow, food crisis, arms flows, and environmental conflict.¹⁷ With an understanding of these indicators, early warning systems have been created to help identify areas of potential conflict in order to implement programs of operational and structural prevention.

12 Crocker, Chester A., Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall. 2001. *Turbulent peace : the challenges of managing international conflict*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

13 Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. 2005. *Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity.

14 Council, The Planning. 2005. *An Investment in Priorities for South Hampton Roads*. Norfolk, VA.

15 Alliance, Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators. 2004. *Vital Signs IV*. Baltimore, MD.

16 Commission, Hamilton County Regional Planning. 2002. *Sustainable Cincinnati: A Regional Indicators Project Measuring the Economic, Environmental and Social Health of the Tri-State Metropolitan Area*. Cincinnati, OH.

17 Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. 2005. *Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity.

While these indicators were clearly designed for international conflict prevention, they can easily be applied to community level conflict within the United States and abroad. Since the indicators were not used in the decision to intervene in these communities, this project will identify the degree to which these indicators were present in communities that have undergone reconciliation processes. Specifically, proneness and econometric indicators will be examined to better understand the potentiality of conflict in the communities prior to, during, and after the process.

Evaluation

Since this research is being done after the completion of the reconciliation work, an understanding of methods of evaluation often used in the field of conflict resolution and the challenges that evaluation can pose will enhance the research. The reconciliation processes implemented by the Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations in Dayton, Ohio, and Uniting to Understand Racism and its parent organizations in Portland, Oregon have provided important cases by which the work of reconciliation can be studied. The mission of Hope in the Cities, an organization based in Richmond, Virginia, is to “provide a framework for honest dialogue and collaboration among citizen groups.”¹⁸ Hope in the Cities worked with groups in Portland and Dayton to develop dialogue processes for just this purpose. In both Dayton and Portland, conflict had not fully developed. Though there was some violence in the cities prior to the interventions, which

¹⁸ Hope in the Cities 2007. 2007 [cited December 6 2007]. Available from <http://www.iofc.org/en/programmes/hic/abt/>.

could be connected to the disparities amongst the races, these were not cases of rioting in the streets or mass protest or violence.

The Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations resulted from community racial tension. The city had historically been divided along racial lines, and DDRR was an approach to addressing that division. In Portland, reconciliation took place as a way of understanding the history of racism in the city and acknowledging its effects.

In his Conflict Triangles Model, Johan Galtung suggests that there are three parts to conflict manifestation: attitudes, behaviors and contradictions. While each of these pieces can form the bases for conflict resolution, when there are contradictions between attitudes and behaviors, the roots of conflict can form. Such contradictions can form a variety of types of violence including structural, cultural and direct violence. As the contradictions between attitudes and behaviors provide the basis for conflict, the introduction of reconciliation processes at the point of these contradictions allows space for new attitudes and behaviors to be formed. An understanding of the indicators that were present as well as the attitudes, behaviors and contradictions will be used to form an understanding of the potential for conflict in each of these communities prior to the implementation of the reconciliation process.¹⁹

¹⁹ Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. 2005. *Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity.

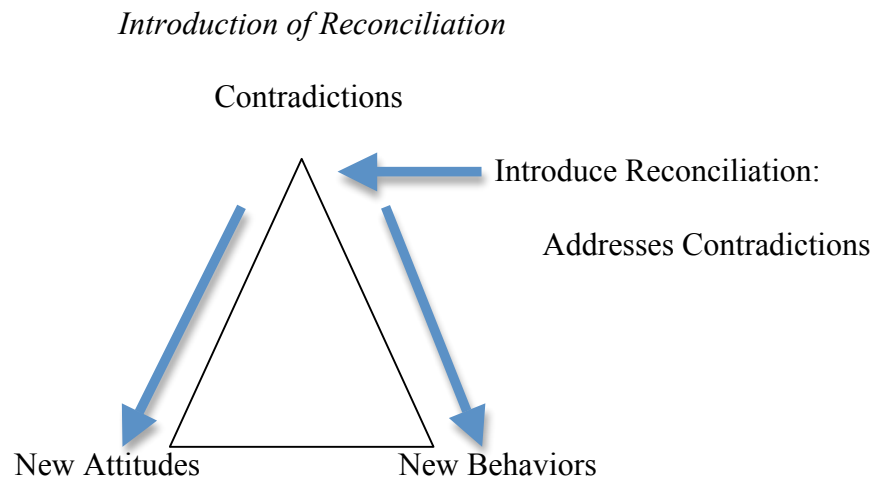
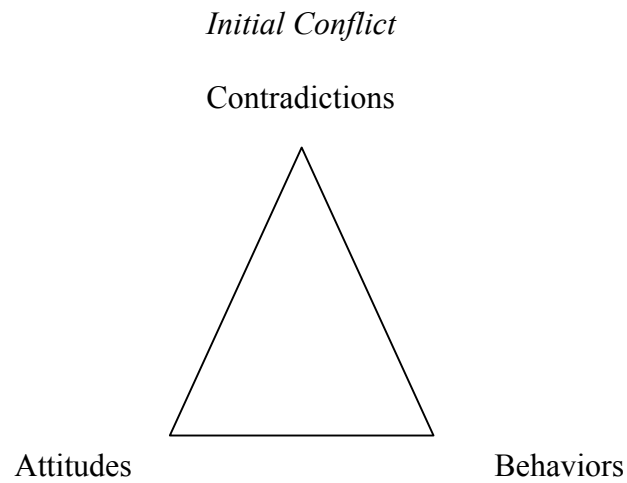


Figure 2: The Reconciliation Conflict Triangles Model²⁰

20 (Revised version of Galtung's Conflict Triangles Model) Ramsbotham, Oliver, Tom Woodhouse, and Hugh Miall. 2005. Contemporary conflict resolution : the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity.

Each of these processes has already occurred and the indices, attitudes, behaviors and contradictions were not evaluated prior to the implementation of the processes. As a result there is no base line date to use in evaluating these processes. In order to evaluate changes resulting from this process, the pre-intervention and intervention data must be reconstructed. This process, however, poses particular challenges in countering biases. In the use of interviews for reconstructing baseline data, questions arise regarding individuals ability to accurately recall information. In *The Real World Evaluation Approach*, triangulation is touted as one of the most important components of reconstructing data.²¹ When interviews are used at a distance from the event, recall decreases, as a result, using alternative methods to support (or refute) the findings of interviews increases the reliability of the findings. Methods suggested for triangulating recall include using “key informants, secondary sources.”²²

While steps can be taken to increase the validity, in the evaluation of a process like reconciliation, linking changes to a community can be difficult. Since “theories of change are not well developed,” neither are the tools for understanding causation.²³ As a result, causation cannot necessarily be directly defined. However, an examination of changes in attitudes, behaviors and other important indicators can provide a glimpse of the effects of a reconciliation process.

21 Bamberger, Michael J., Jim Rugh, and Linda Mabry. 2006. *The Real World Evaluation Approach*: Sage Publications.

22 *ibid*.

23 Elliott, Michael, Tamra Pearson d'Estree, and Sanda Kaufman. 2007. *The Role of Evaluation in Resolving Intractable Conflicts. Beyond Intractability 2003* [cited December 20 2007]. Available from http://www2.beyondintractability.org/essay/Evaluation_Reflection/.

Reconciliation Theory

Reconciliation processes hold the potential to alter the structures that would cause contradictions to manifest into conflict in divided communities. If reconciliation is to be a part of this work of structural prevention, there must be a clear understanding of the goals and processes associated with reconciliation work. Traditionally reconciliation work has been associated with post-conflict peace building; as a result, this analysis of the goals of reconciliation processes will be in the framework of peace building, then linked to preventive work through an examination of the effects of reconciliation on divisions within communities.

Reconciliation holds the potential to alter the conflict cycle because it introduces a comprehensive approach that addresses the entirety of society. It creates crosscutting relationships and a peace in which there are no further claims against the other party. Reconciliation entails major social and political restructuring in order to prevent the commonly acknowledged historical wrongdoings from occurring in the future. It also requires acknowledgement of historical responsibility and truth. Conflict settlement and conflict resolution processes do not address the historical issues nor do they address the relational issues that reconciliation keenly utilizes to create a system in which the parties are mutually accepting of the new frame.²⁴

²⁴ Rouhana, Nadim. 2004. Identity and Power in the Reconciliation of National Conflict. In *The social psychology of group identity and social conflict : theory, application, and practice*, edited by A. H. Eagly, R. M. Baron, V. L. Hamilton and H. C. Kelman. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Before beginning the discussion of the role of reconciliation as an intervention, reconciliation must be defined. Like many subsets of the field of conflict resolution, reconciliation is an ambiguous term, encompassing everything from apology to forgiveness to monuments and textbooks. Nadim Rouhana posits that reconciliation is a process by which a historic compromise is made involving governments, elites, and societies, including mutual acceptance by all parties in which no further claims can be made against the other and commonly acknowledged truth about the past and responsibility exists.²⁵ Joseph Montville, in a discussion of healing wounds between the North and South in the United States, suggests that the “healing process” requires “an inventory of hurts—carried out together by the winners and losers or their descendants, to rediscover what happened in the past which keeps alive so much anger and resentment in the present.”²⁶ Other scholars include the need for apology. Johan Galtung suggests that reconciliation involves “clearing up the past to enter the future together.”²⁷ According to his model of reconciliation, there are three phases of apology: 1) taking responsibility for the past 2) describe what was done in the past (this point can be negotiated by the parties) and 3) entering the future together.²⁸

For the purposes of this discussion, reconciliation will combine components of each of these scholars. According to these scholars, the goal of reconciliation is to reach a

25 Rouhana, Nadim. 2004. Identity and Power in the Reconciliation of National Conflict. In *The social psychology of group identity and social conflict : theory, application, and practice*, edited by A. H. Eagly, R. M. Baron, V. L. Hamilton and H. C. Kelman. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

26 Montville, Joseph. 2007. Walk Through History. Initiatives of Change [cited April 28 2007]. Available from www.iofc.org/enprogrammes/hic/resources/papers/?id=825&print=1.

27 Galtung, Johan. 2007. TRANSCEND and Transform. Presentation at Peaceful Conflict Transformation, at American University.

28 Galtung, Johan. 2007. TRANSCEND and Transform. Presentation at Peaceful Conflict Transformation, at American University.

mutually acceptable understanding of the past as well as a situation in which there are no further claims; and the process by which this is achieved has several key components: first, reconciliation includes all members of society: governments, elites and general populace; next, reconciliation requires responsibility to be taken for the past, and a common record of that past must be created; finally, the parties must move forward together to a new future.

The goals of reconciliation are achieved in numerous procedural ways, often dependent on the context of the individual conflict; however, the process includes key components that are similar across the board. One key component of this process is the expression of narratives of conflict and the utilization of those narratives in creating a common understanding of the past and vision for the future.

An individual's narrative around a conflict or issue drives the way that person forms new ideas and participates in society and in relationships. When that narrative includes negative perceptions or even dehumanization of another person or group, conflict can ensue. The use of narrative facilitation allows a reevaluation of one's narrative in a facilitated dialogue process. Through many turning points, a narrative shift can occur which aids individuals in the creation of a new narrative, one that humanizes the other and results in a more equitable relationship.²⁹

²⁹ Cobb, Sara. 2006. A Developmental Approach to Turning Points: "Irony" as an Ethics for Negotiation Pragmatics. Harvard Negotiation Law Review 11.

The creation of such a shift from conflict to integration requires several stages to be achieved. In his work on the transition from conflict to reconciliation, Carlos Sluzki suggests that reconciliation and integration are achieved through a process. The following steps must be followed in full to achieve true integration: confrontation, truce, collaboration, cooperation, interdependence, and integration. The confrontation stage is represented in Kreisberg's conflict cycle through the formation of basis for conflict. These are manifested in the indicators of potential conflict. The truce stage evolves when awareness of a problem arises. Collaboration occurs when groups begin to try to work around problems. Cooperation goes beyond just working together to trusting the other in joint projects. Interdependence occurs when the groups begin to realize that the other is necessary for existence. Integration is achieved when the groups see all actions as for the benefit for the whole.³⁰ By understanding the past, and addressing it, groups are better prepared to move through these stages to achieve integration.

The success of a reconciliation process also relies on the formation of a historical record or account of the past, a formal acknowledgement. This component is often achieved through the creation of a new joint history. This history results from debate and negotiation between conflict parties to come to a joint understanding of the past. Often recorded in new textbooks or monuments, this commonly accepted history becomes a foundational part of the creation of a new future. In many communities, historical walks, books, or movies to commemorate the historical foundations of a community have been

³⁰ Sluzki, Carlos. 2007. The Pathway Between Conflict and Reconciliation: Coexistence as an evolutionary process. Submitted for Publication.

created to keep alive the spirit of the original community, such as the Shaw Heritage Trail, and the movies *Black Georgetown Remembered* and *Southwest Remembered*. The creation of a commemorative project, also forms a joint project for the parties, a component which Dr. Johan Galtung, a leading researcher and practitioner in the field of conflict resolution, notes as being key to the success of reconciliation.³¹ An understanding of the theories that support the use of reconciliation in divided societies allows for the selection of the most effective process of reconciliation.

One theory that explains the utility of reconciliation as a conflict intervention is Vamik Volkan's theory of "chosen trauma." Volkan defines "chosen trauma" as "the image of a past event during which a large group suffered loss or experienced helplessness and humiliation in a conflict with a neighboring group."³² Volkan describes the transformation of this image into an obsession by which groups choose to act out against other groups. This image is transmitted to the next generation as a way of coping (or avoiding coping) with the traumatic event. As a result the trauma becomes a part of the group identity, a part that is easily referenced for all members of the group. When new crises arise the traumatic event becomes a reference point indistinguishable from the new attacks. Consequently, the group becomes incapable of distinguishing the new aggressor from the historical aggressor associated with the "chosen trauma". This leads the party to

31 Galtung, Johan. 2007. TRANSCEND and Transform. Paper read at Peaceful Conflict Transformation, at American University.
32 Volkan, Vamik. 1998. Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas. Paper read at International Association of Group Psychology.

irrational decision-making, which often results in mass mobilization against the perceived attacker.

With this theory as a backdrop, the importance of three key areas becomes readily apparent. First, there is a component of historical injustice termed by Volkan as “trauma.” Second, an “us” vs. “them” dynamic is created. Under the “us” category exist those individuals who identify with the “trauma,” the established neighborhood residents, and under “them” are any and all individuals who are associated with the creation of the trauma or any new trauma which is condensed in the minds of the traumatized, the new businesses and residents in a neighborhood. Finally, the history and the “us”-“them” dynamic create an extremely volatile situation, which increases the level of possible destruction should irrational decision making and mass mobilization occur, demonstrating the need for intervention where traumatic events exist or the potential for such events is perceived. These three components will become particularly important to the discussion of the role of reconciliation as an intervention.

Reconciliation processes have historically been utilized in areas where extreme violence, injustice or even attempts at genocide have occurred. Examining the components of reconciliation through the lens of “chosen trauma” sheds light on the successes of reconciliation as a means of intervention. The theory of chosen trauma suggests that a historical injustice or traumatic event lies at the heart of new conflict manifestations. In racially divided communities, this historical injustice is often a history of government

neglect, neglect or segregation by a majority racial or economic sector or other forms of disenfranchisement of the community members. Reconciliation processes provide a forum through which past injustices can be explored in great detail. Such processes allow for both the perpetrators and victims or their descendants to air grievances about the past and come to a better understanding of those grievances. Additionally, through the dialogue and transformative practices associated with reconciliation, the parties are able to begin a healing process. Montville suggests that “only healing, actively pursued, heals wounds.”³³ When parties engage in a process that addresses deeply rooted historical concerns, chosen trauma, the cycle of trans-generational transmission can be broken, healing the wounds of the past and allowing the creation of a joint future.

Volkan suggests that the trans-generational transmission of chosen trauma provides a space for the “change of function” by which a traumatic event becomes an identity marker for an entire group and that it occurs as a result of one generation being incapable of dealing with the trauma.^{34,35} Therefore, chosen trauma becomes a part of the group identity because it has not been addressed. Through the process of reconciliation that occurs between groups, the historical trauma is drawn into question and clarified in a collective history. This acknowledgment of the historical injustices and acceptance of a new historical narrative addresses the need for healing with traumatized groups, allowing them to cope for themselves rather than pass the trauma to the next generation.

33 Montville, Joseph. 2007. Walk Through History. Initiatives of Change [cited April 28 2007]. Available from www.iofc.org/enprogrammes/hic/resources/papers/?id=825&print=1.

34 Volkan, Vamik. 1998. Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas. Paper read at International Association of Group Psychology.

35 Volkan, Vamik. 2004. The Seven Threads of Large-Group Identity. In *Blind Trust*. Charlottesville: Pitchstone Publishing.

A second important component of the theory of chosen trauma lies in the “us” versus “them” view of the world that the traumatized often prescribe to. This is addressed in a multitude of ways by the process of reconciliation. First, reconciliation is a collaborative process, one that seeks mutually acceptable outcomes for the good of the entire community. In order to achieve this end, members of both sides must work together. The process works to breakdown the “us”-“them” dichotomy as a re-humanization of the “other” is brought about through the joint expression of past experiences.

Additionally, reconciliation is a multi-level process, reaching government officials, elites and society as a whole. This complexity increases the efficacy of reconciliation at addressing chosen trauma because this allows the outcomes of the process to reach all levels of a group’s identity. By reaching the many levels of society, reconciliation is able to alter all component pieces of society, which might contribute to the trans-generational transmission of a chosen trauma. When a reconciliation process incorporates all levels, it increases the level of buy-in of the entire community group, contributing to the dissipation of the traumatized identity and the acceptance of the new community identity.

The final component of chosen trauma addresses the implications of a chosen trauma. When a community accepts a chosen trauma as part of its identity, the possibility of conflict manifestation increases as the community seeks means by which it may avoid future trauma. This defense often becomes first strike in nature and the identity group

will actively pursue policies that promise to defend against future trauma. These policies can include the alienation of potential victimizers or even the destruction of threatening groups. The reconciliation process addresses the first-strike nature of the identity group's defense and provides a useful framework for prevention of violent conflict by 1) addressing the need for defense through the identification of historical injustices, 2) altering the oppressive structures and 3) creating a shared future.

While reconciliation processes have not been historically utilized to address non-manifest conflict, this project will look at two communities where reconciliation processes were utilized to address community tensions. Through the examination of two different communities working from relatively similar frameworks for reconciliation, information will be examined that speaks directly to the efficacy of reconciliation as a form of conflict prevention.

3. Methodology

As previously noted, one of the most challenging pieces of the field of conflict resolution is evaluation, and much more so than conflict resolution, the evaluation of measures of conflict prevention. This section will address the methods that have been chosen, how they were implemented and discussion of why these methods best fit this project.

This study utilizes a comparative case study approach to understand the impact of reconciliation processes in divided communities on the prevention of conflict manifestation. Specifically, this research utilizes content analysis of primary source and secondary source data from interveners, participants, and media resources from the time immediately prior to, during and after the intervention. Additionally, interviews of participants, interveners, and community members in each community are utilized to gather information regarding attitudes and behaviors prior to, during and after the intervention. Finally, a comparison of demographic, housing and crime data from these periods will help to provide a background for understanding the community during those periods as well as a point of comparison for individuals' retrospective interview responses. Each of these methodologies was utilized across the three main time points of the analysis, the pre-intervention, intervention and post-intervention periods.

The primary source data was gathered from individuals and organizations that participated in the project. Direct request was used to gain access from the organization conducting the reconciliation process, and a combination of emails and requests to interviewees were used to gain access to individuals' notes from these processes. Secondary source data was gathered from archives of local newspapers, newsletters, and magazines. Statistical data was gathered through the U.S. census bureau, which is open source data, as well as any municipal data that was available for the locality being studied. Finally, interviews were conducted with a wide variety of participants. First, members of the process organization were interviewed. I then utilized snowballing to move to other process participants as well as community members who did not participate in the process. While names were a piece of the data, all names and identifying information have been excluded in order to ensure the confidentiality of all interviews and source donors.

Utilizing Galtung's "conflict triangle" as a framework, I examined the contradictions, attitudes and behaviors that were present in each phase of this period. In this study, these three time points formed the basis of the analysis. The pre-intervention analysis served two key purposes. First, the pre-intervention analysis was used to examine the presence and levels of conflict predictors or indicators prior to the implementation of the intervention. Additionally, this portion of the analysis built an understanding of attitudes and behaviors prior to the process. The data from during the intervention was used to identify any turning points in attitudes and behaviors as well as any changes in conflict

indicators. Finally, the post-intervention analysis was used to re-examine the presence and levels of conflict indicators, as well as understand individuals' perceptions of the effects of the process on themselves and their community.

In the pre-intervention analysis, I utilized content analysis of notes, documents and media to form a comprehensive understanding of the situation and how it was discussed prior to the start of the process. Additionally, information taken from interviews was used to retrospectively understand attitudes, behaviors and any contradictions in the community prior to the intervention. While these were not necessarily the same attitudes and opinions they would have given prior to the intervention, in analyzing the shift over the course of the intervention, the interviews provide their perspectives on the impact of the process. Finally, the statistical analysis of demographic and crime data serves as a backdrop for the pre-intervention phase in helping to develop a more comprehensive picture of the community and its issues. Through the analysis of these three forms of data, I utilize the conflict triangles framework to form a comprehensive conflict analysis in the pre intervention, as well as research the following conflict indicators to understand the pre-intervention tendency toward conflict.

The indicators and measures:

- Proneness Indicators
 - Collective Incentives—Any overriding issues or tensions that a large portion of the populace share; this will most likely be visible through the comments

made in interviews, though some may be detected through primary and secondary source manuscripts and documents.

- Capacity for Joint Action—the level of membership in community organizations or activist groups
- External Opportunities—this will be examined through the influence of external forces on the community, such as levels of federal and NGO involvement.
- Econometric Indicators
 - Unequally distributed Income—Demographic data will be an indicator, as well as perceptions of inequality given through the interviews and documents. This will be examined through economic diversity indices as well as data on owner occupied homes and affordability indices.
 - Security—Individuals’ sense of security gathered through interviews as well as crime data will be used as an indicator.
 - Social Cohesion—Living proximity to other groups as well as the level of connection felt to one’s community can indicate social cohesion within a community. These will be measured using racial diversity indices as well as through perceptions given in interviews.
 - Governance—Data on levels of political involvement by members of the community and representation of groups will help to indicate governance, as well as perceptions of the equity and fairness of those governing indicated in interviews and documents.

The intervention analysis utilizes the same tools. This portion of the analysis seeks to identify any turning points in the process from, both the primary source and secondary source data as well as the opinions of individuals. Here, the statistical analysis is used to make note of any changes that occur during the course of the intervention.

Finally, the analysis of the post-intervention, both in the immediate sense and the further removed post intervention in which the research was conducted, utilizes content analysis of documents from the time immediately following the intervention as well as the interviews which speak to individuals' perceptions of how the intervention altered the community. Additionally, the far-post questions allow an understanding of the long-term effects of such a process. The statistical analysis at this point provides a back-drop for the responses of community members. The indicators are utilized throughout the process to understand where changes occurred, if they did.

While the statistical data analysis cannot necessarily be causally linked to the process in communities as large as these, the impact of these factors on such a process cannot be removed. For example, if analyses show that crime rates dropped in both communities following the process, and today individuals say feelings of security are better because of the process, this provides important information for understanding attitudinal shifts. It is important to note that this information may show a gap between people's perceptions and the actual data and that this information cannot necessarily be linked to the reconciliation

process. However, analysis of this type of data from distinct cases, may show some relation to the process.

A case study approach was utilized for several reasons. First, and perhaps most importantly, a comparative case study provides a framework for thoroughly analyzing two distinct cases, their similarities and differences. As an alternative, the researcher considered conducting such an intervention on her own then analyzing the results. This type of process would, however, drastically narrow the reliability of the analysis, as the researcher has a stake in the process and thus the outcomes. Additionally, a comparative case study utilizing a mixed methods approach will provide a much more complex and comprehensive view of the effects that can be attributed to such a process. Since the effects will be better understood, the ability of this research to be generalized to more locales will be greatly enhanced.

4. Case Study: Portland, Oregon

The state of Oregon has a history of racially and ethnically charged laws and actions. Through exclusionary laws, as well as participation in discriminatory practices and even assistance in the internment of the Japanese, Oregon has established a somewhat divided community. This section will examine the discriminatory practices and the history of racism in Oregon, then using a series of interviews and content analyses create an understanding of the situation of Portlanders prior to the Day of Acknowledgment and Portland's Racial dialogues and any changes or shifts that resulted from these reconciliatory processes.

History of Racial Conflict in Portland, Oregon

In 1849, the Oregon Territorial Assembly signed into law an exclusionary act expressly prohibiting “negroes and mulattoes” from immigrating to or residing in the Oregon Territory.³⁶ When Oregon became a state in 1859, this act was still in place, making Oregon the only free state to have a law prohibiting African Americans and Mulattoes from moving into the state. While slavery was illegal in Oregon, whites were not required to free their slaves. The exclusionary laws were deemed illegal by the fourteenth amendment, ratified on July 7, 1868, which provided for “equal protection of

³⁶ Legislature, Oregon Territorial. 1849. Oregon Exclusion Law (1849).

the laws.”³⁷ However, through a series of repeals and re-adoption, Oregon maintained exclusionary laws in the “state constitution until 1926;” additionally, “sundown laws required African Americans to be ‘out of town’ or off the streets by sunset” preventing African Americans from interacting normally with other Oregonians.³⁸ Sunset laws did not begin to be repealed until the 1950’s with some cities maintaining such laws on the books (though not enforcing them), until as late as the 1990’s.

In addition to the exclusionary and sunset laws, Oregon also played a role in the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. In Portland, Japanese Americans were moved from their homes to the Portland Livestock Exposition Center, where they lived in stalls that had been converted into living quarters.³⁹ While apology and reparations were later afforded the Japanese and Japanese Americans who had endured the internment camps, fear of further discrimination prevented many of these families from returning to their homes and businesses in Portland, OR.

These practices of discrimination have marred Oregon’s history, greatly decreasing opportunity for expansion of diversity in Oregon. This lack of diversity has led neo-Nazi and skin head groups to form in Oregon, with some groups declaring the northwest a haven for these groups due to the lack of diversity.⁴⁰ The existence and activity of such

37 Congress, United States. Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. 1868.

38 Davis, Audrey J. 2001. The African-American Oregon Trail: A Look at Migration of African-Americans to Oregon and How They were Treated. <http://www.coe.ohio-state.edu/beverlygordon/863%20Projects/2001%20863%20projects/Davis.htm>.

39 Kessler, Lauren. 1999. On the Home Front. Reed Magazine.

40 Center, Southern Poverty Law. 2008. Hate Groups Map: Southern Poverty Law Center.

groups can present a threat to individuals of other groups creating fear and unwillingness to live in such areas.

The city of Portland grew with the racially discriminatory laws of the state of Oregon as a backdrop for its development. As such, the community had a very small population of non-whites for a significant portion of its history. According to the United States Census, in 1990 the non-white population totaled 67,184 persons, 15% of the population of the city of Portland, and by 2000, this number had grown to 116,880 persons, 22% of the population of the city. Of the minorities present in Portland, Hispanic residents now make up the largest portion with 36,058 at the 2000 Census, approximately 6.8% of the population. However, in 1990, Hispanics only constituted 13,874 or 3.2% of the population. Black or African American residents make up the next largest portion, approximately 6.6%, with 35,115 at the 2000 Census, an increase of only 1,585 since 1990, and a proportional decrease of 1%. Residents of Asian descent make up the next largest portion of non-whites, approximately 6.3%, with 33,470 at the 2000 Census, a proportional increase of 1.3% from 21,997 in 1990.^{41 42} In my interviews of Portlanders, however, perceptions of the presence of non-whites in the community produced much smaller estimates with some individuals suggesting that only 2% of Portlanders were non-white and highest estimates given suggesting that 10% of Portlanders were non-white.

41 Census, United States. 1990 [cited March 1, 2008]. Available from www.census.gov.

42 Census, United States. 2000 [cited March 1, 2008]. Available from www.census.gov.

In the 1980s and 1990s the Portland area began to see an increase in racist activity. In 1988, a Skinhead group known as the East Side White Pride gang attacked and killed an Ehtiopian student, making national news.⁴³ This resulted in an increase in white supremacist activity as skinheads moved to the area. In 1994, the Volksfront group was formed in Portland, Oregon, uniting an up to that point unorganized skinhead movement. Increases in police arrest and prosecution of such activity led to a decline in the Volksfront.⁴⁴ Today the Volksfront continues to exist in Portland, perpetrating occasional attacks; however, wide spread disapproval and police prosecution has held the organization in check.⁴⁵

The Day of Acknowledgment and Portland Dialogues

In an effort to address these past discriminatory practices and move forward collectively toward a more egalitarian future, a diverse group of individuals worked together to create Oregon's Day of Acknowledgment. The Day of Acknowledgment, held on April 22, 1999, the 150th anniversary of the passage of the Oregon exclusionary acts, recognized Oregon's discriminatory past and vowed to move forward into the twenty-first century encouraging interracial dialogue and "full participation of racial minorities in all aspects of Oregon life."⁴⁶ Following the passage of the Day of Acknowledgment Resolutions by the Oregon House of Representatives, Senate, and Governor's Office, two important

43 Jackson, David S. 1993. Skinhead against Skinhead. Time

44 International, Volksfront. The History and Foundation of Volksfront 2005 [cited March 2, 2008. Available from <http://www.volksfrontinternational.com/aboutvf.php?about=9>.

45 Sewell, Abby. Community stands up to Skinheads 2005 [cited. Available from <http://www.theportlandalliance.org/2005/feb/standagainstskinheads.htm>.

46 Assembly, Oregon Legislative. 1999. House Resolution 3 & Senate Resolution 3, edited by S. o. O. House of Representatives.

groups formed in Portland to address racial tension through dialogue and reconciliation: Oregon Uniting and the Understanding Racism Foundation.

Oregon Uniting formed as a grass roots organization in response to the Day of Acknowledgment and the national “Call to Community,” which emphasized the need for justice and reconciliation⁴⁷. The organization formed from a group of individuals who had attended a conference hosted by Hope in the Cities, an organization responsible for racial reconciliation work in Richmond, Virginia. Oregon Uniting was based in Portland, Oregon, and facilitated education and dialogue on race relations in the Portland area. Additionally, members of Oregon Uniting developed a curriculum for school children entitled *Beyond the Oregon Trail: Oregon’s Untold History* to educate school children on the traumas and glories of non-whites in Oregon’s past.

The Understanding Racism Foundation also conducted dialogues around issues of race in Portland; however, this organization focused on a slightly different target group. In the 1994 the Oregon Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/ Ethnic Issues in the Judicial System issued a report. This report found large discrepancies in the justice process for individuals of color. The Understanding Racism Foundation resulted from these findings as an organization whose target was to address racism with individuals who had the ability to alter “treatment and access to opportunity.”⁴⁸ As a result, the dialogues facilitated by this organization focused on incorporating lawyers, law enforcement

47 Uniting, Oregon. 1999. Oregon Uniting: Advancing the Unfinished Agenda of Racial Justice Through Public Education and Honest Dialogues.

officials, court officials and government officials to create change at a higher level than the grass roots focus of Oregon Uniting.

As both organizations continued to develop, the leadership of the two organizations realized the overlapping nature of their work. As a result, the two organizations merged to create Uniting to Understand Racism. This organization brought together these two goals of grass roots and higher level education in racial issues creating a common curriculum for racial awareness dialogue and training. The organization does not teach anti-racism rather they focus on racial awareness through “honest dialogue” to give each participant the opportunity to understand the role of racism in their life and the lives of those around them.⁴⁹ This approach allows the facilitator to create space for individuals to become aware of the role they can play in addressing racism.

Today, Uniting to Understand Racism continues to conduct dialogues on race relations around the State of Oregon. In Portland, the city government has begun requesting dialogues for city workers. Local school districts have begun incorporating the *Beyond the Oregon Trail* curriculum into their schools, and dialogues have been held in school districts involving parents, teachers and students. To date, Uniting to Understand Racism estimates that through its parent organizations, Oregon Uniting and the Understanding Racism Foundation, and the work it has done since the merge, no less than 4,000

48 Foundation, Understanding Racism. 2000. Understanding Racism Foundation Brochure.

49 Baldwin, Richard C. 2007. President's Message: Honorable Richard C. Baldwin. Uniting to Understand Racism, November 2007.

individuals have been involved in group or community dialogues sponsored by these organizations, affecting countless others by their work.

Portland before Reconciliation

In order to understand the likelihood that manifest conflict would have developed in Portland and the preventive role that the reconciliation processes have played and are playing, conflict indicators must be examined. In order to present a picture of Portland as it relates to these indicators, statistical data, interview results and content analyses will be interwoven to produce a clear narrative of Portland's situation prior to the implementation of the Day of Acknowledgment and the subsequent dialogues.

In Portland, a total of sixteen individuals were interviewed. Of the sixteen, four were not related to the process in any way. All others were participants in the dialogues. Of the participants, three were organizers; six were facilitators; and three were only participants.

Indicator 1: Collective Incentive

When asked to describe the need for reconciliation in Portland prior to the implementation of these processes, racism was the most often cited issue. When discussing the racism present in Portland, however, individuals were quick to note that it was a "different kind of racism". This "sophisticated racism" as one individual referred

to it was defined by a white “racial bubble” in which the lack of “critical mass” left “people of color...invisible.”⁵⁰

This “sophisticated racism” was highlighted by disparity in opportunity and treatment for persons of color in Portland. The *Report of the Oregon Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/Ethnic Issues in the Judicial System of 1994* laid out disparity in the Judicial system, outlining that minorities were more likely to be arrested, charged, convicted and incarcerated than non-minorities. In addition to disparity in treatment by the judicial system, this report outlined disparities in the representation of minorities in the Judicial System, largely a result of abysmally lower passage rates for the Oregon Bar Exam. In 1994, the number of minorities on the Oregon State Bar had risen to 257, 2.66% of bar membership; however, the minority population of Oregon was approximately 9.35% at that time.⁵¹ In addition to disparate opportunity within the Judicial System, Portlanders pointed to differences in opportunity for “average” minorities. As a result of “affirmative action,” more than half of individuals interviewed perceived that there was opportunity for minorities with “skills” or education, while simultaneously pointing to difficulties in advancement for “average” or “impoverished” persons.

Portlanders also expressed that they had experienced problems with racial profiling and excessive use of force by law enforcement. One interviewee stated that her fiancé, an African immigrant, had been pulled over six times in the first two weeks of moving to a

⁵⁰ From interviews with community members in Portland, Oregon conducted by Lindsay Jones February 28-March 1, 2008

majority white area in Portland, precipitating his move to another part of the city where the stops were much less frequent. Other African Americans mentioned personal experience of being pulled over and believing it was racially motivated. While such activity was not documented in the time prior to the beginning of the reconciliation process, such activity has since been documented. Traffic stop data released in the Spring of 2006 reported that “African-Americans and Hispanic/Latinos are overrepresented in citywide stops compared to the overall Portland Population” and are “more likely to be searched during a traffic stop than whites”.⁵²

These disparities in treatment and opportunity for minorities demonstrate a collective need for change to promote minority interests. However, due to marginalization of the already small population of minorities, these issues were largely invisible to the majority population.

Indicator 2: Capacity for Joint Action

In order to understand the minority community’s capacity to respond to these issues, the level of concentration, group organization and existence of coalitions must be understood. The census data from 2000 shows that minority communities were concentrated, with African American communities being most highly concentrated in North East Portland. Contrary to some perceptions, non-whites are present in Portland; however, non-whites often live in clusters segregated from the white residences. Hispanic

⁵¹ Department, Oregon Judicial. 1994. Report of the Oregon Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/Ethnic Issues in the Judicial System.

residents are dispersed throughout Portland with greater concentrations in North and East Portland. In high concentration areas the Hispanic population accounts for as much as 29 percent of the local population. Clustering is much more concentrated amongst African Americans in Portland. The majority of African Americans living in Portland live in North East Portland, accounting for 35-50% of the populace in some parts of North East. Asian Americans, while far less concentrated, also live in clusters in East and Central Portland, though never accounting for more than 17 percent of the population in any given area. Portlanders often expressed that North East was where the African American community was located, while location was rarely given to Hispanic and Asian populations.⁵³ These levels of concentration indicate increased proximity which is one of the main indicators of capacity for joint action.

When residents were asked how connected they felt to the community. Individuals were allowed to define community on their own. Long time residents expressed a deep connection to their community; however, for African American residents, they were quick to define community as “the African American Community in North East.” Many of the individuals interviewed were highly involved in community organizations as leaders, which they perceived to give them a deeper sense of community. However, for those who were not as involved, they perceived the connections of individuals to each other and to the community as being less prevalent. Additionally, disconnect between minority groups was expressed, in that Hispanic minorities and African American groups

52 Portland City Council. 2007. Racial Profiling Committee Resolution. 36472.

53 Census, United States. 2000 [cited March 1, 2008]. Available from www.census.gov.

were not working together. These distinctions led me to conclude that organizations existed which increased capacity for group response to mistreatment or disparity. However, mass mobilization across minority groups would have required enhanced networking.

Indicator 3: External Opportunities

In my research, external opportunities for rebellion did not become apparent. However, external opportunity for peaceful reconciliation of these issues was introduced through the work of Hope in the Cities and groups resulting from President Clinton's Call to Community, as will be explained in the discussion of the introduction of the intervention.

Indicator 4: Unequally Distributed Income

At the 2000 census, average per capita income was \$22,643; however, the unequal distribution of that income saw an average of \$25,084 amongst whites, \$14,070 amongst African Americans, \$11,622 amongst Hispanics and \$14,788 amongst Asians (the 3 most prevalent minority groups).⁵⁴ In addition to unequal distribution amongst the races, poverty also affected Portland as approximately 12% of the population lived at or below the federal poverty rate each year from 1996 to 2000.⁵⁵

Indicator 5: Security

54 ePodunk. Census Data 2000 2000 [cited March 3, 2008]. Available from www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/incomeOverview.php?locIndex=15425.

55 Office, Auditor's. 2005. People in Poverty. Portland, Oregon.

When asked to discuss feelings of safety in Portland, Oregon, all interviewees expressed that Portland was a generally safe place. A few expressed that some parts of the community were not safe at night “like any big city.” Others expressed that the extent of racial profiling and police brutality made them (as a minority) feel unsafe with the police. One participant expressed that the only place she did not feel safe was in church, as that was “where the name calling happened” when she was a child. One interviewee expressed that the presence of the “KKK, neo-nazis, skinheads and the migration of gangs from L.A.” in the 1980s and 1990s made them feel insecure.⁵⁶ Others expressed that the white supremacist groups were not a problem, as most Portlanders rejected them. Both an African American and a White interviewee expressed concerns about entering the other community at night, as they felt they would not be safe there.

Indicator 6: Social Cohesion

As outlined in Indicator 2, the living proximity of members of the African American community is highly concentrated in North East Portland. The Hispanic community is also highly concentrated, though not to the degree that the African American community is. This proximity allows for an increased sense of community in these areas.

In interviews, African Americans who had grown up in North East Portland, regardless of their current residency, related to North East as their community. When asked to describe how connected they felt to their community, the majority of white interviewees

⁵⁶ Gang presence was expressed as a concern by many interviewees, but most expressed this as a problem that had developed since the processes began not prior to their formation (see *Portland After Reconciliation*).

commented on the level of connectedness in Portland as a whole, stating that people were very connected. Non-white interviewees expressed a level of connectedness, one going so far as to say Portland was so “interrelated it’s incestuous”, meaning everyone knows someone who knows you. However, despite expressing connection most African Americans interviewed qualified their statement saying that African Americans felt much more connected to the African American community than to Portland as a whole.

Indicator 7: Governance

In the city of Portland civic participation and governance is much greater than the national average. Despite low turn out of 34% in 1999 for a State Election, between 1996 and 2000 November voter turnout average 57%, with November 2000 drawing as many as 78% of Portlanders.⁵⁷ While statistics on the racial composition of voters were not found, this indicates that there was a high level of civic participation in Portland.

Indicator 8: Attitudes, Behaviors and Contradiction

When asked to reflect on the situation in Portland prior to the implementation of the Day of Acknowledgment and the associated dialogue processes, key tensions were brought forward that reflected on the contradictions between attitudes and behaviors present in the city prior to the implementation of the processes. These contradictions became apparent in discussions of the presence of known racism and incidents of racist behavior.

⁵⁷ Office, Auditor's. 2005. Voter Participation. Portland, OR.

Many interviewees indicated that Portland was widely known as a liberal city with one referring to it as “the bastion of liberal acceptance.” One non-related interviewee suggested that the wide acceptance of individuals was what drew her to Portland. However, no less than half of those interviewed suggested that despite the openness of the city, racism continued to exist. One interviewee said that “people in Portland don’t have a clue they’re racist” indicating that individuals’ understandings of racism contradict. According to one, “minority populations feel the impact of race in a different way” further strengthening this idea that the liberal attitude of the city contradicts the way individuals behave towards non-whites.

Two key behaviors came forward as indicators of this contradiction. The first, which has already been mentioned, was racial profiling and excessive use of force against minorities. Despite being a liberal city, minority populations were overrepresented in police stops, arrests, and use of force.⁵⁸ Additionally, interviewees expressed a wide spread perception of racial profiling and police brutality.

Another instance that emphasized the contradiction between attitudes and behaviors was an incident that occurred with the Portland School Board. In June of 2001, an African American member of the school board stated, “I see the Jews running everything. They’re four of them on the board. This is a group that came into this country equal to, if not less than, African Americans. And today they run the country,” sharply dividing the Jewish

⁵⁸ Department, Oregon Judicial. 1994. Report of the Oregon Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/Ethnic Issues in the Judicial System.

and African American communities.⁵⁹ While this incident occurred after the reconciliation processes began, the incident created a need for a series of school board and community wide dialogues, which will be included in the discussion of the intervention.

These differences in attitudes and behaviors, as well as the disparities between minority and non-minority groups noted in the indicators, present Portland as a city that was struggling with issues of race. While Portland's situation was not an explosive one, as seen in some past racial conflicts in the United States, this situation was, as one interviewee put it "a very slow simmer." According to these indicators, the potential for violent conflict, while not great, did exist; however, whether it would become manifest conflict would have largely been dependent on minority groups' ability to unite in their attempts to address their disparate treatment. Additionally, a trigger incident could have sparked such an event or reaction.

Reconciliation Turning Points in Portland

In 1999 the Oregon State government came together in a Day of Acknowledgment. This day was created to recognize Oregon's racist past, and from it dialogues on race relations began to occur. In Portland, Oregon Uniting and the Understanding Racism Foundation, which would later unite to form Uniting to Understand Racism, carried out these dialogues. These organizations carried out small group dialogues with individuals,

⁵⁹ Taranto, James. 2001. Hawaii's Competition. The Wall Street Journal.

businesses, schools, school boards, government agencies, and in community-wide dialogues. As these processes were carried out changes began to occur. In order to understand the impact of these processes, this section will examine changes noticed by individuals during the process and the following section will re-examine the indicators to determine any shifts that might have occurred in those areas.

When participants and facilitators were asked to describe any shifts or changes they noticed during the dialogue process, attitudinal changes came to the forefront. The most often cited shift was that amongst those involved, people's "awareness changed." This came in many forms as individuals became aware of unexpected people having racist ways of thinking, of their own racial biases and attitudes, of other cultures, and of how to communicate. Another frequently observed change was "changes in perceptions." As individuals heard others' stories, their perceptions of the other changed.

Another important change that people noticed was a willingness to talk more openly about these issues and less acceptance of racist behavior. Within the dialogue, individuals noticed others beginning to open up and discuss racial issues, but interviewees also expressed an observed increase in the city's willingness to address such issues. This observation is supported by a behavioral shift shown in the fact that the city of Portland has begun to employ Uniting to Understand Racism to conduct dialogues with city employees. Also, the removal of school board members who made previously

mentioned racist remarks, points to the increased willingness of the community to address these issues.

Portland after Reconciliation

Today, dialogue continues to take place in Portland as community members continue to address racism. As such, the line between the effects of the intervention and turning points in the intervention are somewhat blurred. This section however, will attempt to outline the changes that Portland has seen as they relate to conflict indicators. While some of these changes may be directly related to the work of the dialogue, a conglomeration of circumstances and efforts suggest that the dialogues alone can not be responsible for all of these shifts. Those changes that are most directly related to the work of reconciliation will be indicated as such.

Indicator 1: Collective Incentive

While many of the indicators of collective incentive are still present in Portland, there have been changes since the reconciliation processes began. Increased awareness amongst participants has led to a perception of changes in racist attitudes. Participants interviewed believed that those who had participated in the dialogue were more aware of racial difference and more willing to address it. This removes some of the “invisibility” present prior to the process.

Additionally, steps have been taken to address racial profiling and discrimination in law enforcement and the legal system. Affirmative action programs implemented in the Oregon Bar, coinciding with the Understanding Racism Foundation's dialogues, have increased membership by minority lawyers to 5.5% of the Oregon State Bar.⁶⁰ Actions have been taken to address the issue of racial profiling in Portland. In January 2007, the Racial Profiling Committee was formed to hear community concerns around racial profiling and develop action plans to address it.⁶¹ The city has recognized that racial profiling is a concern and has made addressing this concern a priority. While these changes cannot be directly linked to the reconciliation processes, interviewees felt that the dialogues had created a conversation on race that allowed for space to be created to begin bringing up such issues.

Indicator 2: Capacity for Joint Action

In terms of concentrations of groups, Portland has not changed significantly in recent years. North East is still largely African American. However, those interviewed pointed to the effects of gentrification in North East and beginning of the dispersal of the traditionally African American community. While population concentrations still exist today, gentrification may further separate the community decreasing capacity for joint action.⁶²

60 Program, Affirmative Action. 2006. Reauthorizing OSB's Affirmative Action Program. Portland, Oregon.

61 Portland City Council. 2007. Racial Profiling Committee Resolution. 36472.

62 See Changes in Portland section for further discussion

In addition to changes in community density, participants expressed some changes in levels of connection between communities. As individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds were able to interact in the dialogues, participants noted the formation of bonds across racial groups and an increased connection across those lines. Of specific note, between African American and Jewish participants a community bond has been forged in response to the dialogues that resulted from the school board incident. However, participants and news reports also noted that gentrification was decreasing social cohesion in traditionally African American communities.⁶³

Indicator 3: External Opportunities

On a positive note, the introduction of the dialogue model by Hope in the Cities provided the community with an external opportunity for change. Additionally, President Clinton's Call to Community provided outside pressure to address the issue of race in every community in the United States, including Portland. Without the introduction of these external opportunities, the dialogues might not have been introduced.

However, the introduction of gang activity from L.A. has increased community tensions in recent years as concerns over safety rise. Also, the influx of new residents and gentrification has created new tensions for Portland. These outside forces are adding to the tensions in Portland, creating new issues that must be addressed.

⁶³ Writer, Staff. 2006. In Parts of U.S. Northwest, A changing face. Washington Post, June 19, 2006.

Indicator 4: Unequally Distributed Income

Since income distribution data is only available at the decennial census, this information by race was not accessible. However, statistics on general income suggest that the percentage of residents living at or below the poverty line has increased to 17.4% between 2000 and 2005.⁶⁴ Additionally, the number of both owners and renters paying more than 35% of their income on housing has increased steadily since 2003, totaling more than 75,000 people in 2006; despite these declines, per capita income has risen again to its 2000 level following a 3% decline between 2001 and 2003.⁶⁵ This period has coincided with a national economic decline. With no definitive shifts, and no direct links, it is not possible to determine if any of the changes are related to the processes, though some participants perceived that awareness about white privilege is changing. They also suggested that such awareness might bring about changes in hiring policies.

Indicator 5: Security

When asked to elaborate on feelings of safety in recent years, several interviewees expressed increased feelings of discomfort. However, when this sentiment was expressed, a caveat was also provided, “Portland is no less safe than any other city.” The interviewees then went on to describe increased pedophilia and violence in the media as reasons for discomfort. Here drug related crime was also raised as an important issue, one that interviewees perceived to have recently developed. Crime statistics for Portland,

⁶⁴ Office, Auditor's. 2005. People in Poverty. Portland, Oregon.

⁶⁵ Census, United States. 2000 [cited March 1, 2008]. Available from www.census.gov.

however, show that rates for both violent crime and property crime have declined since 2003.⁶⁶

Indicator 6: Social Cohesion

While the indicators of social cohesion for the city have not generally changed since the processes began, participants attest to significant changes in their personal lives. They indicate that they feel much more connected to persons of other races, with whom they would have never previously associated. Participants also indicated that they felt their peers who had been through the process had also experienced such changes in their relationships with members of other groups. As a result, social cohesion amongst previously unrelated groups has been fostered.

Indicator 7: Governance

My research led to no indication of changes in governance.

Indicator 8: Contradictions in Attitudes and Behaviors

In Portland the implementation of the reconciliation process, according to participants, precipitated changes in perceptions of race relations in Portland. Of particular note, participants felt it created an increased willingness to discuss issues of race. In addition to the improvements noted in the previous section on *Reconciliation Turning Points in Portland*, this process led to new discussion about racial profiling in Portland.

⁶⁶ FBI. U.S. Crime Statistics. All Years [cited March 3, 2008] Available from www.fbi.gov/research.htm.

In response to these discussions, the city of Portland formed the City of Portland Racial Profiling Committee. This committee is charged with receiving community input on racial profiling and perceptions of racial profiling and developing policies to address these issues. According to community members, this committee has led to increased perceptions that the city is trying to address this issue. However, many feel more must be done to improve police-community relationships.

Changes in Portland

This section will conclude the information on Portland with an expanded discussion of changes in Portland that may or may not impact or alter the reconciliation processes or the effects of those processes.

Since the 1990's Portland has begun to experience gentrification. The legislation of an urban area, outside of which development cannot occur, has forced developers to seek low rent areas to create new developments. Gentrification has hardest hit the historically African American North East Portland. In an interview with a long time resident and entrepreneur in North East, he pointed out that people living in the area were hard pressed to turn down \$300,000 for a home they had spent much less on, or in some cases inherited, asking "where's a black man going to get that kind of money?"

Gentrification has created new tension in the community in two forms. First, there is tension between the new residents and those who have been there, as the long-time residents resent the new residents moving into their neighborhood. There is also resentment from those who have moved out of the area from a feeling of being forced out due to not being able to afford rising housing costs. While these tensions are falling along racial lines, in that many of the new residents are white, this conflict is not inherently a racial one, rather it is socioeconomic. Currently, the dialogue processes that are taking place have not been altered to address the new conflicts surrounding gentrification, though some facilitators suggested this was a rising need in the Portland area.

5. Case Study: Dayton, Ohio

Ohio, which achieved statehood in 1803, established early in its history a legacy of segregation and disparate treatment. As Dayton grew, segregation was enhanced through the effects of the Jim Crow laws. This legacy of segregation left a resounding impact on Dayton, Ohio, one that is still being addressed today.

History of Racial Conflict in Dayton, Ohio

While Ohio joined the Union as a free state, early in its history the *Act to Regulate Black and Mulatto Persons* required all black and mulatto persons to have documentation of their status as a free individual in order to pursue work in the state, as well as provided for the return of slaves to their owners.⁶⁷ This law was strengthened in 1807 to prevent further migration to Ohio with the requirement of a \$500 bond for any black wishing to move to the state.⁶⁸ Many other segregationist laws were passed, with some of the more severe not being enforced later in history. However, these early laws laid the ground work for the separation of whites and non-whites in Ohio. Following the adoption of the fifteenth amendment, Dayton experienced segregation as separate institutions were created to serve the black and white populations of Dayton.

⁶⁷ Ohio State Legislature. 1804. Act to Regulate Black and Mulatto Persons.

⁶⁸ Loyacano, Marjorie. A History of Race Relations in the Miami Valley. Carillon Historical Park 2002 [cited. Available from http://ww2.cityofdayton.org/ddrr/relations_history.pdf].

During segregation, black Daytonians developed their own businesses, schools, and services on the West side of the Miami River, while the white entities were to the east of the river. The black community in Dayton was a thriving one, hosting hotels, businesses, salons, and even the third black amusement park in America.⁶⁹ The industrialization of Dayton further enhanced this segregation as a new wave of blacks moved to the community and settled on the west side of the river.

Dayton was not immune to the effects of the civil rights movement. The 1950s and 1960s saw an increase in levels of skilled employment for blacks, though they were still largely underrepresented in white-collar positions. Tension between blacks and whites over the shooting death of a black man by a car full of white men led to rioting in 1966, in which the national guard was called up, and the killing of a black man visiting for a conference by a police officer led to protests in 1967.⁷⁰ While integration took place in businesses and schools, the city continues to be divided by the river even today. Like many metropolitan areas, Dayton experienced urban flight, leading to a much greater concentration of the populace in the suburbs, though due to statutes mandating city employees must live within the city limits, there is a large population along the outer edge of the city. The inner city now is largely abandoned, with boarded up shops and buildings, but even the outer city and suburbs of Dayton are divided along racial lines with the blacks living in the outer city and suburbs to the west of Dayton and whites living in the north, south and east city and suburbs.

69 *ibid.*

70 *ibid.*

According to the United States Census, in 1990 the non-white population totaled 75,786 persons, 42% of the population of the city of Dayton, and by 2000, this number had grown to 77,503 persons, 47% of the population of the city. Of the minorities present in Dayton, African American residents make up the most significant population, approximately 43%, with 71,668 persons at the 2000 census, a decrease of 1,927 since 1990 and a proportional decrease of 3%. In 1990 Hispanic residents accounted for less than 1% of the population with a total of 1,356. That number more than doubled over the next decade totaling 1.6% by the 2000 census with 2,626 persons.

Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations

The Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations was formed to address racism in the Dayton area by creating dialogue on race. The Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations resulted from the National Call to Community. The mission of DDDR is to “lead in eradicating racism in the Miami Valley by building a community that values racial, religious, cultural, interdependence and differences among all residents.”⁷¹

DDRR developed its dialogue curriculum from work done by Hope in the Cities. This model calls for an honest conversation on race and race relations. The DDDR process hosts dialogue groups in homes over a 12-hour period, typically divided in 4 sessions.

Following this process the group will develop a project to pursue together that focuses on

⁷¹ Relations, Dayton Dialogue on Race. Mission/Vision Statement 2001 [cited March 1, 2008. Available from http://ww2.cityofdayton.org/ddrr/mission_vision.asp.

further building on the relationships built over the dialogue process.⁷² This model does not focus on eradicating racism, rather it is an awareness model that seeks to make participants aware of the “other” in a positive way.

DDRR works at a grass roots level to involve the community in its work. However, DDRR is a part of the City of Dayton’s Human Relations Commission. This organ of the city government was created to help foster better relations within the community, and as an extension of the Human Relations Commission, DDRR enhances this work by creating conversation between community groups.

Dayton before Reconciliation

The situation in Dayton prior to the implementation of reconciliation differed significantly from that of Portland. In order to understand the likelihood that Dayton’s situation would have evolved into conflict, the conflict indicators will be examined using statistical data, interview results and content analyses.

In Dayton, a total of fourteen individuals were interviewed. Of the individuals interviewed, twelve were associated with the dialogue process. Of the twelve who were a part of the process, all acted as participants in a dialogue. Three were a part of the early formation of the Dayton Dialogues on Race Relations. Seven were participants and later facilitators, and two were only participants.

⁷² Cities, Hope in the. 2000. Dialogue Guide and Workbook. Richmond, VA.

Also of importance is understanding statistical data on Dayton, as the city has experienced urban flight and consists of not just that which is inside the city limit but the greater metropolitan area as well; statistical information that encompasses the entire area is limited. Data provided is for the City of Dayton unless it is noted to be for the Metropolitan Statistical Area. The Metropolitan Statistical Area is not used throughout as a change in 2005 in reporting changed the breadth of the statistical area from the Dayton-Springfield MSA to the Dayton MSA, significantly affecting the size of the area covered.

Indicator 1: Collective Incentive

When asked to describe the need for reconciliation in Dayton, the segregation of Dayton and the community divisions that resulted were the most pervasive issues brought forward. Since Dayton is divided by the Miami River, the segregation of Daytonians across the river results in both residential and social segregation.

Indicator 2: Capacity for Joint Action

In Dayton the high level of concentration of the African American community in the West side of Dayton clearly lays out proximate capacity. Data from the 2000 Census shows that in a large portion of West Dayton, African American residents account for between 82 and 97.8 percent of all residents living in that area.⁷³ By comparison, in the

⁷³ Census, United States. 2000 [cited March 1, 2008] . Available from www.census.gov.

majority of East Dayton, African Americans account for less than 10 percent of the area's populace.

In addition to concentration, Dayton lacked cross-community ties. According to interviewees, urban sprawl led to a lack of community connection between those who lived in the city and those outside of it. Additionally, many interviewees felt that suburban life did not lend itself to community connection. One interviewee suggested for what community there was, that sense of community in Dayton was drawn "along racial lines." Since the African American community in Dayton was highly concentrated and connected within that community, the capacity for joint action was present in Dayton prior to the intervention.

Indicator 3: External Opportunities

In Dayton, external opportunity for rebellion was not largely present. However, multiple organizations were making efforts toward peaceful resolution of racial issues. In addition to the work of the Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations, the Peace Bridge project was working to bring together Daytonians across the bridge that divides the city through an annual peace march to the Peace Bridge.⁷⁴

Indicator 4: Unequally Distributed Income

⁷⁴ Three Honored at Peace Bridge Ceremony. 2001. Associated Press.

According to the 2000 census, the average per capita income amongst Daytonians was \$15,547, with white Daytonians earning an average of \$17,266 and African American Daytonians earning an average of \$13,266. In addition to this unequal income distribution, approximately 23% of Dayton's population lived below the poverty level during 1999, almost one quarter of the city's entire population.⁷⁵

Indicator 5: Security

When asked if they felt safe in Dayton prior to the implementation of the reconciliation process, there was not a consensus. Some individuals said they personally felt safe, but provided the caveat that many Daytonians did not perceive the city to be safe. These interviewees thought this to be perpetrated by media sensationalizing violent crime. Others suggested that due to "youth violence", "drugs", and "drive by shootings" they did not feel safe in Dayton. Despite these feelings around safety, many interviewees said Dayton was still a great place to raise a family.

Indicator 6: Social Cohesion

The high level of clustering amongst African American residents allows for a greater sense of connection in this community. However, when asked to discuss levels of community connectivity in Dayton, interviewees expressed low levels of community connection, which they directly related to "white flight" and "urban blight." The decreased proximity of members of the white community to their neighbors that results

⁷⁵ Census, United States. 2000 [cited March 1, 2008] . Available from www.census.gov.

from moving to the suburbs decreased the interviewees' sense of connection to others as well as the city at large as they ceased going into the city. One community member noted that community connection heightened in "tragedy" or "urgency," citing an example of an entire neighborhood coming together to protest the proposed construction of a new housing area.

Indicator 7: Governance

In Dayton, Ohio, the priority board system allows for neighborhood level governance and community activism. A few of the individuals interviewed cited this system of governance as a particularly effective one, allowing people to have a say at a very basic level. Voter turnout for November elections in Dayton is particularly high in Presidential election years with 63.9% turnout in 2000 and 73.4% in 2004 while lower in state and local government election years.⁷⁶

Indicator 8: Contradictions in Attitudes and Behaviors

When reflecting on the situation in Dayton prior to the implementation of the Dayton Dialogues on Race Relations, racial division was brought forward as the most important issue. Individuals cited racist attitudes by both groups as well as structural issues that contributed to the community tensions. Segregation in the mid 1900's led to the separate development of East and West Dayton to accommodate separate black and white populations. However, upon the legal end to segregation, the west end developments

⁷⁶ Elections, Montgomery County Board of. Elections Results 2008 [cited March 4, 2008]. Available from http://www.mcoho.org/revize/montgomery/boe/election_results.html.

quickly declined as black Daytonians took advantage of their new found ability to frequent historically white establishments on the east side. This led to the closing of many of the businesses on the west side of town, and these buildings remained vacant for years, allowing for the deterioration of what was once the most vibrant part of the African American community.

Reconciliation Turning Points in Dayton

During the reconciliation process in Dayton, there were no large community wide shifts that occurred. Rather, interviewees cited individual changes as the most frequently observed changes. New experiences, perceptions and understandings marked the Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations. Several participants noted that the dialogue process was their first experience in the home of a member of the other race. Many participants noted that their perceptions of the other race and their experiences changed significantly as their fellow dialogue members shared their own stories. Finally, the chance to hear these stories gave participants an opportunity to understand the other group in a new way.

In addition to these changes in attitude, the DDDR process gives dialogue groups the opportunity to pursue an action plan that focuses on putting into action the attitudinal changes experienced as a part of the dialogue. In Dayton, prior to DDDR, the African American soldiers who served in World War II had never been honored. As a part of a group action plan, DDDR participants recognized, in a formal ceremony at the Peace

Bridge, the road that African Americans had paved during the Second World War.⁷⁷

According to participants, other action plans included the introduction of African American literature into a suburban school and work with children on race relations.

Dayton After Reconciliation

While the Dayton Dialogues on Race Relations have impacted the community, many of the changes have been at the individual level. Additionally, the ongoing nature of DDDR's work stipulates that this section does not focus on *after* the dialogues as much as it does on the more developed phases. However, to make sure that the community impact and other community changes are covered, this section will discuss the indicators in recent years.

Indicator 1: Collective Incentive

Since the dialogues began there have been no significant changes in the segregation of the Dayton area. However, the economic tensions in the community have grown exponentially as the international market declines and jobs are exported. Additionally, foreclosures have impacted the Dayton area in a significant way. Each of these tensions will be discussed in greater detail in the *Changes in Dayton* section.

Indicator 2: Capacity for Joint Action

⁷⁷ Three Honored at Peace Bridge Ceremony. 2001. Associated Press.

While proximity has not changed since the dialogues began, capacity for positive action has increased. Participants in the dialogues cite an increased willingness to discuss issues of race and an “acceptance to talking about history”. Additionally, participants feel more connected to others “they might not otherwise” be connected to. While the larger Dayton community still lacks connection to each other, these small ties are being forged as a result of the dialogues.

Indicator 3: External Opportunities

Like Portland, the work of Hope in the Cities has allowed the dialogues to be introduced to the Dayton area. Additionally, the Dayton Peace Accords and the Dayton Peace Museum have added a backdrop of peaceful relations to the city. However, the adverse impact of the current economic situation coupled with the shift in American industry has left Dayton with many unanswered economic tensions.

Indicator 4: Unequally Distributed Income

While race-based income statistics are only available at the decennial census, the 2006 American Community Survey indicates that the percentage of Daytonians living in poverty has increased 5.5% since 2000 raising this number from 23% to 28.5%. Per capita income in Dayton has risen slightly since 2000 from \$15,547 to \$15,755. Without decennial census estimates of difference in income by race it is difficult to know whether the disparity in income distribution continues to exist.

Indicator 5: Security

Amongst those interviewed, most saw no shift in perceptions of safety in Dayton. One non-participant suggested that Dayton's "pan-handling permits" led to what he perceived to be an increased fear of downtown for families and young women. Others felt that the number of "innocent people being shot" made people no longer feel safe in downtown Dayton. FBI crime statistics for the city of Dayton show a slight increase in violent crime and a decrease in property crime between 2003 and 2006.⁷⁸

Indicator 6: Social Cohesion

When asked to remark on changes in community connection since the dialogues began, three of those participants interviewed suggested that the community is beginning to take more pride in itself. Additionally, participants noted an increase in relationships within the community. Interviewees were quick to note, however that the increase in connection was at the individual level with those who participated in the dialogue. At least five of the individuals interviewed felt there was no sense of community in Dayton. One of these individuals credited her lack of connection to Dayton to the fact that she does not "get involved."

In recent years there have been some attempts to revitalize areas of downtown Dayton that had been deserted as a result of "white flight." This has resulted in new high-priced condominiums and the re-development of some parts of town. However, as no members

⁷⁸ FBI. U.S. Crime Statistics All Years [cited March 3, 2008] Available from www.fbi.gov/research.htm.

of these newly formed communities were interviewed, information on the sense of connection in these communities cannot be derived.

Indicator 7: Governance

This research led to no indication of changes in governance in Dayton.

Indicator 8: Contradictions in Attitudes and Behaviors

While community wide changes in Dayton cannot be noted, amongst participants interviewed there existed a unanimous belief that the dialogue process changed the attitudes of participants. Specifically, they felt that the dialogue gave them the ability to look at things differently. The action plans continued to be put into place and effect change in the community. One participant noted, however, that despite the attitude changes that the dialogue produced, when individuals left the dialogue to go back to their segregated part of town, without the opportunity to put the new beliefs to practice, she felt they would fail to develop. This individual felt that the business-based dialogues were especially valuable for helping to counter this, as they provided a forum to continue the work.

While some changes were made at the individual level, a recent school levy stood out to many interviewees as a symbol of the still racist nature of the city. The recently failed school levy would have provided funds for largely African American Dayton City

Schools. Many expressed the belief that the levy had failed because Daytonians did not want to dedicate these funds to African American youth.

Changes in Dayton

In recent years Dayton has fallen victim to the effects outsourcing and economic decline have had on many mid-western cities in the United States. A city built on the back of industrial growth, the outsourcing of industry jobs to other countries has left many Daytonians, who attained their jobs straight out of high school, without the education and skills needed to remain a part of the workforce in these changing times. As tensions grow surrounding this new economic burden, many of the interviewees feared that this would result in new racial tension as resentment grows against those who still have jobs.

With no end to the decline of American industrialism in sight, this tension in the Miami River Valley will only continue to grow. Additionally, increases in Hispanic immigration to the area begin to threaten the already scarce jobs. The Dayton Dialogues are currently structured to only address African American/Caucasian American conflict. As the dialogue work continues these new economic concerns may threaten the advances currently being made.

7. Comparative Analysis

In the mid to late 1990's both Dayton, Ohio and Portland, Oregon were experiencing racial tension. Dayton's experience, much more apparent on the surface was one of segregation, while Portland's experience was one of unknown white privilege. Both experiences derived from a history of racist laws and regulations, and this shadow hung over the affected communities. The reconciliation work done in both cities had positive effects, but the limitations of those effects must not be left unspoken.

In Portland and Dayton a history of racist laws and their effects on the African American community formed a traumatic experience that the minority groups saw as being responsible for their current day situation. In Portland the exclusionary laws that prevented African Americans and other minority groups from moving to the community were the chosen traumas of those group.⁷⁹ The perceived and real effects of those policies that continue today in difference of opportunity and treatment formed the bases for potential conflict in the Portland area. In Dayton, the segregationist policies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries formed a chosen trauma for the African American community in Dayton. While no longer legislated directly, the continued segregation of

⁷⁹ Volkan, Vamik. 1998. Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas. Paper read at International Association of Group Psychology.

the city as a direct result of those policies allow the trauma to continue today as bases for future conflict.

At the time of the introduction of the reconciliation-based initiatives in both Dayton and Portland, many of the conflict indicators were present. In Portland, collective incentive existed in the need to address disparate treatment, unequal income and decreased security arising from issues of racial profiling. The close proximity of the African American community in North East and the close sense of community in that enclave represents a capacity and social cohesion that would make it possible for this specific piece of the Portland community to come together to create change. However, the lack of ties to other groups, such as the Hispanic community, take away from the power of what could be a partner for change, and without cross cutting ties to the white community, the need for peaceful coexistence decreases. While members of minority communities recognized that problems existed, many white Portlanders were (and continue to be) unaware of differences between the groups. While some conflict indicators were present, the level of civic participation in Portland and what interviewees expressed as “a general willingness to talk about things” it is unlikely that without a significant trigger, such as another incident of police use of excessive force, that the tensions in Portland would become violent.

In Dayton, the segregation of the city, disparity in income and continued lack of resources in the African American community presented the collective need to address

these issues. To a greater degree than Portland, the concentration of African Americans on the west side of Dayton and the sense of community that was drawn along racial lines provided the capacity to act as a single group. Additionally, the lack of cross-cutting ties across racial lines created a situation in which neither group “needed” the other to continue to exist. In Dayton the conflict indicators existed at a stronger level than in Portland prior to the start of the processes. The “sense of hopelessness,” as one participant put it, of a city divided so heavily along racial lines creates an immense feeling of need for change.

In both Dayton and Portland, through the influence of Hope in the Cities, dialogue processes began as a way of addressing the need for racial reconciliation. The Hope in the Cities model of reconciliation holds these values at its core: “honest conversation leading to new partnerships among individuals of every viewpoint; personal responsibility deciding to move beyond blame, denial and personal pain to implement constructive action and offer leadership towards social transformation; acts of acknowledgement and reconciliation of specific racial history and its impact on the communal life.”⁸⁰ In both Dayton and Portland, these values come through in both the goals and outcomes of the projects undertaken.

In neither city were the effects of the reconciliation processes community-wide effects. Rather, individuals’ attitudes and perceptions changed as a result of the experience, leading to the implementation of new methods of addressing “others.” In both processes

⁸⁰ Cities, Hope in the. 2004. Brochure.

participants noted a change in understandings of the other group. While in Dayton, the participants felt that the action plans had an impact on the community, in both processes participants noted that any effects on the community as a whole would have to be the result of the impact of the process on the participants. Having currently reached no less than 3,000 participants in Dayton and 4,000 in Portland in less than a decade of work, the reconciliation process is slowly reaching into these communities.

Since the implementation of these processes some of the conflict indicators have been affected in a positive way. In both communities, cross-cutting ties have been created between the races, creating social cohesion across races. This has opened doors of communication between individuals. Additionally, participants perceive the involvement of important officials as also opening doors at the policy level for discussion of these issues and the implementation of policy change. Some policies, such as the offering of dialogue to businesses and government employees in both cities, can be seen as a direct result of the work of the reconciliation processes. Other changes, such as discussions around racial profiling in Portland and schools in Dayton, may not be a direct result of the reconciliation processes, but many participants feel these changes are a result of an increased willingness to discuss issues of race and privilege.

The increase in communication represents an increased capacity for joint action across races to address issues. This positive increase in ties to the other community points to an increase in the ability to work together to address problems. Additionally, the outside

influence provided by Hope in the Cities' model and the support they continue to offer to the organizations shows a willingness to pursue peaceful conflict resolution.

Unfortunately, while some of the conflict indicators have been positively affected by the reconciliation process, like most conflicts, the conflicts in Portland and Dayton did not remain static waiting for the completion of this process. New tensions have been introduced into both communities in recent years, ones that threaten to undermine the progress being made by these organizations. In Portland, gentrification is beginning to disperse the once strong African American community. This process has brought an increase in feelings of resentment toward new residents (mostly white) and the dispersal of the once cohesive African American community. In Dayton, the economic decline of the American mid-west has resulted in a decrease in available jobs in the Dayton area. This situation has created tension amongst the races as the groups compete for available jobs, according to some interviewees, "blaming the other" for the inability to find work.

In conclusion, the reconciliation processes implemented in Portland and Dayton weakened the indicators of conflict in both cities. This leads to the conclusion that reconciliation processes do have a preventive effect on conflict manifestation. However, it is important to note that this effect is not necessarily a constant one and can be impeded by the introduction of new bases for conflict.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

The reconciliation processes implemented in Dayton and Portland had significant impacts on the participants. In each situation, connections were improved leading to better communication across groups. However, the ever-changing nature of conflict leads to the conclusion that reconciliation processes must be adapted to address the changing needs of a community.

In both Portland and Dayton, the reconciliation process addressed in a significant way some of the initial race related needs of the community. In Portland, an awareness of white privilege and the effects it has on the African American community were raised. In Dayton, an understanding of the segregation of the city and differences in opportunity were understood. Through group action and government awareness policies were implemented to affect these issues.

However, as the needs of both cities have shifted, the dialogues have remained focused on the initial issues of race relations. In Portland, rather than addressing gentrification, the model has remained focused on the history of racist legislation and its impact. While gentrification in some ways is a piece of this legacy, the failure to address it has allowed the issue to continue to grow. In Dayton, rather than address the new economic issues and job competition with Hispanic immigrants, the dialogue has remained focused on

Dayton's segregationist past and black-white relations. The failure to address these issues has resulted in increased tensions amongst the races regarding economic opportunity and a new race based conflict between the African American and Hispanic populations.

In order to fully understand the community wide effects of such a reconciliation process further research is needed. The use of retrospective opinion and perception of a conflict situation creates difficulty in measuring the success of such a process. The interviews of participants in the process brought forward their perceptions of the changes over the course of the process, yet community members who were interviewed had no point of reference for any community change.

In addition to the need for a true pre and post-test of the community, the ability to follow-up with participants after the process had taken place would have provided better perspective. Due to confidentiality of the processes and a lack of records for participants, access to non-facilitator participants was difficult to achieve. A study that coincides with the process would be better able to address some of these constraints.

Overall, the organizations that carried out these reconciliation processes are effectively addressing misperceptions and increasing awareness in the communities in which they are operating. In order to achieve more comprehensive reconciliation in these communities, the following recommendations are provided:

1. Monitor new conflicts as the process continues
2. Gauge the community need for addressing new conflict
3. Implement practices that will incorporate new tensions into the dialogue conversation.

While these recommendations would allow the communities to continue to address race relations and community conflict in a more comprehensive and positive way, these organizations may lack the capacity to carry out such work. Both organizations are staffed at the most minimal level, with all facilitators working as volunteers. Without increases in funding to support such activities, little ability exists to pursue such initiatives. Therefore, more must be done to highlight the successes and raise the importance of such work before policy makers and funding sources in order to continue to pursue racial reconciliation and community peace building in the United States.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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