Commentary

The Constructive Management of Conflict

Developing the Knowledge and Crafting the Practice

Morton Deutsch

Let me begin by indicating how pleased and excited I was to read the four chapters in this part. They are superb! They deal with fundamental questions in an original, thoughtful way and provide new insights into the issues they discuss.

The chapters by Rubin and Levinger and by Faure examine issues fundamental to both theory and practice in the area of conflict. Each chapter addresses different facets of the question, how far can we generalize? Rubin and Levinger focus on the social actors—the individual, the group, the organization, and the nation. They raise the issue of how and when it is appropriate to generalize from theoretical and empirical research on interpersonal conflict to international conflict (and vice versa). Faure is concerned with a similar question: how appropriate is it to generalize across cultures? Until recently, the field of conflict resolution has been largely a product of Western scholars. Are theory and practice in this area so influenced by implicit Western values—ways of knowing, social norms—that they do not have applicability in other cultures?

In the course I have been teaching in conflict resolution for many years, I deal with the issue of generalizability in the following way. I tell my students that there are two kinds of theorists: the picayune and the grandiose. The picayune mainly does not generalize
beyond the data, so his or her generalizations are very limited; they are likely to be valid but not very useful. I identify myself as a grandiose theorist, one rashly seeking to develop ideas that apply from cave people to space people, from interpersonal to international conflict, from the aborigines in Kakadu to the sophisticates on Park Avenue. This is grandiose indeed!

I also tell my students that one advantage of a grandiose approach to theorizing is that other scholars will be quite happy to indicate the areas in which these generalizations are inappropriate. Unfortunately, this has not been quite true in the field of conflict resolution. For the most part, as Rubin and Levinger indicate, it has been assumed that the same intellectual framework and the same concepts apply with different kinds of social actors and in different cultures. Rubin and Levinger and Faure, in their respective chapters, challenge this assumption.

Rubin and Levinger, in their pathbreaking essay, do more than challenge this assumption; they describe a number of ideas that seem applicable across different types of social actors and some that do not. Their analysis provides a valuable model for scholars who wish to identify further similarities and differences with respect to conflict processes across various kinds of social actors. It also provides important cautions for those who seek to generalize from one substantive area to another.

Faure raises fundamental questions about the field of conflict. He makes the case that the concepts of this field primarily reflect the culture of North American scholars, who have been its predominant theorists and researchers. With convincing examples, he illustrates how the concepts employed in the study of conflict do not mean the same from one culture to another and are not value-free. Faure is not pessimistic about the possibilities of developing the study of conflict so that it has more universality, and he outlines several approaches for doing so. One such approach involves generalizing “symbolic figures” that express similar meanings in various cultures as a way of creating intercultural concepts. This point needs further elaboration.

In the language of the paragraph that you're suggesting (and I strongly believe about the need for an abstract language of conflict, determined by their relationship to rules of correspondence and constructs to the concrete data), is Lewinian terminology, constructs, and relational data are similar to color of two genotypically identical variation of the acidity of the salt given construct (for example, different ways in which the other constructs with which it interacts).

My brand of grandiosity is at the level of phenomena. It is my constructs and then be able to speak about data that are applicable across different types of social actions. The terms vary considerably from cultural actor to another, from one social construct would be manifested differently and would be expressed differently to the other constructs in the field.

For example, in my model, the ideas in my theories of conflict resolution are universally applicable to think that promotively can exist in different cultures as well as between people. It is the same types of relationships have different names, but that the relationship be...
In the language of the philosophy of science, Faure appears to be suggesting (and I strongly agree) the need for the development of an abstract language of constructs whose meanings are partly determined by their relationships with other constructs and partly by rules of correspondence that link some of the theoretical constructs to the concrete data of observation and experiment. In Lewinian terminology, constructs are like genotypes, and the observational data are similar to phenotypes. A given genotype can be expressed in many different types of phenotypes (for example, the color of two genotypically identical hydrangeas will differ as a function of the acidity of the soils in which they are planted), and a given construct (for example, aggression) can be manifested in many ways depending on the environment as well as the state of the other constructs with which it is interrelated.

My brand of grandiosity is at the level of constructs, not at the level of phenomena. It is my hope that our field can develop constructs and then be able to specify the relationships among them so that they are applicable across cultures and time, and to different types of social actions. The phenomena to which one would relate the underlying constructs ("interdependence," "trust," "hostility," "influence," "goal," "cooperation," "competition," "conflict") would vary considerably from culture to culture, from one type of social actor to another, from one situation to another. Thus, hostility would be manifested differently in Japan than in the United States and would be expressed differently between nations than between people. But presumably hostility would have the same basic relation to the other constructs in the theory in the various contexts.

For example, in my most peacockish moments, I consider that the ideas in my theories of cooperation, competition, and conflict resolution are universally applicable. Thus, I speculate that it is useful to think that promatively or contrivedly interdependent relations can exist in different cultures and in the relations between nations, as well as between people. It is also useful to theorize that these two types of relationships have different antecedents and consequences but that the relationship between the type of interdependence and
its antecedents and consequences are structurally analogous in different social contexts. My theories are neither rigorous nor complete, so it is difficult to be truly serious about their universal applicability. What I mean to propose here is an aspiration that, as a field, we should be bold enough to strive for even if it turns out to be unattainable.

The Pruitt and Olczak essay is a brilliant exposition of a multifaceted approach to intractable conflicts and also to what I have termed malignant conflicts (Deutsch, 1983). They are the first to articulate so fully and clearly a comprehensive approach to these difficult disputes.

My own approach to such conflict was less explicitly articulated. It arose from dual careers as a social psychologist and psychoanalyst. I have tried to combine in my practice as a therapist— as well as in my theoretical and experimental work—one knowledge and insights that come from each of these areas. My work on conflict resolution as a social psychologist was strongly influenced by images of marital couples in conflict, and my therapeutic work was influenced by our studies of conflict, bargaining, and negotiation as well as by psychoanalytic models of intrapsychic conflict. Although in my practice I often had to deal with “intractable” conflicts, my social psychology work was not specifically directed toward such conflicts. However, I have written several essays—three in relation to the Cold War (Deutsch, 1961, 1962, 1983), one in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflicts (Deutsch, 1988), and one general essay (Deutsch, 1994)—that directly relate to these matters. Research by several of my former students (Kressel, 1985; Gephart, 1993; Herschlag, 1993) also are concerned with the processes involved in escalating and de-escalating conflicts in the marital context.

The approach of my students and myself has been more limited than that of Pruitt and Olczak. Our emphases are on the factors contributing to the escalation of conflicts and the social psychological processes involved in their persistence and destructiveness.

Our suggestions for intervention are derived from a therapeutic model. We are not suggesting that the insights to be gained by a therapeutic approach, but they provide another dimension to the MACBE model, which should be more helpful in seeking to understand or influence.

There is one point about which I believe we all agree: the inherent quality of a conflict is so strong that the prophecies of each side must be realized. This means that each side blames the other for its own losses, and each side believe that its own hostility and behavior toward the other party are more dangerous, and untrustworthy and that its own perceptions become reality. Thus, each side perceives the misperception for each side. This results in the misperception for each side, as it does not believe that its own intentions, as being potentially misperceived, are based on an incorrect causal attribution. Although I do not think that its own part in maintaining the conflict, and how these hostile actions reify the conflict, I do think that fulfillment of prophecies derived from one's perspective are enmeshed. An important intervention is to help the conflict negotiators break this vicious circle so that the conflict problem-solving process can proceed.

The chapter by Ellen Richard provides a fine overview of the current research on conflict in the United States, it also pr
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Our suggestions for intervention in such conflicts borrow heavily
from a therapeutic model. Pruitt and Olczak are also indebted to
the insights to be gained from therapy in their multimodal
approach, but they provide a very useful organizing heuristic in their
MACBE model, which should be of enormous value to anyone
seeking to understand or intervene in intractable conflicts.

There is one point about such disputes that I would stress some-
what more than they do. The dynamics of a malignant conflict have
the inherent quality of a folie à deux, where the self-fulfilling
prophecies of each side mutually reinforce one another. Each side
blames the other for its own malevolent actions. Each comes to
believe that its own hostility, its own aggressive and defensive
behaviors toward the other result from the other’s provocative, dan-
gerous, and untrustworthy actions. In an intractable conflict, these
perceptions become reality. After a while, it is not a distortion or a
misperception for each side to see the other as having malevolent
intentions, as being potentially dangerous and untrustworthy. The
conflict process has made the perceptions become reality. As a
result, both sides are right to think that the other is hostile.

The blaming and denunciation of the other, which are so un-
helpful but so common in this kind of conflict, may come to be
 grounded in accurate perceptions of the other’s behavior, but they
are based on an incorrect causal attribution. Neither side recognizes
its own part in maintaining the malignant relations nor understands
how these hostile actions result from the mutually reinforcing self-
fulfilling prophecies derived from the conflict process in which they
are enmeshed. An important early strategic objective of an inter-
vention is to help the conflicting parties understand the nature of
this vicious circle so they can stop the blaming and begin the
problem-solving process. Pruitt and Olczak’s multimodal approach
suggests various avenues of approach for achieving this objective.

The chapter by Ellen Raider is a gem. Not only does it give a
fine overview of the current status of conflict resolution training in
the United States, it also provides a framework for thinking about
the major issues pertinent to such training—particularly in the
schools. Raider does a masterful job in raising questions related to
training that should pique the interest of theorists and researchers—
as well as practitioners—in this area.

Very much stimulated by discussions I have had with Ellen
Raider, I have begun to do some thinking about some of the social
psychological issues that relate to training (Deutsch, 1994). There
appear to be some important differences between social skills and
skills that can be employed without taking into account the others
with whom you are interdependent. Social problem solving may uti-
Aize the skills involved in individual problem solving, but more is
required if one is to be effective in the social situation. There is a
valuable summary in Raider’s chapter of the methods that are used
in teaching skills, nonsocial as well as social. However, it is evident
from her discussion that there are basic theoretical as well as applied
research questions that need to be asked and answered before we
have a good characterization of the nature of social skills. Clarifi-
cation here would be enormously helpful to those who are training
practitioners.

Also, it is apparent from Raider’s chapter that there is an
appalling lack of research on the various aspects of training in the
field of conflict resolution. We haven’t begun to collect the data
that are needed to begin to answer such questions as: who benefits
and how (including how much and for how long), through what
mediating processes, as a result of receiving what type of training, for
how long, by what kind of trainers and training, in what sorts of cir-
cumstances. This incomplete outline is an illustration of the many
different kinds of questions that need research before training in
this area is well grounded.

Many of us entered the field of conflict resolution because we
wanted to participate in developing the knowledge and practice
that could contribute to the prevention or “pacification” of the
types of destructive conflicts so prevalent in the world today at the
interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels. Development of

the knowledge, professionalism, and compassion in
educate children and adults. It is a process that would be an important contribution to collective
humane.

Note

1. Ideally the constructs would be based on the
existing language. Currently, the language of
conflict is much further advanced than the widely used language to

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the knowledge, professional skills, and appropriate organizations to educate children and adults to manage conflicts more constructively would be an important contribution to making our world more humane.

Note
1. Ideally the constructs would not be labeled with words from any existing language. Currently, terms tend to introduce the cultural biases implicit in the language used. However, until the study of conflict is much further advanced, the advantages of employing a widely used language to label constructs outweigh its disadvantages.

References
Commentary

Justice

Why We Need a New Moral Philosophy

Morton Deutsch

One of my earliest memories focuses on injustice. I was about three-and-a-half years old. We were all staying at a resort in the Catskills, and a counselor organized a game of softball for the older kids (the six-to-eight-year-olds). I was excluded from it because I was too young and was asked to stay on the side. I was very mad, and when a foul ball was hit near me, I recall picking it up, running with it, and then throwing it as far as I could in a direction away from the players.

I have always had a passionate feeling about injustice and being excluded. I was the youngest of four sons and, having skipped grades several times, I was the youngest in my classes throughout my school years. In many situations, I was excluded or was the underdog. As a result, I developed a strong identification with and empathy for the downtrodden in the world. When I was exposed to Marxist thinking at college (The City College of New York) during the Depression, I evolved a conceptual framework for thinking systematically about injustice and a political orientation for changing society so as to reduce injustices.

I am delighted that all of the excellent chapters in this part combine serious thought and passion about injustice. I now offer some reflection about each of them.

The chapter by Folger, Sheppard, and Buttram delights my theoretical persona. It is intellectually elegant and a substantial con-
tribution to the social psychology of justice. Not only does it generalize some ideas with which I have been associated but it also develops an expanded new framework for thinking about both theoretical and practical issues in this area. In response to this chapter, I offer two comments: one about the meaning of equality and the other about the conflict between equality and equity norms of justice.

The S-A-N framework is useful in emphasizing that the recognition of individuality is an important aspect of justice (at least in Western societies). However, I would question their statement that an equal distribution implies that everyone receives the same outcome. As I have stated elsewhere (1985), it is important to recognize the difference between egalitarianism and pseudoegalitarianism. The emphasis in egalitarianism is equality, not sameness. Advocates of equality and egalitarianism are primarily opposed to invidious distinctions among individuals or groups but do not assume that all distinctions are invidious. (See Deutsch, 1985, pp. 41-43, for a more detailed statement.) The insistence on treating people identically, without regard to circumstance, is pseudoegalitarianism, which often masks basic doubts or ambivalence about commitment to egalitarian values. In experimental research, same treatment is often the most convenient or only way of operationalizing equality, but in everyday life, equal treatment is often not same treatment. It is not equal treatment, for example, to require all students to take an identical intelligence test in Spanish whether or not they are proficient in Spanish.

In their excellent discussion, Folger, Sheppard, and Buttram rightly emphasize the many possible conflicts that can arise among the different norms of justice. One particular conflict has been much discussed in the social science literature: that between equity and equality, that is, between economic efficiency and solidarity. As Tyler and Belliveau note, economists commonly assume that there is a tradeoff between equality and efficiency. However, research studies by my students and myself (Deutsch, 1985) indi-

cate that this is not necessarily so. Greater efficiency when successful norm of equity often induces cooperation.

However, I confess that my thinking on the psychological orientations as economic social relations, in contrastional or solidarity-oriented is characterized by the indication that each of these two distinctive cognitive, motivational, and socioemotional orientations, that groups—and also families—recognize task and socioemotional leadership, one step further and a person member has internalized both orientations, to bear the relevant orientation at the right time. Studies show that when negotiating with a car salesperson, one can play an entirely different psychological role that I have my interactions with my

In light of their apt summary of this chapter, I am puzzled by Tyler and my approach to social justice as the exchange. As I indicated in my introductory comments, I started to read the literature on this topic was appalled by the narrowness and lack of attention to the economic or social exchange. My approach is more broad-based. Sheppard, and Buttram state, a fundamental understanding of the economic values, although important values with which a system of justice

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is their emphasis on personal identity as one of the important values in a system of justice; their emphasis is on self- and social esteem rather than on such other aspects of personal identity as gender, occupation, and race. Second, they stress the importance of procedural justice in affecting self-esteem. Third, they indicate the significance of whether one is treated fairly and with respect in determining one's commitment and loyalty to relationships and groups.

There is little doubt that most scholars would agree with the authors' theses and be grateful, as I am, for a more explicit articulation of these views. However, I do differ with their opinion that distributive justice is concerned with the distribution of commodities or instrumental values while procedural justice is more specifically related to personal identity. Teachers, parents, authorities, and peers frequently distribute evaluations, praise, and criticism that bear on self-esteem. And, as every parent knows, the distribution of commodities to their children (for example, pieces of chocolate cake at the dinner table) may have profound implications for self-esteem. Quite commonly, the distribution of resources has symbolic value relating to social and self-esteem that may be more significant than the substantive value of the resources. This is not to deny that respectful treatment by the person or group making the distribution may ameliorate some of the negative effects on those who receive relatively little of the substance or value being distributed.

Although I have written little about procedural justice as such, I have stressed its importance, even going so far as to suggest that it is "a key aspect of distributive justice, and it is reasonable to believe that the sense of injustice is more often aroused by complaints about the procedures involved in a distributive process than about the distributive values governing it" (1985, p. 35). From my current perspective, there is a two-way relation between procedural and distributive justice. Under the general heading of procedural justice, I would include such processes as decision-making procedures, the assignment of personnel to roles in the decision-making and distribution processes, the selection of the rules or criteria employed, and the measurement procedures and criteria. It is evident that the value as well as the actual distribution of resources can be very much affected by the processes by which decisions are made. Those who are not representative of the group, or the decision? Similar questions can be about the fairness of these procedures.

Much of practical politics is concerned with the relations among the decision-making procedures, measurement procedures, and so on, it income, security, education, status, and esteem) that will be distributed among groups. Unfortunately, there appear to be operating such that if one has little income and esteem is low, one is unlikely to participate in activities that might give rise to a positive example of the ethical strength that is able to be created by individuals acting in a systematic manner.

Michelle Fine is one of the socially responsive of my former students who has a thesis that I used to characterize on p. 31): "tough-minded and tendentious, she has the intellectual courage of much of social science by using the many would consider unorthodox methods to analyze the social world as she studies it."
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well as the actual distribution of any particular distributive value
can be very much affected by the various facets of procedural jus-
tice. Similarly, the various facets of procedural justice can be dis-
tributed in different ways depending on what canons of distributive
justice are employed. Thus, who should participate in the decision-
making process? Those who are most expert, those who are most
representative of the group, or those who are most affected by the
decision? Similar questions can be raised about each of the facets of
procedural justice.

Much of practical politics is concerned with distribution issues
related to procedural justice. If one’s political group can influence
the decision-making procedures, the personnel, the rules and mea-
surement procedures, and so on, it can affect the outcomes (such as
income, security, education, status, and health, as well as self-
esteeem) that will be distributed to one’s group relative to other
groups. Unfortunately, there appears to be a self-fulfilling prophecy
operating such that if one has little hope of being treated justly and
one’s self-esteem is low, one is unlikely to engage in the political
activities that might give rise to a more just society. Nevertheless,
as Nelson Mandela has demonstrated, a charismatic leader can pro-
vide a positive example of the hope, determination, and psycho-
logical strength that is able to break through the vicious cycle of
despair created by systematic injustice.

Michelle Fine is one of the most creative, challenging, and
socially responsive of my former students. She is well described by
the phrase that I used to characterize Kurt Lewin (Deutsch, 1992,
p. 31): “tough-minded and tender-hearted.” As her chapter indi-
cates, she has the intellectual toughness to challenge the scientism
of much of social science by using a methodology in her research
that many would consider unorthodox and a lyric writing style that
is suffused with humane values rather than the antiseptic manner of much academic prose.

The chapter by Fine and Wong focuses on an important question: why do victims of injustice often not "voice" their complaints or "exit" from their situations of injustice despite their awareness of being unfairly treated? The authors conclude that the institutional muzzling of protest (through biased or insensitive grievance procedures, retaliation, the potential damage to one's reputation and career, and so on) and the lack of better alternatives, combined with culturally indoctrinated beliefs in meritocratic individualism, are more likely to lead to alienation than high levels of overt outrage and protest. They emphasize that the ideology of meritocratic individualism inhibits the formation of a collective identity among those subjected to injustice by encouraging a focus on individuals, rather than on institutional policies, practices, and hierarchies. (I would use the phrase meritocratic and competitive individualism as a more inclusive label for the issues they discuss.)

Any social scientist whose ideas have been influenced by Marxist thought, as mine were, will have no difficulty accepting the validity of the perspective offered by Fine and Wong and will be delighted by their detailed analyses and vivid illustrations of their thesis. I strongly endorse their call for an activist project for a social psychology of justice.

I note one point in their chapter that has provoked further thought. As the authors indicate, acceptance of the ideology of meritocratic individualism can lead to self-blame. On the other hand, its rejection can contribute to the development of an awareness of oppression by societal and institutional polices and practices. The sense of being a victim, unable to exert any control over one's fate, can induce one to be alienated and to drop out, with ultimately harmful consequences, as illustrated by Fine and Wong in their description of school dropouts and women heroin addicts. I suggest that it can also lead to the role of being a victim, with such secondary gratifications as feeling superior to the oppressors and having an excuse for one's personal failings. It is the choice between adopting the victim role, the demand for a positive collective identity and sense of belonging, and practices.

However, even when this seems a choice, it does not revert to the role of victim. We live in institutions that largely determine our lives, not just the lives of the fortunate. People, there is still sufficient slippage in meritocratic individualism to work to shape a new social fabric that might provide a context for the success of others "proves" that they are actually capable of succeeding. This might involve recognizing the power of the collective in the successful stories of people who belong to groups with a history of oppression. The slack in the system can be filled by increased resources to challenge the notion of merit but also to forge a new set of ideals that must retain their psychological identity for the collective and not allow themselves to be seen as successful stories of others in the meritocratic system.

Susan Opotow's important paper has profound significance: under what conditions are people entitled to the just treatment they are due? It community are normally entitled to some of the horrors of moral exclusion that give rise to it. I shall reflect on two sides of her argument in her experimental study an for justice appears to be finite.

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ing an excuse for one’s personal failings. Ideally, instead of dropping
out or adopting the victim role, the downtrodden would develop a
positive collective identity and seek to change institutional policies
and practices.

However, even when this seems hopeless, the individual need
not revert to the role of victim. Within the context of a society and
institutions that largely determine the fate of different categories of
people, there is still sufficient slack in the system to permit merit-
ocratic individualism to work to some degree for some individuals.
This produces a dilemma: the “success” of some individual members
of a category of people who are objects of discrimination “proves”
to those in power that racism and sexism do not exist; the lack of
success of others “proves” that the unsuccessful people are inher-
ently incapable of succeeding. This dilemma need not be accepted
by people who belong to groups who are subjected to discrimina-
tion. The slack in the system can be used not only to achieve indi-
vidual success but also to forge a positive collective identity with
increased resources to challenge the system of injustice. However,
those who are successful despite the prevailing systemic injustices
must retain their psychological identities as a member of the col-
lective and not allow themselves to be seduced into believing that
the lack of success of others in their group is due to a lack of indi-
vidual merit.

Susan Opotow’s important paper is concerned with a question
of profound significance: under what conditions do we see others as
not entitled to the just treatment to which members of our moral
community are normally entitled? Her rich discussion illustrates
some of the horrors of moral exclusion as well as some of the con-
ditions that give rise to it. I shall not summarize her conclusions but
will instead comment on two side issues in her paper: the use of beet-
les in her experimental study and her statement that our capacity
for justice appears to be finite.

It was a very original and thought-provoking innovation to study
the conditions under which beetles would be included or excluded
from the moral community of the human subjects who participated in her experiment. However, in thinking about my own relations with beetles, it occurred to me that there is an ambiguity in some of her discussion, as well as in that of other scholars in this area. For example, Melvin Lerner (1980), in his discussion of the "just world" hypothesis, does not specify its limits of applicability. Are people motivated to treat all others justly or only those who are included in one's moral community? Similarly, Opotow does not make a sharp distinction between being excluded and not being included in one's moral community. Prior to reading Albert Schweitzer, I had not excluded beetles from my moral community; I simply had never thought to include them or even that they were relevant to it.

The category "not included" contains more than those who are excluded. Exclusion is a more active process. The odious actions that Opotow describes toward heretics, Jews, lepers, and other stigmatized groups were persecutions, not merely omissions of willingness to help others in distress. It is true that if I do not include beetles in my moral community, I am freer to take actions that disregard their well-being and that may even harm them inadvertently, but I am not likely to persecute them and feel justified in doing so.

As individuals, communities, and nations, we often fail to respond to others in distress. This is not necessarily because they are excluded from our moral community but rather because they are not included. We do not seek to harm them or justify their distress unless we feel guilty because we are not able to help them. As Opotow indicates, psychological distance makes us feel little obligation to treat "remote" others the way we treat those who are psychologically close. Implicitly she poses a key question: in an increasingly interdependent and hugely populated world, how can we develop a psychological sense of closeness toward those with whom we have no personal contact? How can we think globally but act locally? This is a vital topic insufficiently addressed by social scientists.

Opotow indicates our capacity for justice appears to be finite. If we were to be global in our inclusiveness and seek to respond to all those who need help—those in R oppressed, the poor, the homeless be overwhelmed. All of us face the capacity to respond helpfully to the world. Some people react to the dilemma by constricting their sense of our defense mechanisms to ward off helplessness induced by their limit to injustice. Hopefully, there are not those who maintain a lively awareness of their own, as well as their structively to injustice. My own is with an endless number of homeless York, is to limit my direct giving of several individuals in my immediate amounts to groups who are activating to the homeless, and to sur to eliminate homelessness. Never strategic moral choices, even in a intellectual foundation. My sense good thinking by moral philo in making the difficult moral as our awareness of injustices inci

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or justice appears to be finite. It ness and seek to respond to all those who need help—those in Rwanda, Sudan, Bosnia, Haiti, the oppressed, the poor, the homeless, the sick, and so on—we would be overwhelmed. All of us face moral dilemmas because of our finite capacity to respond helpfully to the many injustices we see in the world. Some people react to the discomfort produced by such dilemmas by constricting their sense of injustice and by employing various defense mechanisms to ward off the feelings of rage, guilt, or helplessness induced by their limited capacity to respond effectively to injustice. Hopefully, there are many others, including Susan Op tow, who maintain a lively awareness of injustice as they seek to expand their own, as well as their society's, capacity to respond constructively to injustice. My own tendency, for example, when faced with an endless number of homeless beggars on the streets of New York, is to limit my direct giving to small amounts of money to several individuals in my immediate neighborhood, to give substantial amounts to groups who are active and effective in providing assistance to the homeless, and to support legislation and social action to eliminate homelessness. Nevertheless, I feel that my tactical and strategic moral choices, even in this one area, do not have a solid intellectual foundation. My sense is that we are in desperate need of good thinking by moral philosophers and social scientists to aid us in making the difficult moral choices that we continuously face as our awareness of injustices increases.

References