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A Brand New Narrative: Social Attitudes Toward Conflict Resolution and Inefficiency in Marketing and Branding

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A Brand New Narrative:
Social Attitudes Toward Conflict Resolution and Inefficiency in Marketing and Branding

by

Emily Skinner

A Dissertation Presented to the
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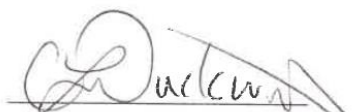

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College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

This dissertation was submitted by Emily K. Skinner under the direction of the chair of the dissertation committee listed below. It was submitted to the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and approved in partial fulfillment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Conflict Resolution Studies at Nova Southeastern University.
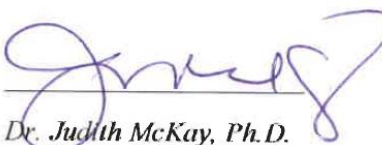
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Abstract

This study aimed to bring to light infield internal assumptions, expectations, and knowledge that may influence limitations on fostering an environment that can increase a social demand for conflict resolution services, knowledge, and practices. The research explored if the field's marketing is influenced by the macro social norms, assumptions, and expectations of conflict and if they influence how the field communicates with its market. The study's goal was to investigate if the marketing and the branding of conflict resolution are influenced by the social fact of conflict as negative. This study explored conscious and unconscious broad patterns of common-sense knowledge, vocabulary, and symbols connected with conflict and conflict resolution. The researcher conducted interviews with two groups: Group A, career conflict resolution practitioners, and Group B, the research outlined target market: millennials. Descriptive qualitative analysis was used to analyze the definitions, descriptions, and narratives of the groups as a means to illustrate the current status quo of the communication between the field and its audience. The research depicts a rebranding of the concepts of conflict and conflict resolution by career conflict resolution practitioners that deviated from the traditional views held by the outlined target market. The omnipresent frame of conflict as negative existed in both groups that informed binary relationships with other concepts such as conflict resolution. This research plays a role in outlining the current environment of the understanding of conflict and conflict resolution with the ultimate goal of improving best practices in marketing and branding for the future.

Chapter 1: Reflection on Building Powerful Communication

Background

The field of conflict resolution is a mix of theory and practice that provides an insight into how humans interact during conflict and a spectrum of tools to transform conflict. The field attempts to identify, address, and mitigate an innately human phenomenon that plagues our societies at a micro and macro level. Conflict is a phenomenon that is common in our everyday lives, so common it often blends into the background of daily life. Its omnipresence creates a gap that disconnects the individual from accessing his/her own role in conflict and the active process of conflict resolution on a daily basis. Typically, we do not consciously address our relationship with conflict, nor with conflict resolution, until conflict manifests into an entity that engineers change or creates a disruption that triggers a demand for attention. Upon this manifestation, ideas and concepts of conflict resolution are sought out as a means to manage the uncertainties of conflict. This pattern of behavior represents an overlooked facet of the relationship between the theory and practice of conflict resolution with the larger community. This commonly occurring phenomenon urges the field to address its ability to access and address the socially constructed and accepted understanding of conflict and conflict resolution as a means to influence a social demand for conflict resolution skills in everyday life. This understanding begs us to take an introspective look into the field of conflict resolution and societal views in order to address realistic expectations for cultivating a shift from a culture of conflict to a culture of conflict resolution.

The aim of this study was to bring light into infield internal assumptions, expectations, and knowledge that may influence limitations on fostering an environment

that can increase a social demand for conflict resolution services, knowledge, and practices. The researcher's intention was to explore if the field's marketing is influenced by the macro social norms, assumptions, and expectations of conflict and if they influence how the field communicates with its market. The goal was to investigate if the marketing of conflict resolution is influenced by the social fact of conflict as negative. The findings of this research can be used as a platform for further research in brand development for the field of conflict resolution. This study explored conscious and unconscious broad patterns of common sense knowledge, vocabulary, and symbols that create a lens for understanding the terms conflict and conflict resolution. One scholar observed, "by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events, seek to learn about them as phenomena in their own right" (Garfinkle, 1967, p. 1). The date observed from studying the relationship and communication between the field and can create a platform of knowledge for creating a braided narrative between the two entities.

A brand is only as significant as its perceived value. The marketing of conflict resolution and its benefits to society is grounded in creating shared meaning and language between the field and the larger society. This can be done by analyzing the current language and symbols against their understood meaning to identify where there are gaps in communication between the field and its market. This study attempted to uncover if the negative social fact of conflict influences the understanding of the marketing and branding of the outlined target market. This research served as an opportunity to flip the switch from analyzing conflict as a neutral third party and turn the spotlight on the field

of conflict resolution with the aim to provide insights into transformative change in the field for the next five, ten, and fifteen years.

Language served as an important part of this research. The reasoning for the use of the term 'field' in reference to the field of conflict resolution will be addressed to promote clarity. The researcher views conflict resolution as a multi-faceted entity that is still evolving. The term institution implies establishment, which is not an appropriate term nor description for conflict resolution at this time. Profession implies occupational titles and clearly defined career paths and standards, which does not adequately describe the field of conflict resolution at this time. For example, if someone would like to become a nurse, he/she would go to nursing school. Where in as, if someone studies conflict resolution, there is a vast array of possibilities for the application of that study in a wide array of fields, and a variety of standards from which a person can claim a title in conflict resolution. To be defined as a discipline is to be more centralized in an area of study, but conflict resolution breaks the boundaries on this term as well with its connections to practice. Therefore, the researcher utilizes the term 'a field' in this body of work, because it interweaves the space for education, professional activity, and growth without stringent boundaries.

<div align="center">**Context of the Researcher**</div>

This study was developed from the researcher's lived experience studying and working in the field of conflict resolution. One repeated pattern of behavior from the larger public, including the researcher's family and friends, in response to learning the researcher, was studying conflict resolution was a misunderstanding and/or lack of understanding of what conflict resolution was and what she did and studied. This was followed by experiences at job interviews where the researcher was asked to justify the

relevancy of her degree for the position. After years of this same repeated interaction and increasing defensiveness within the researcher, it led her to try to figure out, 'Why don't people know what I do?' This insistent repeated pattern of behavior represented a familiar model to the researcher. In conflict when underlying interests are not addressed, the conflict will resurface. The researcher used this model as an inspiration to try to understand the root causes of the issue.

The researcher utilized a marketing and business approach as a means to identify different variables informing the relationship between service providers and clients. This business approach intrigued the researcher because she wanted to get to the root causes of what was preventing the growth of her field. As a millennial herself, she watched the trending topics on twitter and videos go viral leaving her wondering what will trigger the spread of the field of conflict resolution. Additionally, the researcher identified and recognized the need and demand for conflict resolution services amongst her peers. She recognized the market is ripe in the need for conflict resolution services but lacked in the demand that sat at the epicenter of her problem. She developed this research as a means to uncover different variables that are informing that gap between need and demand as a means answer her question of, "why don't people know what I do?"

<p align="center">**Statement of the Problem**</p>

An important finding and trend about the current state of affairs in conflict resolution are reported in research that was conducted with its focus on mapping 'current and emerging career trends in conflict resolution' that interviewed 32 conflict resolution practitioners. This trend specified that "the field continues to have a high supply of providers, low market demand, and high social need (Rhudy, 2014, p. 3)." This informs

the basis of the problem that this research attempted to uncover, which is the current conscious and unconscious social conversations that may be informing a low market demand and yet a high social need. In layman terms, people don't know what we do, so people don't seek us out, thus representing the break in the supply and demand cycle. The syllogism representation of the argument follows the classic representation of 'If A, Then B; If B, Then C; Therefore, If A, Then C'. If people do not know what conflict resolution is, then they won't be inclined to actively seek out conflict resolution services. If people do not actively seek out conflict resolution services, then the demand for conflict resolution services will remain low. Therefore, if people do not know what conflict resolution is, then the demand for conflict resolution services will remain low.

The next layer of the problem was to identify and describe similarities and differences between the conflict resolution field and the larger community. In an attempt to address this aspect, the researcher used a business rule of thumb that it is not the market's (client) responsibility to know that they need a service, but the rather the service provider's responsibility to educate and demonstrate the need for a service or a product. This research was focused on understanding if there is a disconnect in the narrative, meaning, and/or understanding between the market and service provider as a means of analyzing the supply and demand cycle.

Taking a business note from the Marketing Director for LYCRA on how to brand a product he describes the relationship shift need to grow a brand. "Build a lifestyle around your brand, and the audience will follow (Evan Chen Quotes (n.d.), 2017)." The researcher views conflict resolution as a lifestyle and that the branding surrounding the field would benefit from funneling the work through this lens. This research takes a

psychological and sociological business lens approach to address elements that inform the supply and demand gap. This research contends that the variable that influences the gap between a low market demand and high social needs lies in the social understanding of conflict and conflict resolution. The disconnect between these narratives fosters the misunderstanding of the field and informs low demand for the services.

Purpose of the Study

A classic synopsis of an example of conflict is the model of 's/he said; s/he said', this model represents the disconnect of narrative and understanding in between parties. It represents miscommunication and push of positions that do not address underlying interests. This model characterizes the epicenter of the challenge with the identity of the field of conflict resolution within the macro social understanding of conflict. Identities are sensitive to the socially constructed meanings, values, conditions, and circumstances of the environment in which they exist. A classic example of this phenomenon is the celebrity of sports stars within their profession. For example, if there are two people out to lunch at a restaurant and a football player walks by the table, the reaction of people at the table is contingent on the value and understanding of the player. This value is informed by cultural knowledge and understanding of the player's value within the context of football. If person A is a football fan and person B is not a football fan, their reactions to the football player will be different. The value of the player's name and face recognition is contingent on the fan base being informed of his/her value. If the fan base is not informed of his/her value, the player will not be recognized. The culturally informed context in which identities exist function to inform how people interact and view the person, place, idea, or thing and how brands are built. The macrosystems of

context control the external and internal perceptions of identity. Often, this becomes a blind common-sense knowledge that forms a status quo behavioral patterns with the identity.

Conflict could be viewed as a universal commonsense phenomenon. "Not only is disaster common – and increasingly so – it is an extraordinarily revealing sort of affliction (Alexander, 2005, p. 25)." The cultural relativism of this universal commonsense phenomenon of conflict (a term that includes and encompasses language such as disaster, problem, dispute, etc.) is what creates the context for the social understanding of conflict. The cultural context informs what is considered a conflict based on cultural norms, expectations, and the environment. "This is because cultural relativism cannot be meaningful without assuming that there are notions of objects, people, beliefs, truth, existence, etc., that both relativists and non-relativists share (Erion, 2000, p. 33)." Furthermore, conflict resolution can be viewed as a universal commonsense phenomenon, which informs what types of conflict resolution practices people will engage with are culturally relative. The commonality of conflict and managing conflict in people's everyday lives can make a person passive and blind to the need for skill-building or services within the conflict resolution spectrum.

A common example of recognizing this phenomenon in our daily lives is reflecting on romantic relationships. Often in romantic relationships, partners 'fight' about how they 'fight'. This represents three aspects of the commonality of conflict and conflict resolution: 1) Often people do not recognize their autopilot conflict management systems until they have an example for comparison (in this case their significant other), 2) People often do not address conflict management systems (or how they deal with

conflict) until it exacerbates into a large scale conflict, and 3) Ideas of conflict resolution as being natural to a person and they were born with those abilities. This example reflects on the importance of understanding the everydayness and commonsense concepts that surround conflict in our society as a means of addressing the low social demand for conflict resolution. By identifying the language, needs, value, and everydayness of conflict resolution skills and services, the perceived value of the brand will be connected with an increase in daily quality of life. By identifying the extraordinary value in the ordinary space of people's daily lives, the field can build a brand of service, skills, and knowledge that inform parts of the consumer's daily life.

The notion of the negative social understanding of conflict has been addressed within infield literature as a means of comparison for the infield definitions and understandings. Conflict resolution scholars Pruitt and Kim, address the 1983 Webster dictionary definition of conflict as a "fight, battle, or struggle (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 7)." They continue to explain how the understanding behind the idea of conflict socially has "grown to include a sharp disagreement or opposition, as of interests, ideas, etc. (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 7)." Suggesting that conflict is understood in larger 'overt confrontation' meaning, that conflict is not labeled as conflict until it manifests into a larger obstacle or issue. The 2017 definition for conflict in the Webster dictionary is,

"1. Fight, Battle, War; an armed conflict; 2. A. Competitive or opposing action of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons) B. Mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands; 3. The opposition of persons or forces that gives rise to the dramatic action in a drama or fiction (Conflict (n.d), 2017)."

The beginning of the definition of conflict demonstrates the negative social understanding of conflict by using the large scale 'overt confrontations' outlined by Pruitt and Kim. The three words all are infused with concepts of violence, anger, and negative dispositions. Furthermore, the use of the word 'antagonistic' that is defined as, "showing dislike or opposition" demonstrates the negative connotations attached to the word conflict (Antagonistic (n.d.), 2017)." Finally, the third definition depicting conflict as the plot in an artistic representation further alludes to conflict being observed and understood only when it has manifested and escalated.

Additionally, conflict resolution experts Wilmot and Hocker address the negative frame of conflict by reflecting on common negative views of conflict. They state, "many people view conflict as an activity that is almost completely negative and has no redeeming qualities (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007, p. 33)." They outline seven negative commonly held assumptions about conflict such as:

"1. Harmony is normal and conflict is abnormal. 2. Conflicts and disagreements are the same phenomenon. 3. Conflict is a result of personal pathology. 4. Conflict should never be escalated. 5. Conflict interaction should be polite and orderly. 6. Anger is the predominant emotion in conflict interaction. 7. There is one right way to resolve differences (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007, pp. 34-36)."

These assumptions paint the backdrop for understanding the frame that surrounds conflict and how it is negatively viewed in society. The researcher suggests that this frame is an influential variable in the low social demand for conflict resolution services and serves as a platform for addressing communication between the services and the consumer.

This study's goal was to describe the current influence of the 'default position' held by society that constructs a negative frame of understanding about conflict (Searle, 1998, p.9). Default positions are defined as "views we hold pre-reflectively so that any departure from them requires a conscious effort and a convincing argument (Searle, 1998, p. 9)." The existing socially constructed value and meaning of conflict has often been treated independently of the field's concept of conflict. Whereas, this study contends that the negative socially constructed meaning of conflict is interdependent with the field of conflict resolution including in the marketing and branding of its identity. Additionally, while in conflict resolution literature the negative understanding of conflict is treated independently, the most common imagery used to represent conflict resolution reflects the conflict within a negative frame. While the field consciously tries to separate the infield concepts of conflict apart from this 'social fact', its influence and unconscious frame can be viewed within the 'go-to' marketing imagery that is used. The presence of actively addressing the traditional negative view in literature and its unconscious presence in the imagery serves to validate the existence of the negative social understanding of conflict and its influence on conflict resolution marketing.

While the negative social understanding of conflict is often addressed in conflict resolution literature, the omnipresence and everydayness of the 'social fact' that conflict is understood within a negative frame has unconsciously influenced the imagery used in the very same literature (Durkheim, 1982, p. 59). An example of this pattern of behavior can be found in the conflict resolution book, *Interpersonal Conflict* by Wilmot and Hocker. In this text, the authors address the negative views of conflict and outline infield views of conflict that differ from the ideas of conflict being negative (Wilmot & Hocker,

2007, pp. 33-36). Conversely, the cover of the conflict resolution book depicts a bridge over a babbling brook with a ray of sunshine reflecting off the trees in a majestic-like forest. This imagery represents an example of how the 'social fact' that conflict is negative frames the binary symbolism of conflict and conflict resolution. The field of conflict resolution outlines differences in understanding of conflict and has redefined conflict within conflict resolution parameters that are grounded in ideas of neutrality. This creates a closed causal binary that reflects the idea that conflict is negative and conflict resolution is positive. It reflects the idea that conflict is a thing or entity, that is negative and as something that needs to be crossed over, with a fully constructed bridge, rather than as a process. This concept addresses the issue that this study has attempted to address. The identity of the field of conflict resolution exists within the larger negative social frame of conflict and influences the marketing and branding of the field.

The negative frame of conflict influences the perception of the products and the message of the field of conflict resolution consciously and unconsciously for both the larger society and within the field. The researcher attempted to describe the intrapersonal conflict of identity within the field of conflict resolution and how it is informed and perpetuates the larger 'social fact' or perception of conflict as negative. This analysis served to create the platform for understanding the disconnect between the larger public and the field of conflict resolution and how the disconnect of narratives can influence the low social demand for conflict resolution services.

This research suggests the negative frame of conflict and closed casual binary of altruistic views of peace that is equated with conflict resolution and has informed a disconnect between the practitioners and the market by influencing the low social

demand of conflict resolution. This research used descriptive qualitative research to address the communication in conflict resolution branding and marketing in an attempt to identify if the marketing and branding of conflict resolution are influenced by the larger negative social understanding of conflict.

Furthermore, the use of a business lens to evaluate this phenomenon called for the researcher to address the target market to whom the field aims their products and services, as well as how the target market accesses information and communicates with the field. While many could agree that conflict resolution services and products (programs, conflict resolution training, consulting services, mediation services, etc.) are important skills and services for all demographics, it is important to narrow one's market before expanding one's business reach. This sentiment is akin to a common business rule of thumb that states, 'if you market to everyone, you market to no one.' Looking at and outlining who would be the target market for conflict resolution services would involve understanding who is holding the purchasing power or the purchasing market. Goldman Sachs, a Fortune Global 500 company, defines millennials' projected purchasing power as, "the largest generation in history [is] about to move into its prime spending years (Goldman Sachs, 2017, Insights, para. 1)." Forbes recognizes that the current economic market is vying for the millennial market as,

> "there are eight million millennials in America alone and they represent about a fourth of the entire population, with $200 billion in annual buying power. They have a lot of influence over older generations and are trendsetters across all industries from fashion to food (Schawbel, 2015, para. 1)."

The target market for conflict resolution services and programs for the next ten to fifteen years is millennials and outlining this target market provides the context of understanding the communication needs and mediums of the market.

Millennials make up the generation born between the early 1980s to the early 2000 covering an age range of 17 to 37 in the year 2017 (Goldman Sachs, 2015, Insights Infographic, para. 2). This makes millennials range in age from 27 to 47 in the next ten years. This age population will then be making up the basis of the middle and senior-level job positions. This will make millennials a fundamental buying market for marketing to them the importance of conflict resolution and the quality of life that it can inform in both their personal lives and in the workplace. With a shift in corporate value from hard skills to soft skill with 71% of employers saying they value emotional intelligence over IQ (CareerBuilder, 2017, para. 1) and a shift in recognizing the value of workplace culture, the field of conflict resolution has much to offer within the realm of theory, research, and practice. Additionally, with generational conflicts informed by the influence of increased automation and technology and shifts in how we work continues; conflict resolution services and best practices have a possible and plausible projection of growth in the next ten to fifteen years.

Millennials' main form of communication and ways that they access information is via the internet and technology. With the shift to more screen to screen communication and emergence of a simultaneous social media identities, it is imperative that the field adapts and incorporates this shift into best practices to stay relevant and to provide a platform for a sustainable future for the field. It has been demonstrated in other industries how not maintaining relevance with the target market can act as a detrimental force for

continued growth with examples such as Blockbuster Video. Blockbuster Video is/was a video and DVD renting company, but their failure to digitize and monopolize the streaming media business model has forced them into bankruptcy (Satell, 2014). This study used and incorporated the demonstration of the value and use of online communication that represents the change in collective behavior and the importance of maintaining relevancy with the pace of that change.

Significance and Need of the Study

The significance of this study was the conceptual foundation for change and development for the field of conflict resolution. The educators, practitioners, and leaders of the field of conflict resolution have studied, analyzed, and put into practice social theory, conflict theory, and best practices in theory and practice for others. There is room for growth and a need for introspective analysis of how conflict resolution images, identity, and behavior influence others. This work served as an opportunity for the field to practice what they preach and utilize the best practices of conflict resolution introspectively to address variables that are informing the gap between the high social need and low social demand for conflict resolution. This study focused on describing the projected identity and reality of the current state of affairs of conflict resolution and incorporate it into larger systems of understanding in which it exists. The introspective analysis of the field of conflict resolution creates a new point of reference for understanding its place in the market and a path for a more sustainable and profitable future.

The aim of this study was to create a macro-understanding of the interdependent and evolving relationship conflict resolution has with the larger community. Further, it

serves to address the communication of narratives between the field and the market and the importance of maintaining relevance in systems that focus on evolving human behavior. The researcher's goal was for this study to serve as a vehicle for uncovering and describing internal obstacles for growth as a means for the development of a starting point for change. This was an attempt to add to the body of work and literature in the field to address questions that have substantial importance on internal and external stakeholders. The attempt to challenge internal assumptions and expectations creates an opportunity for growth. In short, this study explored the following questions:

I.   How does the view of conflict as negative influence conflict resolution marketing?

II.   How does the view of conflict as negative influence the brand of conflict resolution?

This study utilized a descriptive qualitative research approach to uncover the definitions and descriptions about conflict and conflict resolution from an infield perspective and from the target market perspective for analysis on what exists. The researcher interviewed two sets of populations to abstract information and understanding surrounding conflict and conflict resolution. The first population consisted of conflict resolution practitioners that have had substantial careers within the conflict resolution field and that have developed marketing and branding for their own or their organization's conflict resolution practice. The second population consisted of a sample set of the target market that was outlined by the researcher above as millennials. The interview questions involved descriptions of imagery and colors associated with terms, the definition of terms, descriptions of examples of terms, discussion behind meanings of

conflict and conflict resolution, and reflections on client needs and wants. The aim of this data collection was to compare and contrast definitional narratives and descriptions surrounding conflict and conflict resolution. The findings serving as a marker for understanding the frame of reference used in identifying and understanding conflict and conflict resolution in marketing and branding. Additionally, the second aim was to identify variables that can serve to inform the branding and marketing of the field of conflict resolution.

To summarize, the problem cycle of this study was to evaluate and understand how and if the larger social understanding of conflict as negative influences and informs the perception of the conflict resolution field in the larger community. Additionally, it served to evaluate if the infield internal absence of challenging this frame has created limitations on industry growth and how shifts in communication have the potential to be used to grow the field. This chapter outlined the framework of understanding the researcher used to develop her approach at addressing the question that is a constant in her life, "why don't people know what I do?" The next chapter outlines the research used to construct the arms and legs of this research and breaks down the approach through three branches of focus that include: language, identity, and business. Language tells us stories, informs identities, and in turn informs language. This relationship serves as the backbone for understanding the marketing and branding of the field as a means to identify what is being communicated to the market.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: Abstracting the Extraordinary from the Ordinary

As a first step to create a concrete platform for deconstructing the social understanding of conflict and conflict resolution, this chapter will abstract the social forces that contribute to blending the concepts into the background of daily life. In order to construct an infrastructure that depicts how conflict resolution best practices and conflict management systems inform quality of life, the first step is to abstract the extraordinary from the constructed ordinary. The construction of the stark contrast between the two will create a starting point which the field can use to construct a competitive framework for developing a shift in social demand by identifying overlapping narratives, disconnected narratives, and Unique Selling Proposition (USP). USP is "a description of the qualities that are unique to a particular product or service and that differentiate it in a way which will make customers purchase it rather than its rivals (The Economist, 2009, para. 1)." The place of conflict resolution best practices in society remain invisible because social circumstances prevent people from consciously recognizing that they are practicing them, making them blind from the impact conflict has on their lives. The over-exposure to historical references of violent conflict and altruistic ideals of peace act as a force to maintain the status quo of conflict as a large negative event. The social forces that are exercised over the individual dictate a skewed understanding of conflict and conflict resolution and inform the anatomy of the low social demand for conflict resolution services.

Language

While we are consciously interacting with others, our brains are unconsciously performing comprehensive filters and processes to inform our understanding and

behavior. Communication and speech function as a means to create mutual understanding. Cognitive science has demonstrated that underneath the conscious awareness are inaccessible processes that control and inform behavior. Classical cognitive science was formed and influenced by cybernetics and the digital computer (Dawson M., 2013, p. 20). Cybernetics is the study of "adaptive behavior of intelligent agents by employing the notions of feedback and information theory (Dawson M., 2013, p. 20)." Cybernetics examines how information is processed and influences the fundamental assumption in cogitative science that cognition is information processing. These processes are informed by memory, language, context, connecting information, making inferences, experience, body language, and more, thus functioning much like a search engine, such as Google, functions on the internet.

Google relies on the collective intelligence of the web users to create a base of information about any keyword. Google does not develop content, but rather it collects and creates a mass base of information and connects users with this information by using algorithms. Algorithms produce output from a given input. The more information that is tagged or associated with a search keyword will inform the output of the search results for said keyword. Search results are a product of the collective input, therefore serving as a frame of reference for understanding concepts and ideas. Google's search engine, like our cognitive processes, is affected by situational knowledge and its environment and is reflective of our social understanding surrounding the stimuli. The change in the news and the information that is put on the internet surrounding a certain topic informs the results that will populate for a given subject.

Trending topics inform the pace of change in the results and from hour to hour and sometimes from minute to minute as to what will inform the results that are connected to a certain search item. This model is similar to the background of our thoughts that inform how we understand the world and how we interact with it. This same model of operation happens in our cognitive unconscious that connects the outside world with the self and reasoning that inform the ideas of *'common sense'* (Erion, 2000, p. 18). This constructs the understanding that the ideas and reasoning are not independent of the individual, but rather interdependent with the individual and the society. The interactions of the individual and society inform the memories, frames, context, symbolism, understanding, meaning, and value that operate unconsciously to inform an individual's structuring of thought and behavior. The function of memory is that it creates the frame for the ordinary. Words and language serve to trigger the search engines in our brains and connect meaning and understanding during communication.

Google serves as an excellent source of data for understanding and collecting social patterns of how the larger community engages with the language and concepts of conflict and conflict resolution. In 2013 conflict resolution practitioner Justin Corbett, "analyzed over 225 million annual online conflict-related search queries to better understand the scope and scale of conflict in America (Corbett, 2016, Abstract, para. 1)." This research produced many important findings about "how the public prioritizes frames for their conflicts and their preferred resolutions (Corbett, 2016, Abstract, para. 1)." In this work, Corbett discussed the fast-paced changing world of how communities interact and how our search histories have become a valuable data set for understanding human behavior. His findings reveal important information about how conflict resolution

language is being searched online and the disconnect between infield language and searched language. He used examples of searched language such as "Should I leave my husband if he cheats on me" as compared to searching divorce mediation (Corbett, 2016, Case Study, para. 2). He contextualized the search contents as referring to a conflict in a spousal relationship and highlights the frame and language in which people are "searching" for conflict resolution help online. They tracked and mapped this metadata as a means to map current market trends and connect services with the larger public. He found that "a quarter billion online conflict-related queries occurred annually; more than seven queries every second (Corbett, 2016, Public Awareness, para.1)." With search rates at this capacity, the field of conflict resolution should be streaming off the charts in profits and popularization, but that is not the reality. This research further supports Rhudy's research claim of the high social need, but a low social demand (Rhudy, 2014) as the conflict resolution language, knowledge, and familiarity are not commonplace. Since 2016, Justin Corbett's company Advancing Dispute Resolution has partnered with community and state programs to increase public awareness of conflict resolution and they have raised over "$2 million in donated Google Ad Grants advertising to display targeted message in response to public search quires on a wide range of conflict context (Advancing Dispute Resolution, 2018)."

The philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's attempt to uncover the structure behind language developed the concept of "meaning-as-use" (Biletzki, 2018, 3.3 Meaning as use, para. 1) His work developed the idea that "the meanings of words cannot be defined in isolation from the life practices in which they are used (Cloke, 2015, p. Slide 5)." He constructed the idea that behaviors, events, and actions are the starting point for meaning

that create syntax, symbolism, and definitions. The meaning of words is contingent on the role that it plays in social activity (Turnbull, 1996, p. 156). It is often assumed that underneath words there is a shared underlying meaning, but instead of a "word having a fixed definition, it evolves and has a history, picking up new meanings and dropping old ones as social practices alter their associations and references (Cloke, 2015, p. Slide 5)." This is reflective of this study's evaluation of understanding of the terms conflict and conflict resolution in order to identify the social attitudes and relevance in the marketing and branding of the field. The difference between the target market and infield social practices of conflict resolution and how they influence the definition of the term demonstrates a cultural conflict in language and practice.

Augsburger, author of *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures* (1992), presents the idea of the difference in understanding in his development of how conflict resolution needs to inform a cultural shift in our social activity of dealing with conflict.

"Our much-loved patterns of either-or thinking, of argumentative and appositional disputation, and of competitive and win-lose forms of resolution much be superseded. When we are locked into traditional either-or thinking, the logic (no matter how tight and tidy) has a fundamental limitation. Any competitive and conflictual thinking about conflict blocks us from shifting over to a design style of thinking, from moving into an exploratory mode of searching for an alternative solution (Augsburger, 1998, p. 5)."

This is a direct reflection of understanding the patterns of behavior of social activity that have been historically used to inform what we now understand as conflict. Additionally,

it reflects the role the conflict resolution field plays in informing change in social activity to inform the change in the meaning and definition of conflict.

German philosopher Habermas explains via his concepts on 'communicative rationality' the way society uses language is reflective of their shared meaning. He described that during daily discourse with other actors we employ language under the expectation "that a rational consensus can be achieved (Joas & Knobl, 2009, p. 229)." Our language connects to three different references within our consciousness to connect the language with the world which he defines as: "validity claim to truth", "validity claim to normative correctness", and "validity claim to truthfulness" (Joas & Knobl, 2009, pp. 230-231). This triad of references connect to empirical evidence and logic about how society understands the world, the meaning and interpretation society has socially constructed behind the word/s that connect them to the world, and the subjective experience with the word/s in the world.

Cognitive references are connected at varying levels depending on the context and the experience. For example, a teenager may explain to an adult that they are experiencing a conflict, but the adult disregards the claim by creating a comparative analysis to conflicts the adult has experienced creating a hierarchy of understanding and value within the understanding of the word conflict. Words have objective and subjective stories behind them and frame conscious and unconscious actions, reactions, and interactions with them in the world. The understanding and references behind the words inform actions by the actors communicating them and the actors receiving them. This process serves as a platform that advocates for the field of conflict resolution to address

the meanings, understandings, and communication of our services and practices with the larger community.

As philosopher Lakoff notes, "every living being categorizes (Lakoff, 1999, p. 17)." Animals categorize their lived reality with categories such as food or not food and threat and non-threat based on their memory and experience. "We have evolved to categorize; if we hadn't, we would not have survived (Lakoff, 1999, p. 18)." For example, human biology reflects categorization with sight reflecting the categorization of light versus dark and informing reactions. The human social categorization has evolved throughout time and has changed with new knowledge and shifts in cultural thinking. Cultural relativity reflects this internal categorization process by reflecting categorization in social systems that we live in and creates a cognitive cycle and pattern of categorization that happens unconsciously when a person interacts with the world. These conceptual prototypes dictate how unconscious categories inform how society frames and interacts with the world.

In order for social systems and institutions to realistically function, they need to work within the collective common sense of understanding but must speak to the collective needs and wants. The collective perception informs the driving force that individuals use to categorize the need and/or demand of using or engaging with the systems and services. This concept is the platform for developing an understanding of the marketplace. By understanding the existing landscape in which a product and service are marketed will inform the language and communication needed to market to that selling point.

Emilie Durkheim's theory of social facts creates a starting point for the journey into the understanding of the identity of conflict and conflict resolution in society. Society is socially constructed by the collaboration of repeated acts of behavior, communication, and events. Social facts are defined by Durkheim as "category of facts which present very special characteristics: they consist of manners of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they exercise control over him (Durkheim, 1982, p. 56)." Durkheim explains social facts as things because they evoke a power over the individual as they are valued and practiced by the collective. This power creates a false autonomy of the individual because the social facts act as societal surveillance and collective consciousness that is the product of the history and shared experience of the collective. The shared meaning and value of social facts are culturally transmitted and informs behavior within a society.

Social facts act as an authority over human behavior and construct social norms. Collectively accepted social norms are what inform our infrastructure and organization of society. The organization and order of social facts inform the construction of institutions and industries in society because they represent the systematic efficiency and the collective valued reasoning of their place in society. Social facts represent socially constructed ideals, beliefs, and practices that have established cultural reality.

Social facts demonstrate the relationship between the individual and the collective and represent what forms culture. Just as we are living beings, culture is a living system. Culture in a society creates the cognitive comfort of expectations and assumptions for individuals living in a society. "Culture is a derivative of individual experience, something learned or created by individuals themselves or passed on to them socially by

contemporaries or ancestors (Avruch, 1998, p. 5)." Individual behaviors, understandings, and ideas inform the larger macro social systems. "Individuals reflect or embody multiple cultures and that "culture" is always psychologically and socially distributed in a group (Avruch, 1998, p. 5)." Individual cultures have multi-faceted relationships with cultures on a global, national, and local levels. Cultures are not only confined to geographical locations, but encompass other social categorizations such as age, race, gender, sexual orientation, social-economic status, and religion. Cultures are influenced by time and space and reflect attitudes and perceptions of history and of the future.

In Avruch's book *Culture and Conflict Resolution* (2006), he outlined a critique between infield perceptions and understandings of conflict versus the larger social context. He identified a difference in conflict resolution identities within the field and compared them with other fields and understandings of conflict resolution. He conceptualized the difference between definitions of conflict that are identified between being grounded in values versus being grounded in resource distribution. These definitional infrastructures with culture create a causal relationship with the types of conflict resolution practices that will be favored or considered best practices. While Avurch's narrative focused on the infield disconnect in narrative that effects growth, this study served to describe the same model disconnect between the field and the larger public. Avruch contends that "cultural analysis is an irreducible part of the problem-solving process (Avruch, 1998, p. 74)." He emphasizes the point that the cultural frame from which the understanding of conflict is filtered through influences the demand and context from which conflict resolution services would be sought after.

Furthermore, he explains the difference between the colloquial and the specialized understanding and use of the term conflict resolution and how they are rooted in the meaning of structural change. He discusses the controversy of language and categorization in the field of conflict resolution. Further, he reflects on how this creates discourse on whether conflict resolution practices that do not resolve conflicts, in the sense that they never surface again, and if those practices can actually be categorized as conflict resolution. This discourse reflects the lack of consensus in the field of conflict resolution regarding language and practice. Additionally, he discusses the influence of how the cultural understanding of time and space influence the understanding of conflict resolution and creates a dialog about the language used within the field with examples such as: "Galtung's notion of "positive peace," Burton's notion of "conflict prevention," or Lederach's notion of "conflict transformation" (Avruch, 1998, p. 101)." He discusses the outlined accomplished scholars in the field use of the transformation of the words of conflict resolution to demonstrate the cultural relativity of the subject matter. The repackaging and rebranding of conflict resolution within infield scholars demonstrates the value of language in the understanding and representation of concepts and the importance of definitional understandings in connection with terms.

To speak a language is not only to speak the word/s, but to understanding the stories, histories, and understanding behind the word/s. Language is a means of access to culture and the symbolism or imagery of language becomes a condition for the understanding and immersion into that culture. Language is how societies create and validate social order. Language is a framework for uncovering the symbolic meaning and influence that people develop and rely on to consciously and unconsciously interact in

their daily lives. In the field of conflict resolution, there is an academically identified and defined language in terms and concepts that work as symbols and understanding of the culture the field is trying to a project. Many conflict resolution books begin by defining conflict:

"Conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007, p. 9)*."*

"Conflict is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatibility and the possibility of interference from others as a result of this incompatibility (Folger, 2009, p. 4)*."*

"The opposition between individuals and groups on the basis of competing interests, different identities, and/or differing attitudes (Schelleberg, 1996, p. 8)."

The definitions that are used in the field to understand and define conflict produce a context and a referent for understanding, conceptualizing, and categorizing past, present, and future conflicts. These definitions of conflict prove problematic with traditional concepts of conflict as they neutralize the idea and concept of conflict as a means of providing a platform for the field's conflict management and transformational models. These definitions of conflict are a self-fulfilling prophecy for they serve as the frame for the practitioner, but do not incorporate the social understanding and frame of conflict within the larger social context. These definitions are imbued with the assumptions of conflict resolution practitioners as neutral third parties. The definitions use the point of the view of a neutral third-party mediator or facilitator to outline its conception. This objective referent for conflict is the field's best practices and mental

models for exploring conflict management and transformation. While these definitions and understandings of conflict create an opening and context for practitioners to analyze conflict, it creates an assumption that parties in conflict will view conflict in the same manner. This presumption informs a practitioner's expectations of behavior, attitudes, and interactions with parties in conflict. These definitions serve as a model of how the field has rebranded the concepts of conflict and conflict resolution as compared to traditional use of the terms. This creates a potentially unrealistic expectation of the mental models' parties in conflict may have and a lack of connecting with the market demand for conflict resolution services and education.

Comparatively, the larger social understanding and definition of conflict is defined and understood by historical narrative, institutional educational focus on war, and media outlets that function on the ideology of 'if it bleeds, it leads' of micro and macro conflicts. The historical representation of conflicts on a micro and macro level create a contextual referent from which people consciously and unconsciously ground their understanding of conflict. The historical referents convey the meaning of the term conflict by referencing historical examples and simultaneously producing and influencing the socially constructed and accepted notion of conflict. In this case, it is socially defined and referenced by exposure to violence, death, anger, pain, war, guns, fighting, and hate defined by history and media portrayals. It is not a single event in history, but rather the categorization of similar events that are used to construct the mental frame from which we understand the word conflict. This frame casts a shadow over the understanding of the everydayness of conflict behind conflict as a volatile event and thus creating a negative stigma surrounding the social identity of the term conflict.

This is representative of the fact that conflict is omnipresent in peoples' lives that it is only noticed when it causes disruptions such as in the case of war, violence, or arguments. On a micro level, because of the commonality of conflict and conflict resolution in our lives, we become habituated to its presence. As defined by Google on July 13, 2019, at 3:54 pm, the definition of conflict is defined as a noun as "a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one (Google.com, 2019)." Additionally, it is defined as a verb as "be incompatible or at variance; clash (Google.com, 2019)." Dictionary.com defines conflict as a noun as "a fight, battle, or struggle, especially a prolonged struggle; strife" and as a verb as "to come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash (Dictionary.com, 2019)." These are the two definitions that are used by the general public outside of the field to define conflict and they vary exponentially to the infield definitions. The infield understanding of conflict and the process of conflict resolution do not adequately take into account the social fact of conflict and conflict resolution in the lived reality of the general public. "Sociologists distinguish the 'product' from the 'process' meanings of a common understanding. As 'product', a common understanding is thought to consist of a shared agreement on substantive matters; as 'process', it consists of various methods whereby something that a person says or does is recognized to accord with the rule (Garfinkle, 1967, p. 24)." This means that while people can identify conflict and conflict resolution in history and in others, they are often disconnected from the process within themselves.

While the field uses the above-outlined definitions to try to reframe conflict in a neutral manner, the social objective reference for what has defined conflict in history overrides that neutrality. This disconnect in the understanding of conflict creates an initial

disconnect between the practitioner and its participants for engaging in conflict resolution and widens the gap for miscommunication in marketing for education and training of conflict resolution skills. This is further represented in the researcher's lived experience when telling people that she studies conflict resolution and the response often given in a joking manner of "oh, my wife needs that" or "you should come to my family party". This response represents the identifying of conflict-ridden relationships or behavior in others and the disconnect with oneself in the process and the production of the behaviors and environments.

The historical objective referent for the social understanding of conflict suggests that there is an inherently *us versus them* ideal saturated in the understanding of conflict. The assumptions and expectations of what history has represented as constituting a conflict contradict the neutral academic and infield definition of conflict and create conflicting mental models about conflict resolution. Interpersonal, organizational, and international conflicts have been historically discussed, publicized, and defined by the delineation of the two or more entities going head to head in conflict with a focus mostly on resource distribution. This has created a social understanding and perspective of conflict that is almost exclusively an *us versus them* phenomenon rather than parties with incompatibility of goals. It represents the idea that conflict is identified by intensity. This perspective creates problems for conflict resolution practitioners, not only in the understanding of conflict but how it represents the process of conflict resolution in practice. The *us versus them* conceptualization consciously and unconsciously limits the ability for understanding broader concepts of resolution by being understood as having a winner or a loser. This creates a limited scope of resolution possibilities restricting the

use of multi-layer, multi-faceted, multi-level type of resolution that practitioners envision for their participants.

This is problematic because the disconnects in the understanding of conflict affect the ability to understand the complexities of conflict and the opportunity for incorporating different new practices and processes of resolution even for those within the field. The definition is then solely understood by the delineation of groups in conflict that is informed by an inherently *us versus them* ideal. In order to produce a culture that does not solely define conflict in a negative light or an *us versus them* lens, we need to reframe and re-conceptualize how the field connects with people to create a social demand for conflict resolution skills that the field has defined as a social need.

Identity

Conflict resolution is a multi-faceted word that is used as a noun in the field of conflict resolution and/or as a verb that depicts the process and active use of conflict resolution. The multi-faceted use of the word mirrors the same multi-dimensional way that is used to understand its place, role, and function in society. It is used as a category that describes an industry of conflict resolution that encompasses a large variety of niche industries that include and are not limited to mediation services, negotiation, arbitration, facilitation, consulting, conflict coaching, organizational conflict consulting, human resources, workplace mediation, peace education, and more. It is a field of study in higher education and certificate programs worldwide. Additionally, it describes a set of skills or practices that are used in everyday life to mitigate conflict by actors. This multi-dimensional field represents three aspects of conflict resolution which are education, practice, and training and the markets that they represent.

An existing internal debate within the conflict resolution community is if conflict resolution is a field or a profession. This pressing question is a reflection on the understanding of the identity of conflict resolution and is reflective of the multi-dimensional ways in which conflict resolution is used and represented. In 1986 conflict specialist Paul Wehr developed a study to evaluate the teaching of conflict resolution by surveying 500 university programs (Wehr, 1986). This study served as a gauge to evaluate social identity and familiarity with conflict resolution by looking not only at the numbers of courses provided but under what discipline they were housed. He identified a growth in the number of courses offered in conflict resolution with the courses being homed under other disciplines such as law, political science, and business. William Waters repeated Wehr's study 10 years later to evaluate the growth in the field and found the development of more standalone programs offering degrees in conflict resolution and dispute resolution (Waters, May 1999). He concluded that the increase in graduate degrees in conflict resolution is demonstrative of viewing conflict resolution as a 'distinct academic discipline' (Waters, May 1999). The lack of research that has an introspective lens on the field of conflict resolution plays a role in the lack of data that can be used to inform decision making and growth.

In the recent article, *Yes, Conflict Resolution is a Field*, Mediator and Conflict Resolution Scholar, Juliana Birkoff, explores the differences between field, discipline, and profession and examining their definitional implications against conflict resolution (Birkhoff, 2006). By comparing various sources' definitions of the term field, she concludes that the definitions do not dictate that a field needs distinct boundaries and is a general area of knowledge which would reflect that conflict resolution does qualify as a

field. She continues on to evaluate different sources' definitions of the term discipline and finds the definitions to dictate an organized set of knowledge that has distinct boundaries and she expressed that conflict resolution is a weak discipline. Finally, she evaluated definitions of a profession as a group of job titles that have specific training and criteria and concludes that categories of conflict resolution can be viewed as professions such as mediation and arbitration (Birkhoff, 2006, para. 6). Her article is demonstrative of the multifaceted face of conflict resolution and unclear identity that is not only found in the larger community but within the defined community as well.

The layers of identity debate within our community unfold like an onion. The standardization and regulation debate of mediation is a direct reflection of this on-going identity politics within our field. Bush and Folger address this idea in *The Promise of Mediation*: "our field has reached a moment when it includes practitioners working from very different premises and employing very distinct practices" (Bush & Folger, 2005, p. 266). They compare the spectrum of mediation practices to the therapy profession and their infield controversy of approaches. Bush and Folger discuss that while there are drastically different therapy approaches, they are both identified under the same therapy categorization. This categorization has served to provide therapists with a more dynamic service to their clients. This is reflective of the mediation style and approach debate that was sparked and is on-going by Riskin's 1996 article, *Understandings Mediators' Orientations, Strategies, and Techniques: A Grid for the Perplexed,* in which he discussed that mediators' approaches are either evaluative or facilitative (Riskin, 1996). This opened up an internal debate that polarized the identity of mediation that was grounded in ideas of best practices and identity. These identity politics within our field

inform the on-going debates about regulation and standardization of practices. The importance of this information is that it serves as a direct reflection of a stratification of infield identities that seeps into projected stratified identities to the target markets.

In the first issue of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* in 1957, the founding authors outlined the two rationales for the publication. They outlined the prevention of global war and the increase of knowledge in the area of conflict resolution (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Mail, 2011, p. 35). In comparison 20 years after in 1973, the mission of the journal grew to encompass nuclear holocaust, international conflict, human rights, equality, and the environment (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Mail, 2011, p. 35). The comparison of these outlined missions of the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* reflects not only the growth of the field outside the limitations of war but the stratification of identity that broadens the spectrum of not only the ideas about conflict but the application of conflict resolution practices. As the field of conflict resolution grew out of the focus of conflict as war, the social understanding and identity of conflict largely remain there.

Contemporary Conflict Resolution outlined four generations of conflict resolution (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Mail, 2011). These outlined generations are viewed through a geopolitical lens utilizing war as a backdrop. First-generation (1918-1945) and Second Generation (1945-1965) are overlaid against World War One and Two, Third Generation (1965-1985) against the Cold War, and Fourth Generation (1985-2005) within the post-Cold War world. Conflict resolution's historical identity is grounded in ideas of war and peace. This is reflective of the social understanding of conflict as negative and war and conflict resolution as positive and peaceful. This is demonstrative of the omnipresence of the social fact of conflict as negative and how conflict resolution

is viewed within that frame. The evolution in the field of conflict resolution is to expand

its identity outside of the frame of war (which can be viewed in the mission of the

Journal of Conflict Resolution outlined above) and is reflective in a transformation of

identity. In business terms, this would model the marketing and branding of the new

identity. In the words of conflict resolution leader John Paul Lederach, "transcending

violence is forged by the capacity to generate, mobilize, and build the moral imagination

(Lederach, 2005, p. 5)." While Lederach's work focuses on reimagining the relationship

between parties within conflict and conflict resolution as a means for peacebuilding, it

serves a model of thinking for rebranding the field. That in order to market the value of

conflict resolution there must be an evaluation of the relationship with the target market.

As a means to build a shared narrative of a moral imagination based on how conflict

resolution practices inform the quality of everyday life.

Along with the disconnect between the understanding and definition of conflict,

another obstacle the field faces is the conceptualization and social perception of time and

space in relation to resolution. A world of rapid speed news, with access to information at

the tip of our fingers, with television shows that solve problems in 30 minutes, and our

short term collective memory about sensationalized human tragedy has created a

disconnect between the conceptual and actual time and space of not only conflict but in

particular the process of resolution. The psychological term of "bearing witness" is used

to describe the phenomena of sharing and communicating of traumatic experiences

(Pikiewicz, 2013, para. 2). While historically capturing and communicating witness to

large scale conflicts was reserved for journalists, the presence of social media has

transformed the model of access. The traditionally used slogan and model used by media

of "if it bleeds, it leads" is reflective of the way people share information on social media such as Anthony Bourdain, "tweeting a picture of a dead child on a Gazan Beach" was tweeted more than 15,000 times (Beeston, 2014, para. 6). The author explains that photographs and videos have been a fundamental representation of conflict and disaster and it is even reflected in idioms we use such as, "seeing is believing". Bearing witness is grounded in the idea that if people know about a conflict, violence, or a disaster it will move them to help or support, but criminologists such as Stanley Cohen demonstrate the opposite.

Stanley Cohen's work is grounded in examining emotional responses to deviance, specifically deviance represented in mass media, as mass media serves as the main source of information for the target population (Cohen, 2011, p. 9). He outlines five key elements to his concept of *moral panic*: 1) Concern about the potential threat represented in an image, 2) Hostility towards actors that symbolize or are connected with the threat, 3) Consensus that the threat is real and prevalent, 4) Disproportionality of cases that embody and support the concept of the threat, and 5) Volatility in that outrage spikes and disappears quickly and without warning (Cohen, 2011). This theory is representative of the influence of how ideas and understandings of conflict and conflict resolution have been impacted by media. The spiking of outrage and the quick diminishing of that outrage serve as a model to desensitize the population and create new thresholds for what gets classified for outrage.

This theory is reflective in social media and has been labeled as #hashtagactivism. Hashtag activism is the use of keying a term on social media by utilizing a # symbol in front of a term or keyword. Hashtags allow other users to search social media platforms

for similar images, videos, and posts that have been tagged with the same hashtag. It serves as a language online. Hashtag activism is a term that is used when a specific hashtag is attached to a social issue. While the concept and method are controversial, it is a reflection of the moral panic modeling. A social issue will arise and inform social concern will raise that triggers the birth and the use of a hashtag to represent the issue. Social consensus and partisanship are built around the hashtag visibility from going viral and trending on social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. A familiar consequence of an issue going viral is the spike in conversations and concerns surrounding the topics with a subsequent drop in concern about the topic or issue, regardless of the width, depth, or projected needs of the issue.

An example of hashtag activism is #bringbackourgirls. This was a hashtag that was created and went viral after news informed that 276 schoolgirls were abducted by Boko Haram in Nigeria in 2014 (Matfess, 2017). As concern for the event spread, the hashtag went viral and was breaking internet records. The hashtag was shared by people such as Michelle Obama, the Pope, and Malala Yousafazi (Matfess, 2017, para. 5). Finally, as quickly as the hashtag went viral it faded into the background of the internet. The overwhelming presence of the news about the abducted girls quickly dissipated and lost its height on the treading list on Twitter. The hashtag #bringbackourgirls stopped trending before the girls were rescued. The moral panic over the isolated event of the 276 girls did not adequately represent the long history of abductions, kidnappings, and terrorism Boko Haram's presence has and continues to have in Nigeria; nor did it fully look at the process of resolution in this conflict. This example demonstrates how social

media and media have influenced our social understanding of conflict and conflict resolution.

While the nature of conflict resolution is dynamic, the make-up of the structure of the field with a focus on niche markets has influenced a decentralized identity of conflict resolution. This meaning the focus of niche markets has created a sea of individually defined markets rather than building up one centralized market. The decentralized identity of conflict resolution affects the connection with the access to markets for the deliverance of conflict resolution services, skills, and knowledge. As each niche market defines and redefines conflict resolution within the environment they work in, it serves to blur the collective identity. Without an overarching governing structure there is no identity to model. For example, in pointillism paintings, each dot plays a vital role in informing the larger identity of the painting and the image of the painting serves as the structure of the role the dot will play in informing the image. The larger image cannot exist without the dot and the dot role and value are outlined by the larger images. The interdependent relationship between the two serves as a model of understanding for the relationship between niche markets and the collective identity of the conflict resolution field.

The decentralization of the identity of the field affects the integrity and legitimacy of the structure of connecting conflict resolution services with "reoccurring social practices" (Giddens, 1984, p. 522) within communities. The agency of actors to buy into the conflict resolution field and construct an industry is founded on creating a call to action to the actors. The structure of the industry of conflict resolution needs to motivate the agency of actors to act and the case of conflict resolution, it is to act in the purchasing

of the services, products, and knowledge of what conflict resolution has to offer. "All social action involves structure, and all structure involves social action. Agency and structure are inextricably interwoven in ongoing human activity and practice (Giddens, 1984)." The demonstration of the value of conflict resolution as a brand will serve to inform where people are willing to invest their money.

To address the autonomy of agency within the field's structure, data is needed on the analysis of the design of the infrastructure and identity of the field. To inform shifts in culture, the field must empower agents to make decisions about their actions and well-being in the process of conflict resolution. In other words, to inform a conscious understanding of the benefits of utilizing conflict resolution best practices and how they can inform quality of life. The autonomy of the actor being informed and educated on conflict resolution best practices serve as a platform to lessen the gap between the high social need and low social demand. This is the role of education and training within the conflict resolution triad that creates awareness and consciousness about the knowledge, services, and best practices of conflict resolution.

Business

In marketing and advertising, the point of focus is not the sale of the product, but what the owning of the product means. It advertises the lifestyle it will allow the purchaser to have, the status it will bring to their being, and how happy it will make them feel. Brands sell a lifestyle or a feeling in order to have people invest their purchasing power into their product. The buy-in from the broader community does not only represent profit, but it represents the voice of demand from the collective identity for that lifestyle. The organic industry did this by creating campaigns informing its markets on its value by

exposing the hazards of not investing in an organic lifestyle. "As a result of a successful effort by the organic food industry to alter public opinion the overwhelming majority of consumers believe that "organic" is better, safer or more nutritious (Forrer, Avery, & Carlisle, 2000, Introduction, para. 3)." This commonly held understanding of the word organic led the USDA to create organic labeling regulations and policy for a product to be labeled as organic as to not mislead customers that were investing their purchasing power in the organic lifestyle. This example is a reflection of the power of the frame from which language is understood and how it can be transformed through time and space.

While conflict resolution can be defined as a field, a profession, and an industry, it is also representative of a conscious lifestyle or a brand. The knowledge, services, and training of conflict resolution inform a larger ideology that is representative of a lifestyle that consciously practices conflict resolution best practices and how this increases the quality of life. Communicating the value and identity to the larger public can serve as a platform for lessening the gap of low market demand and high social need as it challenges the status quo understanding of conflict and empowers the person/s in the process. This means addressing social information surrounding the identity of a field and the language and symbols that are used in its marketing and branding to access its consumers. In sociologist Erving Goffman's (1963) seminal work on stigma, he discusses the relationship between social identity and stigma and how this informs attitudes and behaviors (Goffman, 1963). He discussed the social consequences of stigmas and how they are used internally and externally. The 'visibility' of stigma is determined by how prevalent and/or present the stigma is in communicating the meaning the symbol, entity, or person possesses (Goffman, 1963, p. 48). That the 'know-about-ness' of stigma will

inform the level of the obstacle it can inform in interactions (Goffman, 1963, p. 49). This research is trying to address if the social understanding of conflict as negative stigmatizes the field of conflict resolution, thus influencing a low social demand for services.

This same phenomenon is viewed in the stigma attached to the advocacy for people with disabilities. The advocacy for disability rights has been tirelessly fighting and continue to fight to this day to break the stigma attached to disability rights to support individuals and communities. A window of understanding into this stigma is understood by looking at the historical and modern-day use of the word 'retarded' (further referenced as the R-word) and how the stigma and negative social understanding of mental health is reflected in the use of that word. Historically, the R-word was used scientifically in the health field to label people with mental health issues and/or with different abilities and then was later on transferred outside the hospital to the streets as a term to insult someone by insinuating lack of intelligence (Peters, 2019, para. 6). This represents the harsh and unforgiving light that is reflected in having different abilities and then used colloquially to continue to fortify the stigma of needing or receiving help or support. The stigma attached to the identity or labeling of having a different ability as negative acts as a social barrier for people to obtain services and rights. This antidote demonstrates the importance of taking into account social understandings about concepts and words. This research serves as a means to address the gap of the high social need, but low social demand for conflict resolution services and products.

The disconnect between narratives can represent a larger issue within the identity of the field in conflict resolution and its need for opening new markets. The space between the socially defined and informed identity of the conflict resolution field and the

internally defined identity serves as an important point of understandings to identify any difference in narratives. In the binary and ever-increasing polarized world, if conflict is being defined as a clash, argument, disagreement, strife, and collision than conflict resolution is being defined by the inverse. If conflict is war, then conflict resolution is peace; if conflict is negative, then conflict resolution positive; if conflict is loud, then conflict resolution is quiet. This is representative of the imagery used in the field. The peace dove and the handshake are two highly used imagery symbols that are used to represent the field and they play into this mental frame. This phenomenon limits the field and creates a false representation of the tools, services, and knowledge that the field provides. This serves as a misrepresentation and projects a reality of the process of conflict resolution that will end in peace or a handshake. This limits the reality of the potential of conflict resolution from which there is an entire spectrum of tools and ways conflict can be managed and transformed that never involve a handshake.

Marketing research focuses on four factors: cognitive, emotional, language, and action (Devault, 2019, para. 4). These facets of marketing research are reflective of how the brain categorizes the language and symbols used in marketing, the emotional response connected to language and symbols, and how it informs action (Devault, 2019, para. 6). A majority of market research focuses on language as a way to access beliefs, worldviews, and behavior. These models represent the need for this body of research to serve as a gauge for evaluating the frame from which the consumers are absorbing conflict resolution imagery and identity as a means to inform behavior.

In the field of conflict resolution, there has been a pattern of continued use of misrepresentations of the process of resolution in the imagery and symbols that are used

to represent the field. The symbols most often used are bridges or shaking hands without recognition that these images represent a false identity of resolution. Conflict resolution does not sell the bridge, it is selling the mortar and the trowel. Conflict resolution does not sell the handshake, it is selling the process that may lead to the handshake. This misrepresentation from the field serves to reiterate the disconnect and lack of understanding of conflict resolution. It can represent how the field is influenced by the social fact that conflict is negative. To produce a culture of conflict resolution trust in the process and brand of conflict resolution need to be developed. The misrepresentation of conflict resolution only leads to a lack of trust in the process and misrepresentation of the benefits of conflict resolution.

While both the infield and social understanding of conflict share a narrative that is grounded in the more traditional view of conflict as negative and conflict resolution as peace, this is not the field's Unique Selling Proposition (USP). The USP is the practice of isolating what makes the products, services, knowledge, and best practices of conflict resolution different and better than the current status quo. The USP of conflict resolution informs the decision-making practices of the target market and can influence a shift in low social demand. The infield imagery and marketing schemes used to engage the public with conflict resolution services and products are often grounded within the frame as conflict as negative and conflict resolution as positive. This is represented in the common use of imagery such as peace doves, handshakes, and picturesque bridges in conflict resolution products, services, and businesses. While these images represent the idea of meeting people where they are in their understanding of conflict and the idea of speaking the same language as your target market, there are some limitations in this approach.

With the everydayness of conflict in our lives, we are often blind to its influence in our

lives until it escalates into a large conflict. This informs the way the conflict resolution

marketing is viewed. Conflict resolution services and practices are often viewed as the

fireman to come and put out the fire, which is not an adequate nor full representation of

what conflict resolution is, which serves almost like false advertising. This representation

focuses more on addressing events rather than behavior replacement and skill-building.

Additionally, it fails to develop or inform the public about the USP of conflict resolution

lifestyle or how it is different than what people already practice or how they already

manage conflict. From a business angle, the idea of conflict resolution as an event rather

than a lifestyle is more reflective of big-ticket products a person buys occasionally verses

the products you buy every day. By evaluating and addressing how the field of conflict

resolution is communicating with the public, this research can serve to uncover blind

spots and holes in the approach and address influences in the low social demand for

conflict resolution services and products.

As outlined by Julie Change, the President of Strategies-by-Design, with over

eighteen years of experience in marketing there are eight fundamental steps in marketing

(Chance, 2017). She defines a strong marketing foundation by defining the product or

service (Chance, 2017, para. 3). This step entails outlining what is being sold and how the

product is packaged to the public. The branding of conflict resolution as a lifestyle can

take a cue from looking at the weight loss industry and how it has rebranded to maintain

a high demand for the products and knowledge.

In the 1930s the grapefruit diet emerged followed in the 1950s by the cabbage

soup diet along with many other types of fad diets (Lynch, 2015, para. 7). These fad diets

were meant to provide quick weight loss results for which there was a high demand, thus informing the popularity and name recognition of these diets. Fad diets do not focus on transforming behavior for long term retention of results of weight loss, but rather at the short-term absence of behavior that informs a temporary status of weight loss that is more often from loss of water weight. This often focused on one facet of the weight loss process, which would be food consumption. This would produce results in the dieter rapidly achieving weight loss, but quickly diminishing those results as soon as they deviate from the diet. While results were gained, they were difficult to maintain, thus affecting the target market's trust and ultimately the demand for fad diets. While there was still a need for weight loss strategies the marketing strategy needed to be reevaluated as trust in the fad diet brand diminished. This led to the weight loss industry to take a different approach and started branding different weight-loss strategies and brands such as Weight Watchers.

The Weight Watchers brand moved away from dieting and focused on lifestyle and grounded their strategy in teaching people how to eat healthy for their bodies, understanding portion size and control, and long-term health. This model is followed by weight loss lifestyles such as the Atkins diet and the Paleo diet in which there is a focus on lifestyle changes to how the food is prepared and what types of food are included in one's diet (Lynch, 2015, para. 7). This reframing of "dieting" to "eating management" transformed the weight loss industry and informed recruitment and retention of its target market. "Weight loss businesses are adapting to a more holistic approach to health – Weight Watchers has developed an entirely new system that omits the actual word "diet" altogether, and Jenny Craig, while still firmly in the official weight loss game, offers

lifestyles strategies as part of their program (Franchise Help, 2018, Opportunity, para. 2)." The industry recognized the importance of language and branding as a means to maintain high demand for their products and services. The marketing of a product as a lifestyle develops a longer relationship with the buyer and becomes a staple in the daily organization of the buyer's life.

   The weight loss industry recognizes the stigma that surrounded the word 'diet' from the historical use and interaction with the word and how it was influencing their viability within their market. The rebranding focused on changing the perception, understanding, and connection of the products and services with the target market to support relevance and growth. Public stigma derived from the social understanding of conflict can influence the low social demand for conflict resolution services by not highlighting the USP. Stigmas and negative attitudes act as a form of resource deprivation as they create social barriers from public access to conflict resolution information, services, and knowledge as seen in Figure 1 below.
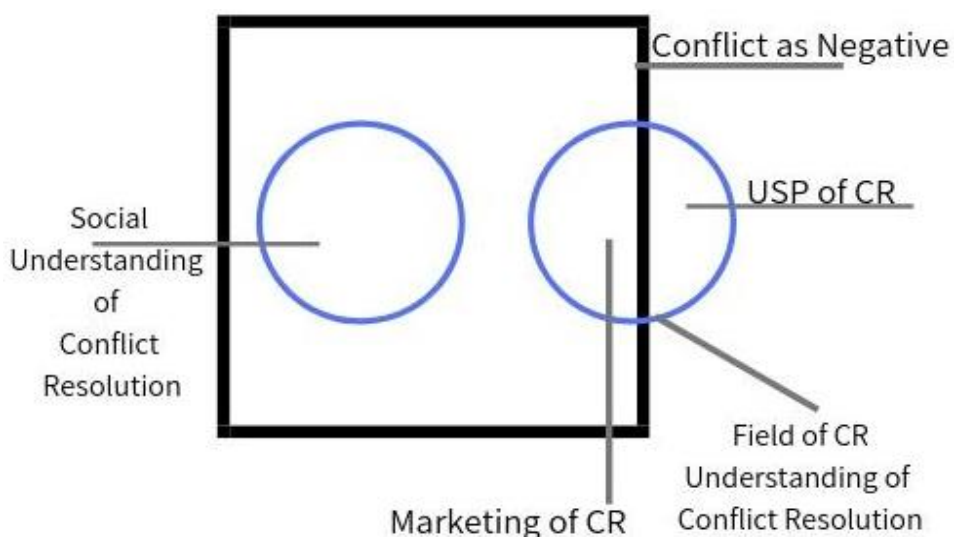
Figure 1. Business Model Evaluating the USP of Conflict Resolution

(Skinner, 2019)

Figure 1 serves as a representation of the relationships between the larger frame of conflict as negative and infield and outfield understanding of conflict resolution. It demonstrates the duality of the understanding of conflict resolution by the field and the space from which the USP for the target market lies within that knowledge and understanding. It represents the social barrier of conflict as negative as a part of the relationship from which the rebranding would have to address in order to connect with the target market.

The routine occurrence of conflict and conflict resolution in our lives creates conscious and unconscious assumptions and expectations about the understanding of both concepts. These assumptions and expectations about conflict assume conscious and unconscious control over the understanding, interpretation, and inform behavior in conflict and conflict resolution. The repetitive behavior of the association of conflict as negative acts as a scale of measurement and as the referent for future interactions with conflict and conflict resolution. "Members' accounts of everyday activities are used as prescriptions with which to locate, to identify, to analyze, to parable occasions, the prescriptions, they observe, are law-like, spatiotemporally restricted (Garfinkle, 1967, p. 2)." This ubiquitous process is how commonplace practices are organized. Once behavioral processes are conditioned and routinely practiced, our bodies unconsciously act in direct reflection of the routine history like muscle memory. Muscle memory allows behavior and associations to be carried out without conscious effort. This creates an obstacle from a person consciously being able to analyze their behavior and creates an absence of introspective assessment for the quality of conflict resolution practice. Conflict resolution is not only defined by positive behavior but also encompasses

negative behavior and is culturally relative. The absence of widespread public awareness

and understanding of infield concepts such as Galtung's negative and positive peace and

the spectrum of tools available to manage conflicts creates a limited frame from which

people can evaluate the efficiency and value of their short term and long-term conflict

resolution practices on their life. This informs a roadblock for making the distinction

between negative conflict resolution practices and "best" practices and how ones' conflict

management style and tool choices are informing his/her quality of life. The failure of the

field to make an impact on a clear socially understood distinction between best and

negative conflict resolution practices creates an un-informed standard of practice. The

conflict resolution practices are culturally informed and then replicated. The repetition of

the practice informs cultural notions of competency as in what is a best practice by using

historically repetition as a scale of measurement. The limitations in the social practices of

conflict resolution reflect a USP for the field to profit from by educating people about the

larger spectrum of conflict resolution options and their value in comparison with current

practices.

     The social competency of conflict resolution skills is not necessarily dictated by

quality, (because of the lack of understanding about the spectrum of tools in conflict

resolution) but rather informed by the quantity of experience. The social conditioning of

conflict resolution acts as a force that skews an understanding of the benefits of the field

of conflict resolution and the understanding of the actual task and achievement of the

perceived resolution. This conditioning of basic assumption behavior creates a distinct

difference in being able to uncover understandings of low social demand for conflict

resolution services and application of conflict resolution theories. This gap represents

how generally our society is consciously aware of identifying conflict, but not the process of conflict resolution. The gap between the high social need and low social demand indicates that we are living in a culture of conflict and it is the field's job to make a shift to a culture of conflict resolution that focuses on being an active part of the process. To understand how the habituated presence of conflict and conflict resolution affects our lives along a negative and positive continuum, the field needs to clarify the limits of the field and conduct a careful analysis to inform a macro shift in behavior and widespread knowledge. The conscious realization that the field is not immune to the same pitfalls serves to address and prescribe in others is the first step in developing an enterprise in innovation.

In this chapter, the researcher outlined how narrative monopolies perpetrate historical models of thinking by controlling the frame from which people understand and identify with different stimuli. The collective status quo of narrative monopolies function to blind populations to nuance and the USP of conflict resolution. The next chapter structures the methodology used by the research to address the question if the negative understanding of conflict influences the marketing and branding of conflict resolution.

Chapter 3: Methodology: The Framework for A Brand New Narrative

Language is a window of understanding that serves as a means to create interconnected understandings about the world around us. This research utilized descriptive qualitative research to uncover concepts and terms between two populations as a means to uncover if the social fact of conflict as negative influences the marketing and branding of conflict resolution. Its focus was to investigate, "people's attitudes, opinions, or beliefs about a particular issue or experience (Percey, Kostre, & Kostre, 2015)." Descriptive qualitative research was chosen as it was a strong fit for evaluating the terms and concepts in participants' everyday use and to focus on being able to describe, define, and characterize them within a participant's experience. This approach has allowed the researcher to uncover the invisible as a means for uncovering the extraordinary from the ordinary. By uncovering patterns in the common use of the terms conflict and conflict resolution, the researcher was able to understand and paint the picture of how the target market interacts with the terms and the cultural understandings connected with them. The ultimate goal of this research was to improve the practice of marketing of conflict resolution and to provide information that will serve as a body of understanding of the current status quo of the market. The findings will serve as a starting point for developing a lens for addressing space for growth within the field. These descriptions functioned as a window of understanding to start to map the relationships between the infield and target markets concepts of conflict and conflict resolution. This chapter outlines the approach, methods, instruments, and analysis procedure used in this research.

Research Questions and Approach

I.   How does the view of conflict as negative influence conflict resolution marketing?

II. How does the view of conflict as negative influence the brand of conflict resolution?

The research aimed to identify if there is an influence of the social fact of conflict as negative on the marketing of conflict resolution as a platform for understanding if it influences the brand of conflict resolution. The researcher interviewed two sets of populations as a means of comparative analysis from their data. The first population consisted of career conflict resolution practitioners that have developed or supported the development of marketing for their own conflict resolution business or the organization they work for. The second population consists of a sampling from the target market as outlined earlier in this research as millennials. This population had no gender, education, nor conflict resolution familiarity requirement, but had a prerequisite of having worked in a professional capacity for at least five years.

These interviews served for abstracting the definitional understanding surrounding the concept of conflict and conflict resolution from both an insider perspective and outsider perspective as a means to paint the picture of the current environment. This comparative analysis served to highlight similarities, differences, and nuances surrounding the definitional understanding of conflict and conflict resolution. This data served as a platform for identifying variable/s that may influence the gap between the low social demand and high social need for conflict resolution services. The research went further to evaluate current practices of the career conflict resolution

practitioners by asking them a sub-set of questions concerning their practices and ideas about the marketing and branding of the conflict resolution field.

The research was based on examining culturally informed differences and similarities in definitions between the emic and etic groups of conflict resolution field with a focus on utilizing language as a means of understanding. The analysis of the same word/s and their definition and descriptions of imagery and color associations serves as a platform for analyzing different culturally relative meanings and associations within each group. The uncovering of the definitional understandings of the concepts serves as a body of work from which the field can evaluate the current marketing of conflict resolution and use it as a platform for growth. Descriptive qualitative research serves as a method for defining the concepts of conflict and conflict resolution as a means to uncover relationships. The reason for uncovering similarities and differences between the two populations' definitions serves as a means for analyzing the marketing discourse and communication from producer and consumer. In essence, the focus was to uncover if the field and the target market are speaking the same language and if not, where are the gaps in the communication.

Data collection utilized interviews as a means to uncover the definitional relationship between the population and the concepts (Franceschetti, 2017, pp. 60-61). This strategy employed semi-structured interviews to gather a range of definitional understanding surrounding conflict and conflict resolution. The use of open-ended questions in the interviews created the space for conversational narrative surrounding the concepts as a means to access understanding about connections to the personal and larger context surrounding the words, images, and feelings connected to conflict and conflict

resolution. To address the marketing of conflict resolution the communications between producer and consumer should be evaluated as a means for uncovering successes and limitations in the communication between the two entities.

This research served as a means for understanding the definitional understandings of each group as a means to understand and outline culturally relative influences on the terms. Descriptive qualitative research served as a platform for abstracting how the emic and etic groups interpreted the concepts as a means for the researcher to then systematically interpret patterns within their responses. The definitional understandings produced from the interviews consisted of reflections, experiences, interpretations, and viewpoints that paint a picture of the frame of understanding from both the supply population and the demand population. The goal in abstracting these frames serves as a pinnacle point of analysis to compare narratives that are similar to conducting marketing research (Spencer Pyle, 2010, para. 5-10).

Marketing research provides businesses and industries with data to evaluate the needs and expectations of their target market. "By researching the answers to specific questions, small-business owners can learn whether they need to change their package design or tweak their delivery methods—and even whether they should consider offering additional services (Spencer Pyle, 2010, para. 1)." This research aimed to construct a platform of definitional understanding surrounding the concepts of conflict and conflict resolution to identify influences in the marketing communication and environment that can be influencing the gap between the high social need for conflict resolution services and low social demand.

Populations

This researcher interviewed two populations labeled Group A and Group B from here on forward. Group A consisted of nine participants who fulfilled the criteria of working in the conflict resolution field for over eight years and who have served in some capacity in developing marketing for their own or for the organization they work for marketing materials. There was no age range nor gender criteria for participation in this group. The gender make-up of the participants from Group A consisted of five participants that identified as female and 4 that identified as male. The median age of Group A participants was 60 years old and their geographical make-up spanned the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Within the United States, the participants' locations spanned from Pennsylvania, New York, Texas, Georgia, New Jersey, Oregon, and California. The median number of years in the field from the participants was 21 years and the industries that they work in spanned mediation training, higher education, military consulting, consulting, author, legal services, and more as many participants had multiple identities from which they applied their conflict resolution services. Nine participants volunteered to participate in this group. Due to their experience and deep understanding of the field and the extended length of the interviews for Group A, nine participants provided a sufficient data set to evaluate patterns and themes for analysis.

Group B consisted of twenty participants representing the target market of conflict resolution as defined in this research as millennials. This group consisted of participants that fulfilled the criteria of not identifying as working in the conflict resolution field nor in a conflict resolution capacity. The age criteria for this group was the age range of 25 – 37 years old and the participants for this study were required to be

18 years of age or older. There was no gender, education, nor familiarity with conflict resolution criteria for this population. The participants were required to have worked in a professional capacity for a minimum of five years. The term professional is defined by the researcher as the participants have been working a full-time job for a minimum of five years. This requirement is included as a means to create a control standard so that their interview reflections included work associations concerning conflict and conflict resolution. The gender make-up for this group was fourteen participants identified as female and six that identified as male. The median age was 30 years old and the participants' locations spanned New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. The industries that the Group B participants worked in included furniture sales, education, pharmaceuticals, airline customer service, healthcare, mortgage sales, technology, legal, fitness, financial, interior design, and retail. Twenty participants were chosen to participate in this group.

Recruitment

Group A and B recruitment for participants was conducted in two phases. The first phase included posting the Internal Review Board (IRB) approved flyer for recruitment on the professional social networking site www.linkedin.com. Group B IRB approved flyer was posted on www.linkedin.com and www.facebook.com. Interested parties from both Group A and B who commented on the post and/or direct messaged the researcher from the post were followed up with the IRB approved email message that included the IRB approved consent form for their review. Upon agreement to participate with the return of the signed consent form, the time and date of the interview was scheduled. At the end of the interview, the researcher asked participants if he/she would

share the flyer with their professional or personal connections for leads on possible participants for both Group A and B. This initiated the second phase of recruitment of following up with leads from the initial participants. The potential participants were emailed with the preapproved IRB email message and IRB approved consent form. All participants from Group A and B were recruited in this manner.

Limitations

One of the overarching limitations of this research is the absence of existing bodies of work that draw connections between the complex intersecting relationships between society and the field of conflict resolution. The aim of this research was to examine existing connections between the intra-identity conflict of the field of conflict resolution in comparison with the macro identity of conflict and conflict resolution in our society and its interdependent relationship with growth dynamics. While there is much research and documented theoretical models that outline the basics of how to examine these types of conflicts, there has been little research done on examining the internal and external culture of conflict resolution using these models. This research serves to champion a dynamic analysis of the field of conflict resolution to serve as a platform for sustainable industry growth.

This limitation represents a larger field misrepresentation of conflict resolution as the failure to consciously serve as an example of practicing the field's outlined theoretical models and best practices introspectively create a disconnect in the value they serve to the larger community. To inform large scale cultural shifts in society, the field must model the behavior it documents to serve as an example of the benefits that the field has to offer. This research serves as a starting point for our community to address, discuss,

learn, and grow by applying the models of practice from which the field has grounded its identity.

Role of the Researcher

The limitations of this research stemmed from the researcher's implicit bias from her journey of becoming a member of the conflict resolution community. When she began her studies in Conflict Resolution and Analysis in 2010, she had an outsider perspective that was built on her own unfamiliarity with the field and its practices. This outsider perspective served as a platform for creating the identity comparison between the socially constructed understanding of conflict and conflict resolution and the internal understandings of the latter. As she continued with her studies and integration into the field of conflict resolution, this unresolved conflict of identity would cycle in escalation and become latent throughout her academic career.

Additionally, as a millennial, the researcher recognizes the limitations that the socially enacted and projected demonization of her generation and the products of her generation has had on the engagement and marketing to them. Millennials are commonly and routinely referred to as lazy, entitled, and antisocial and are often used as a scapegoat for the blame of failures in our society. Millennials have been blamed for destroying industries such as the diamond industry, bar soap industry, department stores, napkins, and more (Matyszczyk, 2017). The practice of diminishing the new and next generation is not novel to our society. It has been practiced with the emergence of each new generation. This practice is grounded in the nostalgia of the past and creates limitations for understanding and maximizing growth for the future. Its focus is to cope with the failure of companies to maintain relevancy with the needs and wants of a new target

market. The researcher's goal is to recognize this phenomenon as a means for the field to not miss an opportunity for growth by breaking down the walls of bias.

Societal and infield understandings of what it means to be social and how to communicate are changing and the denial and sometimes demonization of this evolution creates roadblocks for maintaining relevance in our ever-evolving world. This nostalgia of past practices creates ideas of superiority of historical mediums of communication and inferiority of the reality of the evolution of communication on our identities. For example, the millennial preference for using texts, emails, and social media platforms to communicate is often viewed as or framed as a failure to be able to communicate, wherein traditional forms of communications such as meetings, phone calls, and writing letters are viewed as "real" communication. This research was grounded in breaking through this stigma to create space for maintaining relevance with shifts in communication and how people are behaving to increase the likelihood of a shift from a culture of conflict to a culture of conflict resolution.

Confidentiality

To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the interviewed participants, several action plans were employed. Once interview participants agreed to the interview and were scheduled, the list of the participants' names was filed electronically under password protection. All further information surrounding the participant data was labeled using language such as Participant A1 and Participant B6 to serve as their pseudonyms. This language was chosen by the researcher to maintain organization when conducting large volume interviews sets. The interviewees were given an IRB consent form that clearly outlined the research and all the potential risks it entailed. At the start of each

interview, a verbal review of the consent form and an opportunity to ask any questions was presented to each participant. Signed consent forms were scanned or downloaded electronically and saved under password protected files. Interviewees were not asked to identify themselves by name on the interview recording. Interview recordings were first transcribed using computer-automated transcription software that was password protected and then finalized by the researcher as a means to protect confidentiality. All interview recording transcriptions are saved under their categorized label and saved in a separate file from their names. Identifying characteristics and names of institutions were removed from quotes used by the participants to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

Risks

While the content of the interview material was not sensitive in nature, the interview did propose certain risks to the participants. The length of the interview was about one hour for Group A and 20 minutes for Group B. To prevent this risk of harming the participants, the length required to conduct the interview was clearly stated in the consent form. To address the risk of participants feeling nervous about answering questions correctly or associating the questions as taking a test, the researcher spent time at the beginning of the interview explaining that there is no right or incorrect way to answers the questions and that the researcher is only looking for patterns in ideas and reflections. During the discussion of ideas and themes that surround conflict and conflict resolution, there was an outlined possible risk of triggering emotional experiences with conflict and conflict resolution from the participants. To create safety for the participants from this risk, the participants were briefed on the content and themes of the interview prior to the interview. The participants were informed of all risks in the consent form and

they were informed at the start of the interview that they can stop the interview at any time.

Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

Interviews were used as the main data collection tool. Interviews were chosen as the main tool because it creates a data set of individual definitional understandings about conflict and conflict resolution from which patterns could be assessed. The patterns created windows to be able to evaluate connections to larger social definitions and understandings about conflict and conflict resolution. The researcher used two different sets of populations to serve as a comparative analysis to uncover overlapping or differences in definitions and understandings.

A semi-structured interview style was used as a means to create an in-depth conversation surrounding the topic. The first set of questions in the interview were closed questions addressing demography to quantify that the participants fulfilled the requirements to serve as a participant in the research, as well as some open-ended questions describing their knowledge of the conflict resolution field. (Appendix A) The second part of the interview consisted of using open-ended questions to discuss definitional understanding and definitional descriptions about conflict and conflict resolution, perceptions of the role of conflict and conflict resolution in their daily lives, and questions surrounding imagery and color associations with the concepts. (Appendix A) Group A which consisted of the career conflict resolution practitioners had a third set of questions that explored different practices of marketing of conflict resolution, ideas about misconceptions about conflict resolution, and ideas about branding and the future. The interviews for Group A ran an average hour in length and the interview for Group B

ran an average of 20 minutes in length. All of the interviews took place and were recorded using an online conference room from the platform www.zooom.com. Recordings were first computer transcribed utilizing a secure computer automated transcription software that is password protected from www.Happyscribe.com, which is a service in which a software transcribes the audio. Then, the transcriptions were reviewed and finalized by the researcher in her private office using headphones.

The questions were designed to address different aspects of the definitional understanding of conflict and conflict resolution. The participants were asked to define conflict and conflict resolution. These questions served to create a narrative context surrounding the terms as a means of analysis for the frame of understanding from a definitional standpoint. The participants were asked to describe feelings, images, and colors that they connected with the terms. This served as a means for analysis for understanding the frame of reference of positive and negative associations and connections with conflict and conflict resolution identity via imagery, colors, emotion, and description. Examples of each concepts were asked of the participants as a means to create experiential grounding of the meanings of the terms in their personal life, in a larger macro sense, and to gauge intensity and impact of the words. Time and space associations were explored by asking the participants to discuss how present the role of conflict and conflict resolution is in his/her lives.

Analysis Procedures

The researcher utilized qualitative research analysis software called Atlas.ti. This software provided the researcher with tools to streamline the coding analysis of the data. The first stage of thematic coding analysis was coding Group A and Group B data sets

from Part II of the interviews from which all participants were asked the same set of questions. These data sets were first coded to organize the predetermined categories to examine in the analysis. A thematic coding analysis approach was used to analyze the participants' narrative about their feelings and ideas about conflict and conflict resolution. (Aronson, Spring 2014, p. 1) The data was coded into the codes on the table below that were predefined from the content of the interview questions sets.

      The researcher was open to the emergence of new codes from the data and codes were added to accommodate the emergence of new categories. For example, the code 'Emotions in Interview' was added to address patterns of expression of emotion from the participants during the interview. This thematic coding analysis was constructed as a framework that similarly models marketing research by focusing on "identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behavior (Aronson, Spring 2014, p. 1)." Marketing research is reflective of how the brain categorizes the language and symbols used in the marketing, the emotional response connected to language and symbols, and how it informs action (Devault, 2019, para 5-10) and the codes reflect the drive at describing those categories in connection with conflict and conflict resolution.

See Table 1 on next page:

Table 1

Phase One Thematic Coding for Group A and B – Interview Section II

Key:

P = Predetermined Codes

I = Inductive Codes

Code Name	Code Description
Color of conflict (P)	Color associations with conflict
Color of conflict resolution (P)	Color associations with conflict resolution
Conflict definitions (P)	Definitional understanding of conflict
Conflict descriptions (P)	Descriptions of conflict; examples of conflict
Conflict imagery (P)	Images and visualizations of conflict
Conflict resolution definitions (P)	Definitional understanding of conflict resolution
Conflict resolution descriptions (P)	Descriptions of conflict resolution; examples of conflict resolution
Conflict resolution imagery (P)	Images and visualizations of conflict resolution
Conflict resolution wants (P)	What they wanted to learn about conflict resolution; expressions of wished/desired knowledge
Emotions in conflict (I)	Emotions expressed towards conflict
Emotions in conflict resolution (I)	Emotions and feelings expressed towards conflict resolution
Emotions in interview (I)	Emotions and feelings expressed in the interview in connection with the material
Linguistics of conflict (I)	Word/s associated with conflict; saying associated with conflict; idioms; conflict jargon
Linguistics of conflict resolution (I)	Word/s associated with conflict resolution; saying associated with conflict resolution; idioms; conflict resolution jargon
Time in conflict (I)	Feelings and descriptions of time and space in conflict
Time in conflict resolution (I)	Feelings and descriptions of time and space in conflict resolution
Understanding of conflict resolution field (P)	Knowledge of the field of conflict resolution

Once both Groups A and B interviews were coded for these initial categories, the data sets were separated by group and each code was evaluated for prominent concepts as a whole, then by group, and then against each other. Sub-codes that evolved were from patterns of topics, linguistics used, feelings expressed, or expression of behavior by the participants (Aronson, Spring 2014, p. 2). For example, the data was first coded for 'Color of Conflict' was then coded for patterns of color associations that occurred in the data. After that, each group was filtered through this list for analysis of similarity, difference, frequency, and/or causation. This created pools of comparison between Group A and Group B data for analysis of similarities, differences, and global themes. Coding outcomes of different categories were compared against each other for further analysis such as 'Color of Conflict' and the 'Color of Conflict Resolution'.

The second phase of analysis was to code Group A sub-set of questions from the interview Section III about marketing and branding. The data set was coded in the same method as phase one. The predetermined codes are listed in the table below. Identifying patterns in the marketing of conflict resolution serves as a means for evaluating the current status quo of practice as a means for improving practice.

See Table 2 on next page:

Table 2

Phase Two Thematic Coding for Group A – Interview Section III

Key:

P = Predetermined Codes

I = Inductive Codes

Code Name	Code Description
Branding (P)	Include discussion of branding including the branding of the field; the branding of themselves or their company
Marketing (P)	Discussion of marketing strategies; ideas about marketing
Misconceptions of conflict (P)	Ideas surrounding the misconceptions about conflict
Misconceptions of conflict resolution (P)	Ideas surrounding the misconceptions about conflict resolution
Conflict resolution wants (P)	Ideas, hopes, or wants for the field of conflict resolution
Conflict resolution needs (P)	Ideas on what the field of conflict resolution needs or lacks
Technology (P)	Discussion of the use of technology

The coded data created an arena from which themes emerged. The themes that emerged were used to put together the puzzle of the larger collective's experience as a means for analysis (Aronson, Spring 2014, pp. 1-2). Patterns that emerged within the codes spoke to globalized themes connecting a framework of ideas (Gibbs, 2007). The framework told a story from which the researcher listened to and used to address the research questions in this work. Patterns of attitudes and beliefs emerged across both groups and within each group. These patterns spoke to a deeper lived reality of the participants and their connection with the concepts of conflict and conflict resolution.

The researcher's aim was to describe the influence of the negative social understanding of conflict on conflict resolution marketing and branding. The evaluation

of symbols, language, and emotions attached to them creates the frame of understanding to evaluate the current status quo of the marketing of conflict resolution. In order to address gaps in understanding between conflict resolution and its target market, the first step is outlining what is the current state of understanding, practice, and ideas. Chapter Four outlines the data collected from the interviews about the infield and outfield relationship with conflict and conflict resolution.

Chapter 4: Findings: Data Results and Analysis

The ultimate goal of this research was to serve as a base of knowledge to support improving practice in the conflict resolution field for the future by describing the current status quo and what exists within the lens of the communication of the field of conflict resolution. The interviews were designed to address associations with the language and symbols used in the field and to gauge social understanding of the field from the outlined target population. As a means to address the research questions of 'How does the view of conflict as negative influence conflict resolution marketing and the brand of conflict resolution?' The importance of this research question is that it lies at the epicenter of understanding the relationship between the message, the messenger, and its audience. This chapter outlines the findings from the interviews that are followed by discussion and analysis of the findings in Chapter Five.

Binary Relationships between Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Both sample groups were asked the question 'when you think of conflict, what color/s come to mind?' The answers ranged in description, but several patterns were found. Similarities in the representation of the color red in association with the word conflict were found between both groups. Five participants in Group A and fifteen participants in Group B discussed the color red in association with the word conflict. While the color red was a significant overlapping response in the association between the two groups, they were discussed in different capacities and different lights. Group A discussed red in connection with being vibrant or in connection with other colors.

"Not red in an angry way. Red with a slight touch of coral in it. In a very vibrant way. This color I have all of these clothes in… but it's just again very, very energetic very driven. Colors have vibrations. It's very high vibration and for me very motivational and exciting." (Participant A1)

"Well, there is the obvious color of red which is how people respond. The blood starts flowing. Our faces become red. The red is the color of the flag you wave in front of the bull. And even it's been shown that competitive sports teams that wear the color red do better, then those that wear the color blue. I would say that there are two other colors that come to mind and those are blue and green. Blue, because of the fact that it really represents a kind of peaceful place and green because it implies a kind of ecological understanding that conflict is an ecology. An entire system and that out of it comes renewal. Rebirth. The color of spring." (Participant A9)

While comparatively, Group B used red in association with negative feelings and the use

of connections with war or violence.

"Red that's the first thing when I think about conflict like in the bigger picture like with countries or some, you know, civil unrest. Red usually represents war." (Participant B12)

"Interviewer: Any reasoning behind the red? B9: Just because it's like a negative thing I guess." (Participant B9)

While the two groups shared the color association of conflict with red, it was

described with different overarching lights. Moreover, the responses reflect a gap in

understanding between the two groups with Group A contextualizing conflict color

associations in a more positive light and Group B contextualizing conflict color

associations in a more negative light. Table 3 outlines all the color associations that were

made from each participant from both groups. Many participants said more than one

color in their answer, and some had no color associations.

Table 3

Colors and Color Descriptions of Conflict

Color and Color Descriptions	Group A	Group B
Black/White	0	14
Blue	1	2
Bright/Vibrant	2	1
Dark	0	9
Grey	0	9
No Color	2	0
Orange	1	1
Red	5	15
Yellow	1	2

In addition to the color red, Group B discussed black and white, and grey. Black and white were referenced fourteen times in Group B and grey was referenced in their associations with conflict nine times. They discussed black and white in reference to conflict in the colloquial way people often discuss conflict and conflict resolution with idioms such as, "It is black or white" or "It's either black or white, no middle ground". The way the idiom "black or white" is used is to discuss absolutes or clearly defined predetermined solutions. It represents a more limited view of conflict that has a more rigid defined space from which there is a right choice and wrong choice or there is a winner or a loser.

"Black white and gray because that's how we think about it. For some people, it's either black or white, but sometimes it's all shades of gray" (Participant B12)

This limited view of conflict in association with the outlining of colors deviated starkly from the descriptions of the colors of conflict from the conflict resolution practitioners where they discuss energy, rebirth, vibrancy, and renewal.

"*Kind of vibrant colors that both honor the conflict and honor the clash and honor the idea that conflicts can be a good thing.*" (Participant A3)

Wherein as, Group B's overarching theme in their color associations connected to a negative association or use of the descriptive words such as dark.

"Yes, I guess you usually associate negative with darker colors." (Participant B9)

"Just like a gray like, you know, black. Like just like dark tones." (Participant B20)

It is important to note that the association between black and white was with the word conflict and not conflict resolution. This metaphorical representation reflects feelings of time and space associations in reference to conflict. A pattern that arose throughout all the interviews, especially during the conflict definition section and is reflective here as well, is that conflict is often defined by conflict resolution practices,

such as predetermined solutions. This is discussed further in the definition section, but it is important to note here as well. The color association of win/lose by the representation of black and white reiterate the relationship between conflict and conflict resolution. It is representative of the larger interdependent relationship that the two concepts have with one another and into the larger global theme of binary understanding that serves as an overarching theme throughout the research. The relationship between conflict and conflict resolution is viewed as binary creating causal relationships in thinking. Such as, if conflict is negative, then conflict resolution is positive. This is supported in Group B explanation for why they chose black and white for their associations with conflict. The representation of conflict as black and white funneling into a larger global theme of the representation of binary concepts throughout all the interviews and the role that binary thinking plays into understanding conflict and conflict resolution.

"So, I think that's why destruction becomes black and pure becomes white. There's just opposite. That's why black is the first thing that pops into my head." (Participant B6)

In addition, the color grey was associated with conflict nine times in Group B. The use of the color grey in connection with the color representation of conflict as black and white. The idiom "grey area" is often used colloquially in relation to conflict and conflict resolution. This idiom is used to describe a space that is not clearly defined and can represent uncertainty in comparison with the positive and embracing description given by Group A. These observations in the use of associations of color with the word conflict describe a stark contrast in the feelings and ideas surrounding conflict between the two groups.

Both groups were asked the question, "when you think of the words conflict resolution, what color/s come to mind?" Similarities between Group A and Group B in

color associations with conflict resolution reflected the colors yellow, blue, and green. A

theme of positivity was found between both groups building into the binary relationship

between conflict and conflict resolution that is contextualized within the frame of the

social fact of conflict as negative. This represents how the social understanding of

conflict as negative influences meaning and understanding of conflict resolution.

Table 4

Colors and Color Descriptions of Conflict Resolution

Color and Color Descriptions	Group A	Group B
Black and White	1	2
Blue	0	6
Dark	0	1
Green	4	10
Grey	1	4
Happy	0	2
Light Blue	5	0
Neutral	0	1
No color	1	0
Pastels	1	3
Purple	2	2
Red	2	4
Vibrant	2	4
White	0	5
Yellow	3	10

The table below maps the similarities in perception in association with conflict

resolution with the colors blue, green, and yellow. Associations with blue and green were

connected to ideas of flow by providing examples from the environment and society such

as water, the sun, and the use of traffic lights. The reflections and use of imagery to

provide examples are reflective of process and movement in comparison to the

association of conflict that was more connected to a place in time or by the event of

choice between black and white. This reflects the binary relationship between the two

concepts and how they influence each other. In that, the concepts are understood in relationship to each other and the concave and convex relationship they play in the social world.

Table 5

Color in Conflict Resolution Similarities – Group A and B

Colors	Group A	Group B
Blue	5	6
Green	4	10
Yellow	3	10

The participants' imagery descriptions in association with their color association were overwhelmingly positive with depictions of positive landscapes and clear outlining of the feelings connected to the color such as 'moving forward'.

"Blue skies, blue." (Participant A2)

"Oddly enough I'm going to say more of a green, you know, moving forward as opposed to, you know, the stoplight red or yellow caution. Let's just go, you know, with a with something simple that everybody is familiar with. Yeah. So, if you think about it in those terms and, you know, possibly more of a blue-green. That idea of a flow." (Participant A5)

"Green. Like a Go green. Like light from road sign… not the road sign. But the road green light." (Participant B12)

"And green I literally thought of a traffic light. You get the green light and you can move forward." (Participant B6)

 "A big sun. I think of it as a big conflict being resolved." (Participant B13)

Differences were noted in five members of Group B associating of conflict resolution with white, while none of the members of Group A created this association. White is reflected in traditional ideas of purity being white. These are social

understandings that have religious undertones such as with religious associations representations of the white wedding dress and the white first communion outfits. Additionally, it reflects the historical connections of war in the use of waving the white flag that represents truce or surrendering. This association is connected with the social frame of conflict being defined by war and framed as something negative.

"Well, why? Because of purity and what I mentioned before about the opposite." (Participant B6)

"Definitely lighter. I would say white, pretty much you know, everything on the lighter side pretty much." (Participant B9)

Descriptive words used by Group B were more reflective of the altruistic views of conflict resolution and demonstrative of the clear binary between conflict as negative and conflict resolution as positive.

"And happy spring colors yellows – greens." (Participant B16)

"Now see, it would be bright colors - happy colors." (Participant B20)

"You know, just you know pretty much all lighter colors. Very peaceful." (Participant B9)

"I guess softer, softer, more pale. Easter. You know, the Easter bunny hopping around." (Participant B2)

The color association created a building block for understanding and observing the ways in which the different groups characterized conflict and conflict resolution. It informs a pillar in the global theme of the terms as binary with the demonstration of the categorization of the color associations. Conflict was more often categorized as negative and conflict resolution was characterized as positive creating a binary relationship and understanding of the terms. This was furthered noted in how conflict was viewed within a more rigid frame and conflict resolution being viewed with a frame of fluidity. Group A and B had some similarities in perceptions of color about the two concepts which depict a

larger shared social understanding. While there was a shared association, the infield

understanding differed from social understanding that conflict is understood as negative.

This difference in understanding serves as a gap in language, not language in the sense of

speaking but in the sense of meaning association and how that can inform how messages

are understood between the groups. Group B's clear outline of conflict as negative

reflects the binary relationship and how the frame of conflict as negative informs the

understanding of conflict resolution as positive. The color associations open the door to

examining the relationship between the populations and the concepts.

Traditional Views of Conflict as Negative Creates Absence of Creativity

Participants from both groups were asked to describe the images that came to

mind when they heard the word conflict. Patterns in Group A's reflection on the images

associations with conflict fell into three categories: images of conflict resolution spaces,

traditional images of conflict as war or a fight, and the absence of imagery. Two of the

conflict resolution practitioners described imagery of conflict through depicting conflict

resolution spaces. This is reflective of the pattern in color association of depicting,

describing, and defining conflict via conflict resolution and their interdependent and

binary relationship. This was found in two of Group B's answers as well.

"Yeah, so me... me personally... the image that comes up to me is a studio or a place where people make messes in order to make something beautiful. So, I think if studios, that could be a recording studio, that could be a creative visual arts studio, so any place where creative people get together and make messes in order to create beauty."
(Participant A3)

"I think the drawings would have changed over the years. Today I would draw three people in a circle talking to each other. Because that's most of my experience with conflict is working with groups of people, either in threes or in groups. But the image that comes to me is a kind of energy that flows between those three people: the third person, of course, is the mediator. Two people alone are likely to spark - when the energy hits

them. The mediator is to turn the energy into a form that can be accepted without defensiveness or counterattack." (Participant A9)

"Yeah or even a large conference room with you know a meeting with people." (Participant B13)

"People. Like family and friends, work…maybe I guess sitting down maybe at a table. Yeah maybe sitting down like they're getting ready to talk about it." (Participant B14)

Two members of Group A had an absence of imagery in association with conflict. This was a very important finding that the participants from the conflict resolution practitioners could not come up with an image that they associated with conflict. The lack of imagery plays into the role of complacency in the imagery used in the field. By the lack of defining an image, the control in what images are associated with conflict resolution and how those images are understood and perceived are controlled by the audience. In the color associations with conflict there was the shared use of color between the groups, but different descriptions of what that looked like to each group. With the lack of imagery associations from Group A represents the lack of active development or conscious work at developing and branding imagery through the conflict resolution field perception. The absence of imagery does not address the difference in perceptions. Rather it allows the audience to define the image and what it means to them. This plays a role in the identity and branding of conflict resolution in that the identity has been shaped by the social understanding of conflict as negative.

"I don't have any particular images. It depends on the conflict…. I don't have a visual image of conflicts. I just don't... I think a lot of people probably don't have a visual image of conflict." (Participant A4)

"Because again, you know, that's like saying what does food look like. you know what I mean, like there's a million kinds of food. There's a million kinds of conflict. So, if someone said if I ask you what food looks like is there only one image that comes to your mind and so my answer would be no." (Participant A4)

Furthermore, two other participants from Group A described the imagery through how they imagined others would visualize conflict and deflected to answer what images they associated with conflict. They discussed the traditional images which were aligned with traditional concepts of conflict such as war and fighting. This absence of imagery from conflict resolution professionals in defining the field's identity with conflict serves to illustrate the influence that the social understanding of conflict as negative has on conflict resolution marketing. The participants in Group B recognized the presence of conflict as negative in the imagery.

"But, you know, I think when I do this kind of word association with my students or with clients and I'll say, you know, what pops into your mind of conflict. Yeah, they'll think of war, stress, divorce, neighbors fighting, you know, more negative imagery because we've been wired to see conflict as an inherently negative thing or something that we want to avoid or fix rather than channel." (Participant A3)
"We're gonna stay away from war. We're gonna stay away from the negatives, we're going to... you know, I think everybody who starts in the field or when you're teaching a class in conflict resolution starts from that point. If you use... give me some synonyms for instance with your students, they're gonna come back with all the, you know, dispute, war, that that sort of thing. But if we take a look at it from the perspective that it's an opportunity for change or to change something or to upset the status quo." (Participant A5)

This particular reaction reflects heavily on trying to understand the influence as outlined in the research question: How does the view of conflict as negative influence conflict resolution marketing? The absence of career conflict resolution practitioners to be able to clearly define or outline imagery connected to conflict from an infield perspective describes an environment of complacency to the social norms and understanding of conflict to inform the imagery. Furthermore, it is descriptive of the practice of practitioners avoiding actively defining or describing imagery from his/her point of view. It serves to describe the existence and presence of the social understanding

of conflict as negative and its presence and influence in the marketing of conflict resolution.

Additionally, while Group A participants addressed the vagueness of the word conflict and having imagery associated with it, it begs the field to address the disconnect between the larger community images. If a person Googles the word conflict and looks under Google images to find the images that have been tagged as conflict, a clear pattern of understanding and of traditional societal definitions of conflict as negative are present in the images. The images reflect patterns of yelling, fighting, anger, competition, and win/lose situations that reflect the images Group B describes in their associations. The participants from Group B did not have trouble finding answers for their image association with conflict. Similarities that crossed over between the groups were images of conflict being depicted as fighting or war. Group B imagery was heavily weighted in descriptions of images of anger, fighting, yelling, and arguments and this was reflective in some of the responses from Group A, as well. The most used words from Group B in discussing images of conflict were argue and arguing. It appeared 13 times in their responses.

"People yelling at each other or silence when they are not speaking to each other. Those two extremes." (Participant A2)

"Blood (laughs) Red and orange and red and yellow which are the colors of blood, fire, explosions and so forth. That's the imagery that I usually use in my textbooks and in my training manuals." (Participant A7)

"Well, something stuck with me from law school, where litigation was described as two bulls going at it in a field. And so that to me has always created that mind metaphor for that's what conflict is. These two bulls in a field going at it and, you know, the bulls can have different attributes, but I thought that was a very apt... I thought that was an apt image" (Participant A8)

"Maybe just the political time I would say like a wall, unfortunately. Even like flames like fire like it creates heat." (Participant B1)

"OK, so conflict I would say like the first on the call to mind would be like a physical altercation probably." (Participant B11)

"I guess maybe spatting or arguing." (Participant B13)

"I think. OK. Probably the wars." (Participant B15)

"Like arguments or disagreements on beliefs or points of view." (Participant B16)

"The first thing that comes to mind is people fighting like physically and then also just like yelling at each other." (Participant B17)

"Fight. Two people fighting." (Participant B4)

The imagery associated with conflict was heavily dominated by the traditional views of conflict as war and fighting and had an overarching negative association with it. There is a disconnect from the descriptive words used by Group A in association with the color and conflict and the descriptions of the images of conflict. This represents a shared space between the groups in the understanding of conflict. That the social understanding of conflict as negative is very much a part of the infield perceptions of conflict. It reflects the influence of conflict as negative has on imagery within conflict resolution imagery and marketing. It describes the duality of the understanding of conflict from conflict resolution practitioners in that they share the social understanding of conflict as negative, but simultaneously have a heightened understanding of the infield reflections of conflict as neutral and an opportunity. It reflects on how Group A constantly navigates between these two understandings and frames.

Both groups were asked to describe the images that came to mind in association with the word conflict resolution. The interviewer often framed the question asking if the participant had to draw the word conflict resolution, what would they draw. The majority

of the conflict resolution imagery fell into the binary representations of the frame of images of conflict as negative, therefore conflict resolution is positive. There was a presence of the classic images that have been historically used in conflict resolution. There was an overwhelmingly positive arch across both groups in their reflections. This plays into this larger global theme of binary thinking and the role it plays in constructing the space from which conflict and conflict resolution are understood within the frame of the social understanding that conflict is negative.

"Just two satisfied people." (Participant A2)

"A group of happy people of different colors, nationalities and religions." (Participant B15)

Absences of images of conflict resolution occurred only in Group A that consisted of career conflict resolution practitioners. The absence of images associated with conflict resolution is representative of the lack of imagery that adequately represents conflict resolution from a conflict resolution standpoint, which was also seen in the lack of images for conflict. This is reflective of the complacency in allowing the audience to define the images and their connection with them. The lack of ability to create images can be connected to the lack of industry recognizability as a field.

"Honestly I'm trying to think of something… what honestly happens. Black. I don't have any images associated with that." (Participant A1)

"Interviewer: Do you have any images that come to mind when you when we when you hear the word conflict resolution? A4: No." (Participant A4)

Classic images of conflict resolution include the handshake, the bridge, stock images of businesspeople at a table or at a meeting, peace dove, peace sign, and others. These classic images represent conflict resolution and often can be problematic. A participant from Group A discussed these images as, "*So these are images that come to*

mind, but I don't support. Some of the ones I mentioned before, the roundtable, the people shaking hands, bridges, doves...But I also realize that as powerful as those images might be, they don't necessarily represent where people are in their conflict and I think those images actually drive people away from our field rather than bring them to us. And I say people, I mean the end users of conflict resolution services, not people who want careers in the field (Participant A3)." The commonly used images represent traditional and social understandings of conflict and conflict resolution through the lens of conflict as negative or as zero/sum. The interdependent understanding of conflict and conflict resolution creates a binary reflection of emotion in the representation of conflict resolution. While conflict images were outlined as negative, the conflict resolution images were outlined as positive.

"As a tennis match, where there's a winner and there's a loser." (Participant A2)

"Walking through a very steep mountain" (Participant A6)

"It would be difficult to draw because what I'd like to draw would be people holding hands, but you can't quite see the hands reaching out to each other - experiencing each other." (Participant A9)

"A smiley face or a house like a home... Like trees like positive landscape like a forest almost." (Participant B1)

"A big sun. There is a light at the end of the tunnel." (Participant B13)

"Maybe by something corny like people like standing up and holding hands - sunshine and rainbows." (Participant B14)

"People shaking hands. Probably like calmer conversation. A lot of head nods." (Participant B17)

"People shaking hands, at ease, maybe smiling, comfortable" (Participant B19)

"I would probably draw happy people, like you maybe, like a group of people around the table everybody you know let's say like shaking hands or you know happy faces talking about maybe you know how they resolved the issue." (Participant B20)

"People shaking hands. That's the first thing that comes up are people talking to one another." (Participant B3)

"A handshake. It is the first thing that pops to mind." (Participant B6)

The representation of imagery of conflict resolution is described by conflict and the binary relationship between the two is omnipresent. The influence of the view of conflict as negative can be observed within this construct. It is representative of the 'before and after' types of imagery that is classically used on infomercial television in their descriptions of conflict resolution. The use of a contract to depict value in the latter category.

This participant described conflict imagery as two bulls in a field. This representation of conflict resolution reflects that inverse relationship.

"So, I often think about what you would do differently to avoid the two bulls going at it in the field. Would you put them in different fields? If you're going to put them in the same field, you know, will there be a fence down the middle or what needs to happen so that these two bulls are locking horns in the metaphor for litigation. And it's really hard." (Participant A8)

"The same set of people but I drew, for example, for conflict but shaking hands and smiles and faces that you know with varying words like. I'm glad we agreed. I'm glad we found the solution or something like that." (Participant B12)

"I would think the first thing that comes to my mind would be like on the left would be two siblings you know like arguing or you know having a disagreement and then on the right it would be them hugging and because I feel like that is like the conflict and then like the like love at the end because you know that would be the best resolution." (Participant B18)

There were misrepresentations described in both groups. The misrepresentation of conflict resolution as therapy was reflected in both groups. While colloquially the process of conflict resolution at times can be described as therapeutic in nature, therapy and conflict resolution are two separate practices. This misrepresentation is indicative of a

lack of knowledge and understanding of what conflict resolution practitioners do. Additionally, it represents a reliance on familiar and defined industries language to describe the field.

"[...] a big therapy couch." (Participant A7)

"Psychologists." (Participant B4)

The evaluation of imagery associated with the terms serves as another pillar for examining the relationships both groups have with the concepts. Examining the imagery created a space for describing the backdrop that the social understanding of conflict as negative has on both groups. It represented the influence of the binary relationship stemming from the social understanding that conflict is negative and how it serves to create understanding for both concepts. The lack of original imagery from the conflict resolution practitioners serves as a window into evaluating the identity of conflict resolution in terms of branding.

Emotional Divides Across Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Participants from both groups were asked to describe how the word conflict made them feel. Patterns in the emotional descriptions connected to conflict in Group B reflected the assumptions and traditional ideas of conflict as negative. Eighteen out of the twenty participants described conflict as negative, one described conflict as situational, and one associated conflict with possibilities. The overwhelming association with conflict as negative describes the researcher's outline of the social understanding of conflict as negative. In Table 6 below, it outlines the different types of descriptive words that were used by the participants in Group B. The descriptive words have a connotation of uncertainty to them such as anxious, stressful, tension, and angry.

"I don't enjoy conflict... like I don't like when it comes around it doesn't make me feel good. Almost like a nauseous feeling." (Participant B1)

"I don't know. I think the word conflict seems like intimidating, I guess. So, it kind of makes you feel like anxious a little bit. Well, it makes me feel anxious like using the word conflict. I don't know I just... Whenever I hear the word conflict, I just think of like I guess I associated it with something negative like something bad or like I'm in trouble or something like that." (Participant B14)

"Conflict is when something makes you step back and think twice about making a decision. Something that makes you feel uncomfortable. Something that you feel is wrong deep inside." (Participant B15)

"I mean how does it make me feel, when I hear the word conflict stressed.... anxious. Yeah, yeah. Stressed and anxious and it's like how do I... how did I get into this conflict in the first place." (Participant B20)

"Conflict I mean it's not really the word itself probably isn't really a good feeling and actually makes me a little anxious because conflict makes me anxious. So yeah I guess kind of anxious." (Participant B3)

Table 6

Descriptive Words Used in Association with Conflict from Group B

Descriptive words used in association with conflict	Number of times used in Group B descriptions of conflict
Anxious	4
Emotional	5
Stressful	6
Tension	9
Nauseous	1
Avoidance	5
Angry	2
Uncomfortable	6

Comparatively, Group A, the conflict resolution practitioners overwhelming described conflict as associated with opportunities and possibilities and moreover situational. Some described their initial gut reaction as negative but identified that

through their training they were able to transform that initial emotional response to

conflict and reframe it as normal and an opportunity for change. This references the

duality of the understanding of conflict by conflict resolution practitioners. Moreover,

this creates an important reflection on the time and spatial understanding of conflict that

plays into this web of understanding. The normalization of conflict by conflict resolution

practitioners transcends the pattern of the social understanding from being understood

within the frame of a fight, an argument, or a clear event. A majority of Group B used the

example of it feels negative because they associate the term with a fight or argument. The

connection with the event aspect of conflict informs the way it is contextualized for

people outside of the field. This differentiation of emotional descriptions represents a

difference in an emotional connection to the concepts and plays into the larger gap

between Group A and Group B's relationship with conflict, as well as the influences of

the context of time from which conflict is understood.

"So, depends on the conflict how it makes me feel." (Participant A1)

"So, I can see the possibilities. That is exciting. And what you think in your head is not how it's going to go. You have to involve the other people. So, you can you can make a strategy and you can plan what you'll do but how you come at somebody else, how you come to somebody else, how you invite somebody else into the problem at each little tiny bit of the step determines a lot. So, the possibilities are very exciting when you can see them." (Participant A1)

"Well how it makes me feel as, you know, as part of the field, I see it as an opportunity, as a catalyst, as just a normal part of human beings… being social animals and something that does need skills and mechanisms and processes in order for it to be productive." (Participant A3)
"Well after all these years the conflict is good. It allows you to get what you need. Basically, it's I mean to get something that you don't have. Or to a change the structure or whatever." (Participant A6)

"Well it it's a reality. It doesn't really... The use of the word doesn't evoke a particular emotion other than it is a reality. And to be resolved something needs to happen and it can be something positive, it can be something negative. But unless there is a change or a

change agent, it will just continue. So, it doesn't...so it doesn't evoke any emotion for me particularly." (Participant A8)

This represents an important disconnect in understanding the marketing and branding of conflict resolution and the role that the social understanding of conflict as negative plays into it. The emotional connections and responses to conflict are reflective of the global binary themes between the two groups and almost reflective of speaking another language with the difference in associated meanings, understandings, and associations with time and space. The stark differentiation between the emotional responses to conflict are representative of symbolic interactionism and how patterns of understanding represent how people make sense of the world (Macionis, 2014, pp. 20-22). Identifying interpretations and responses of stimuli provide a window into understanding how messages are connecting with different audiences. The audience's negative emotional connection with the word and idea of conflict play into the larger picture of the binary relationship with conflict resolution.

Both groups were asked to give their emotional responses to the words conflict resolution and a majority of the responses were grounded in positive attributes. Group A described the conflict resolution process and how that process could make themselves feel and make others feel. They used words like helpful, humanistic, normal, and passionate. For Group B, while a majority of the responses were grounded in positive attributes with eleven of the twenty participants defining it as positive, a distinction took place. The participants that discussed conflict resolution as an event described more positive and satisfying attributes in comparison with participants that discussed conflict resolution as a process. The participants that discussed conflict resolution as a process described conflict resolution as challenging, anxious, and uneasy. The event of conflict

resolution signaled an ending or a change in emotion from the negative feeling in conflict to the positive feeling of a resolution. While the understanding of conflict resolution as a process had no defined end or solution and was described with feelings of uncertainty. The role of time and space associations plays an important part in uncovering the social understanding that surrounds conflict and conflict resolution.

Table 7

Emotions in Conflict Resolution Co-occurrence table between Event and Process from Group B

Emotional descriptions	Event	Process
Anxious/Uneasy	0	2
Challenging	1	4
Discouraged	0	1

"Well, a little bit discouraged. Because I know conflict resolution can be a very long process. So, I guess discouraged that I might be changing sides and just the whole process itself." (Participant B11)

"It makes me feel still slightly anxious. But I would say still slightly anxious for some reason I don't know why...Yeah. Yeah, the conflict is still present and I, and I don't know if it will be part of it another question you'll ask, But, maybe because I don't always like expressing like different views from other people. So, hearing it like…. hearing a different view or why there's a conflict or hearing different opinion might make me anxious or upset." (Participant B10)

"Well I mean it's in the word resolution, so it automatically sounds positive. In my opinion, you know, a problem being resolved. It has a positive connotation to it." (Participant B13)

"My first thought would be challenging. I think, you know, it's hard when people have a strong opinion to get both parties to come to an agreement. I think it would definitely take, you know, a strong bipartisan like situation to make them both agree. So, my first thought is challenging but I don't think it's impossible." (Participant B18)

"It's a positive feeling. I mean, obviously I don't like conflict. So, I think resolved that's a better feeling. But I think it's a positive thing." (Participant B3)

"You're looking at that positive outcome of negative word conflict. So, in a way you've just, you know, you are solving a problem more or less." (Participant B9)

To continue, the underlying ideas that come with conflict resolution being an event and people feeling satisfied is the suggestion that everyone is a winner or that they won, which represented that the best conflict resolution tools were utilized. The sentiment was grounded in the binary of conflict as negative, therefore conflict resolution is positive. This is reflected in the traditional images used for conflict resolution: handshakes, handshakes with smiling people, and picturesque bridges that seem to project a calm and happy ending. There is a dissidence with the term conflict resolution and its relationship to the ideas of a solution. With the idea of solution serving as a tangible thing or event rather than looking at behavior replacement, skill learning, and process adjustment. The time context from which conflict resolution is understood influences the emotional connection to the concept. The idea of the solution is equal to answers and answers often associated with solutions.

This builds into the narrative of the zero-sum model of conflict resolution. If there is a 'right answer' then there is a solution present. This creates a dangerous narrative for conflict resolution because if there is a right answer there should be a consensus or agreement on it. The solution should be an agreement on the 'right' answer. This creates the understanding that the term solution is equated to agreeing and thus creating a limited view of conflict resolution that it is to solve something and that it is to agree. The presence of agreement becomes the scale of measurement used to identify if conflict resolution is happening. The scale of measurement is defined by agreement.

This was representative in high volume use of the idiom 'agree to disagree', which was used by twelve participants in Group B and was not used at all in Group A.

The high-volume use of this term made the researcher stop and begin to address language and idioms used by the participants by adding new codes to the coding process. The term 'agree to disagree' was used often and used specifically to reference the idea of a solution or an ending. It was used to demonstrate even if parties do not agree, they can still resolve the conflict by agreeing to disagree. The role of agreeing in this idiom is reflective of the role of the association of time and space in conjunction with the social understanding of conflict resolution. It is more of an avoidance tactic (which is some cases is a best practice), but the overutilization is creating echo chambers of ideologies in which, if I do not agree with you, I will agree to disagree with you and not engage with you anymore. It is almost a symptom of exhaustion. Moreover, it is used to describe an ending or a solution to tough conflicts. In this idea there is still a passiveness to the term of conflict resolution, rather than for things to get messy, loud, or hard (which people do not connect with doing conflict resolution 'right'), we will agree to disagree. This idea does not go to address the underlying interests of the parties nor needs of the parties, but rather puts a pause to the 'fighting' and this, in essence, is a misrepresentation of conflict resolution.

Another popularly used idiom from the participants was "seeing eye to eye", which was used one time by Group A and eight times by Group B. 'Seeing eye to eye' is a well-known idiom that is used colloquially to demonstrate agreeing with someone or to demonstrate the lack of agreement by 'not seeing eye to eye'. This returns to the focus on agreement and that conflict resolution is equated to and measured by the presence of an agreement. The way this idiom is used is more reflective of sameness or being on the same level or having an agreement of understanding. If the party does not agree with a

predetermined solution/idea, they can agree to disagree. If they see eye to eye, they

understand each other which is referencing sameness and the idea that the parties are on

the same level creating the idea that agreement equals sameness. The idiom paints the

picture of eyes that are at the same level reflect having consensus about a subject or about

the conflict. The consensus equates to sharing similar ideas about morality, values, and/or

understanding of what is fair. These ideas are reflective of the view of conflict resolution

as equated to resource distribution and the idea that fair solutions are equated to equal

distribution or agreement. This ties into another popularly used saying which was

"middle ground" which was used fourteen times by Group B. This is about agreeing on a

space between both parties that has an equal distribution of space between both. Much of

the linguistics used in Group B's description of conflict resolution is situated in the idea

that rightness and fairness are evaluated in relationship with the self and the idea of

equality being equated to sameness.

In conflict resolution folklore, there is the story of the orange. It is used in

trainings and books and the researcher first learned it in her mediation class in her

Master's conflict resolution program. The gist of the story is that two people are fighting

over an orange. The fight is essentially over resource distribution, each party wants the

orange and they cannot agree on who is the right person to give the orange to. After

talking they find out one person wants the juice and the other the peel. That the resolution

was not found in the sameness of resource distribution, but rather in equity in resource

distribution.

In contrast, avoidance was viewed as a non-tactic or an anti-tactic by Group B and

it was the most prevalent tactic discussed and labeled. Avoidance was heavily linked in

connection with the expression of not liking conflict. It almost was used as a means to measure how much they dislike conflict and a scale of measurement of their lack of competency in conflict resolution.

"I want to avoid it. And I would do whatever needed to be done to kind of meet anyone in the middle and make everyone happy." (Participant B2)

"I mean I really think life is too short to engage it in your personal life since there's so much conflict in the world and our, you know, in our culture, in our political world. Near or far, you know, whether on the micro and macro level. So, I really just try to have relationships where there isn't conflict." (Participant B2)

"I honestly don't think it very often, I guess, I mean and I kind of think that it has to do with me trying to avoid it." (Participant B3)

"I didn't realize that silence for like picking your battles is a resolution but that is also something I do on a daily basis." (Participant B15)

While Group B discussed avoidance at a high rate, they did not categorize it under conflict resolution and that tied into a larger global theme of lack of a language of conflict resolution that will be discussed further in the linguistic section. While Group B lacked the language and jargon of clearly defining skills like conflict resolution, they did describe many conflict resolution skills and practices. This represented a knowledge gap between the two groups.

A highly important theme to address in the emotional connection to conflict resolution is the presence of shame. Shame is when a person thinks less of one's self and it is reflective of our own sense of incompetence or powerlessness (Emotional Competency, Shame, 2018). When a person feels like they don't live up to the standard of measurement that has been socially defined as adequate the person feels shame. Shame is very powerful and can be overwhelming. Group A discussed at length the role of

shame when trying to market to a larger community and Group B reflected a feeling of

shame about themselves in the reflection of their conflict resolution skills.

"So, everybody imagines themselves an expert in conflict. And they see it right now as a weakness or a deficiency to have to outsource." (Participant A1)

"And if you cannot do it by yourself. You are not socially fit, I guess. So, it's something that we're still not ready for." (Participant A6)

"I'll tell you because of demographics that I work with don't. Because of the foundations, I happened to work with them because I was working in foundation work. The people I worked with there are people who don't want you to know they are having problems." (Participant A1)

"I have a company that I use call conflict management consulting. But I changed it because nobody wants to admit they have conflict. So, if I call it collaboration services all of a sudden people are like, oh yeah we want that you know." (Participant A4)

"The thing is that even at [University name removed], you don't want to be able to be labeled as conflict-prone or some someone that...So, basically regardless of having access to your targeted population you still have to deal with the cultural issues… Yeah, but at the student mediation services at [University name removed], no one know wanted to be seen as having trouble and not been able to fix it by themselves. They didn't want to be ...come directly to the mediation office or mediation place to solve the issue... they'd rather don't go because of what others might think of them because they were summoned to go and fix that situation... And that was in the U.S. and Mexico it's even worse. You don't want to be associated with causing trouble because conflict in Mexico is thought of as a bad thing." (Participant A6) *Names removed to protect confidentiality.

There is an inherent feeling that conflict resolution is natural and if parties have

disagreements or arguments, they are failing at this natural ability. Therefore, informing

the feelings of shame. The negative understanding of conflict makes people feel fearful of

being labeled conflict-prone or conflict-ridden, and the positive binary of conflict

resolution makes people want to demonstrate their competency in that by not needing

services.

"Interviewer: How often do you feel like you use conflict resolution in your own life? B5: Not as much as I should. Yeah actually tend to just ignore the problem or just deal with it, without solving it, you know accept the fact that that's what it is and just move on." (Participant B5)

"*So, I feel like I don't really handle it at work.*" (Participant B7)

"*And makes me feel like uneasy because I know that I cannot... Probably ever solve a conflict all by myself. I know it takes a team of people to resolve the problem or come to a solution. So then like I would say it humbles me because I feel it so above me to come to a resolution.*" (Participant B15)

This creates the idea that some people are more conflict-ridden than others, or that some people naturally resolve conflicts better than others. This social understanding plays an important role in how conflict resolution is viewed in a macro and micro sense and how it informs how we evaluate ourselves. There seems to be an inherent idea of 'I know what I ought to do' or an image of what conflict resolution looks like and they are not living up to it. This is similar to an exercising metaphor. It is very common to hear people discuss diets and gym regimes and it is also common to hear people's shame when they discuss that they have not been to the gym in a while or that they really should start going again. There is social understanding that going to the gym is valued and positive, so not living up to that expectation makes people shameful. The researcher found similar shaming with conflict resolution in what people thought they ought to look like when practicing conflict resolution in comparison to what they were practicing.

This frame of what conflict resolution looks like is built off of the altruistic images of peace. People feel like they are bad at conflict resolution, if they get upset, if they yell, or if they are not calm. This creates a very limited view of conflict resolution and an almost unattainable ideal, almost reflecting sainthood. There was a social ideal of conflict resolution present and many participants in Group B felt like they weren't living up to it. This can be tied back into the image descriptions of altruistic ideals of peace that is setting the standard. This was reflected in participants creating jokes about how much

conflict they have, in the strong demonstrating of avoidance of conflict, and in their discussion about conflict resolution skills they wished they were better at.

This is comparable to unrealistic body standards portrayed in the media and its effect on how people feel about themselves. The pattern use of similar body types for men and women in the media has created a standard of measurement of what society has equated to beauty. More often the body types are unattainable for most, which creates a skewed scale of measurement for how people feel about their bodies. It is not setting people up for success nor empowerment by creating an uphill battle with acceptance, which can be similarly reflected in the conflict resolution ideal. There is almost a 'Mother Teresa' ideal about conflict resolution and it looks like a fully selfless person that dedicates their life to peace. (Note: the researcher would like to acknowledge much of the critique of Mother Teresa in her ideal of sainthood, but the researcher recognizes the social understanding of altruism connected with her persona). This creates a disconnect between people feeling empowered by conflict resolution because they do not identify with this ideal and it is a misrepresentation of conflict resolution. Conflict resolution can be a loud, expensive, painful, long, and normal everyday occurrence.

While the omnipresence ideal of conflict resolution equating to peacefulness exists and the stereotype that conflict resolution practitioners are peaceful peacemakers exists, hidden beneath this veil of peacemakers and altruism, there is a culture of competition, paranoia, and distrust. As the field portrays the mask of peacemakers behind the mask lies issues of competition and distrust that are not actively addressed in the conflict resolution field. "The very people who desire change often act in ways that reinforce the things they want altered (Smith & Berg, 2014, pp. 30-31)." The stereotype

of the idea of peacemaker does not only affect others from accessing their role as a peacemaker but has created a category from which we create assumptions about how others in the field should and ought to act while conducting business. The idea that members of the field of conflict resolution should be held to higher standards than other fields and how this should inform the way they do business. There is an inherent idea that conflict resolution business practices differ from that of Wall Street and the honest answer is: they do not. Conflict resolution field has not created conflict resolution business models that differ from the current business practices, so the idea that the models of business would differ from other fields or that competition doesn't exist is erroneous.

Even in the field of conflict resolution, the stereotype has seeped into thinking and has created assumptions of behavior and created some anger and resentment within the field. The researcher found this to be an important piece of information because it is a conversation the field is not having within the community and it is one that the field should be having. The researcher found a very present theme of anger in the Group A interviews that was directed towards the field. This anger is projected toward an ideal of what the field ought to be.

"So, a vice that they have in this field is optimism and instead of creativity. And they also have the bias that people are all inherently good and are not trying to hurt people. That is a bias and that is a blind spot. You're working together. It is not true." (Participant A1)

"I will tell you this is a very competitive field. And the first conference I ever went to... Now you have to understand that was when I was trained, I was already in my late 30's, so that's what comes with being old. I went to a conference in the United States and I recall turning to my colleague and saying - this is the biggest group of back biters I've ever been part of my life. I must say I was very surprised. And I thought OK, well I can sure play the game and I can actually make a decision whether or not I want to play the game. But I found that absolutely fascinating. People are often very willing to tear others down. Which is when you put those concepts together. Why is that? In a field where

everybody is supposed to be nice and polite or at least principled at least, I thought this a pretty unprincipled bunch of people who are supposed to be adhering to certain values and ethics and expectations and indeed principles of respect regarding and dignity at least for others, which is what we are trying to embed and draw out of our clients when we work with them in mediation or so seemed me... So is that's very interesting isn't it." (Participant A8)

"You know this this field is not for the faint of heart. Let's put it that way. Because you have to you have to maintain your own self-control and your own sense of dignity and worth and everything else in the midst of an onslaught." (Participant A8)

"And I think in that I wonder to the extent that this profession is so competitive that people back away from actually promoting the wisdom of dispute resolution." (Participant A8)

"In part, if it's because as a profession we do not demonstrate collegiality, collaboration, treating each other with respect, regard, dignity, even if we have differences of views or outlooks." (Participant A8)

"So, we have [University name and program removed] people who are doing incredibly impressive work and do you fucking think that department gives a fuck about it. No, they are part of the problem because they leave everybody up to hang out to dry." (Participant A1)

"When you go for years without having employment and nobody understands what you do…There are a lot of really smart people who have our degree or in same exact position and I'll tell you that it gets better. It doesn't get better it gets worse and worse." (Participant A1)

"I think that where we work and our enemy is not the people with guns, our enemy is the people with political science and international degrees that argue that all conflict is cognitive-based." (Participant A7)

"I was really stunned at how 20th century our field is, and you know, we have kind of a mixed bag, in that, a lot of the founding fathers and mothers of mediation, at least, they're still around. So, we have a lot of her gurus and mentors who are still around. But the field hasn't really fully gotten the voices of millennials or even Generation Xers like, so what it means is... I think our field has become a bit stodgy, so if you go to any of the conferences [Association name removed] or others, demographically it's not a question of age, it's a question of people not grasping or utilizing some of the like basic 21st-century ways of marketing the field." (Participant A3)

"We can't even half the time even acknowledge that there is a huge wealth of knowledge and system design there that would be very useful for us. No, this is all brand new and it's great. And I think in in that way we have really failed people in the community, we have failed the community, we've actually failed the profession." (Participant A6)

"It's very difficult for individuals in our field to be able to make inroads to where you can function professionally and earn a living at doing this." (Participant A5)

Another reoccurring theme among the conflict resolution practitioners is the lack of recognition and value the field garners in a professional capacity. The theme of the lack of recognition was expressed by participants in Group A in relation to the lack of prestige and value the work the field does in the larger community. This can be connected to the lack of knowledge and understanding the larger community has about conflict resolution. Which is connected to the marketing and branding of conflict resolution and represents a circular problem in that way.

"You can take an 8-hour course in mediation. That's the same as what we do. There's not an understanding that it is a field. There is no respect for it as it is a field." (Participant A1)

"It's a recurring theme: How hard science versus social science. How there's this divide and there continues to be this divide. Regardless of what science we put behind it. If you don't understand social science and don' t understand that we have methodologies. Don't consider... They consider it like you're making something up. So now, for example, something in politics. They'd say something like, ' Oh that's your opinion.'... No, I don't have an opinion. I have an informed perspective based on these areas and I'm curious to hear your informed perspective. I think it some shit that people say they're sitting on a bar or something." (Participant A1)

"So, so this idea that's the misconception I see, is that it's not acknowledged as a field and when you sit at a table where it's not acknowledged. Somebody who plants flowers will have the same credibility as you who has a Ph.D. Everyone's on the same level. For us that puts us on a new level." (Participant A1)

"We're not a collective. People don't have a body of understanding of what our work is about and the different ways and the diversity that you can apply it and where you can apply it and how you can apply it. They don't understand." (Participant A1)

"I think you know it's funny I would say like for the first 10 years of my career, my mom had no clue what I was doing, in part, because you know mediation and conflict resolution is not. These aren't household words just yet." (Participant A3)

Another important critique of the field concerned the standardization of tools, practices, and services and the different types of consequential effects this has on the

field. That the reason people have a lack of recognition about the field is that there is a

lack of standardization within the field. Standardization plays an important role in

identity development. The lack of standardization is what effects not only the product and

service people receive, but also how the group is viewed as a whole.

*"There are a lot of people that are not trained mediators that are out there saying they're mediators and they put people in separate rooms and then run between the rooms because they think that gives them control and that's a negotiated settlement that's not even mediation." (*Participant A2)

"Well, the court should not assign mediation to anybody who is not properly trained. And if you do a federal county or city contract, you are expected to do conference-style mediation or you're you'll never see a second case…And the court cases you get people, especially court-appointed stuff, which is a very actually very small amount of mediation that is being done as court-appointed people, but the attorneys think it is the only thing that's done. It's really a small amount of what's done in the mediation world. But the court, the way they do it, is that they sometimes appoint people again that are not trained or are not well-trained. And one attorney gives it to his friend the attorney pretending that they are neutral and they're not neutral they're friends of the person that just has hired them… They get hacks, you get a lot of hacks. But the courts half the time don't even know that and they appoint hacks that mediate badly and if they stuck to the statute and didn't breach the statute I think there'd be a lot more satisfaction with the mediation process because the people that are credentialed are those that keep current with education all the time, they are up to date with it. So, it makes a big difference."
(Participant A2)

"I mean what I'm saying is that the process should be so standard and so welcoming that… if you go in to have your appendix removed, you know, you're going to go to a skilled surgeon, who's going to give the anesthesia, going to cut you on the right side and it's going to take out the appendix and it's going to sew you up and you're going to probably be in the hospital overnight and go home the next day. So, you know exactly what they're going to do if you have to have your appendix removed. But if you're if you've never had to have your appendix removed, it's not on your radar. But if it is if your appendix starts to hurt and you've got to have it done. You want to know what that is going to look like to have it done. And that's what I'm saying has to be done for mediation. And because so many people have been out there hacking it and it doesn't always get done as a quality process. That's what needs to be changed." (Participant A2)

"You know it means we don't have a regulatory framework that breathing down our neck. But it means, you know, it also means that the quality and reputation of our services are all over the place." (Participant A3)

Emotions in the field of conflict resolution was a code that emerged from the data and served as an important piece in the puzzle of understanding conflict resolution branding. The internal conflicts and identity struggles inform the lack of branded identity from which the larger community can access and understand. By leaving internal assumptions and concerns unaddressed and unexamined, the field is subject to the same conscious and unconscious conflict processes seen in other groups in conflict. "The dynamics that emerge within any particular group are also influenced by the larger system and environment within which the group is embedded (Wallach, 2004, p. 87)." This is reflective of the lack of application of conflict resolution skills and techniques applied within the field to address these underlying issues, concerns, and emotions.

Academic elitism was a reoccurring theme not only during the interviews of Group A but also in the recruitment of Group A. Where academic rigor is not only expected and demanded by the researcher, some of the interactions during the interview process made the researcher reflect on the role that academic elitism plays in maintaining this veil of secrecy about conflict resolution and the role it plays within intergroup dynamics, as well.

In the recruitment process for participants for Group A, after sharing the IRB approved flyer with potential participants, some potential participants had questions and concerns for which the researcher scheduled a phone conversation to discuss in detail the consent form and expectations. One potential participant spent nearly 20 minutes explaining to the researcher why the research was wrong, and that this potential participant had the right answers and that not only was the research useless, but the rest of the conflict resolution community had the wrong idea about the future and the needs of

conflict resolution. This interaction was before this potential participant was privy to the interview questions or the premise of the research. The researcher informed the potential participant that the interview was voluntary and by no means or at any time was he/she inclined nor expected to participate, but also explained that perhaps he/she may have some unfounded assumptions about the work. This potential participant later sent the researcher an apologetic email explaining that they may have jumped to conclusions. The pattern of apologies in the process of the interviews and the anger in the interviews were deemed as important to note as the answers to the questions by the researcher as a means to understand the current status quo of the field.

During the interviews, one participant from Group A became angered during section II of the interview questions. The questions that angered the participant were the questions that were going to be asked to both populations. (Appendix A) The participant stopped the interview and started a frustrated inquiry about how these types of questions were suitable for a dissertation and demanded to know who the researcher's dissertation committee and chair was. The questions that were being asked were deemed too low level to merit a response from a professional of their level. The researcher continued to explain the methodology and later in the interview was issued an apology by this participant. This struck the researcher as particularly important because more often than not much of the important work that is done in conflict resolution gets stored away in the ivory tower of knowledge that is academia. This creates issues of access and the potential reach of conflict resolution with the larger community.

Privilege creates systems of elitism. The privilege in the field's access to conflict resolution knowledge makes the field numb to powerful social systems of oppression that

restricts people's access to it. Every system has a purpose and function in our society. Privilege often blinds us to the reality of our role in maintaining these systems and the privileged position of having the key to the transformation of these systems. Having privilege comes with the responsibility of recognizing the possession of the key to the door of inclusion that opens the pathway for opportunity of the other. This privilege plays an important role in addressing how the field can 'speak the same language' of its audiences and target markets. Specifically, in terms of marketing as a means of breaking down the wall of access to the valuable knowledge, skills and services of conflict resolution has to offer.

"We call it the ID net model. And it's not based on your credentials. You know, we don't identify ourselves as academics, Ph.D.s or anything else. Because we find that it's intimidating. A lot of people will not attend or share their ideas if they think they're surrounded by a bunch of Ph.Ds." (Participant A5)

In contrast, in Group B it was powerful to see how interest in conflict resolution was peaked after a short 20-minute interview. Participants were automatically able to see how having this information could influence their quality of life at home and at work. The interest exists, they just do not know that the field of conflict resolution exists. To reference one of the researcher's professors, "Did gravity exists before Newton?" The answer is that it did, but society just did not have the language to talk about it. It was omnipresent in our existence, but we just didn't have the word and language to understand it. The field of conflict resolution models this same framework. As one of the conflict resolution practitioner participants said, *"We can see the invisible* (Participant A1)." This is an important key factor to examine in marketing and seeing how the field can connect with that interest and cultivate it into demand.

"This is really interesting. Like it was... I never really think about it on a daily basis like this…So it's actually kind of a different and I feel like almost maybe everybody should have this conversation at some point. Cause I think it gives you a different perspective. Makes you think about yourself a little bit more." (Participant B1)

"What's your dissertation is about? Everything you've talked about just made me interested." (Participant B12)

"*And I'm glad that it's the topic for your dissertation. Pretty good and both relates to how its workforce is changing every now and then you know there are more and more millennials going into managerial positions as they move along in their careers where you know for years, we had a previous generation there. you know I feel like millennial impact in workforce is changing tremendously. Like what we expect our workplace to be."* (Participant B12)

"That's really cool. It's almost like your... Like I said I don't know what a conflict resolution professional would do...And you know you see in couples which is your everyday probably your most your everyday relationship that you have, and you have couples counseling and why not there be something like that for work and every other aspect." (Participant B16)

"Okay great. It's very interesting." (Participant B19)

"I think it's like really interesting and now I kind of want to like look more into this and like what you do." (Participant B2)

"Because I think that I think I would totally be interested in conflict resolution." (Participant B20)

"I mean, I will definitely after this, look a little more into conflict resolution consultants and all of that but even I didn't even know that was a thing to be honest… Now, I'm a bit interested to look a little further into it." (Participant B4)

"I definitely would like to know more about conflict resolution or maybe we can do that another time." (Participant B5)

"Well definitely that. Now we have talked about this I feel like conflict like I shouldn't look at conflict as such a negative thing. I feel like, you know, I feel like I'm not the only one that feels that way. And like a lot of people just feel like it's a negative thing. Now that we have talked about it, I feel like you know is the first step of finding a solution just to have a conflict. Even if it's something big that could affect many people or something that can affect your everyday life." (Participant B9)

Understanding the marketing and branding of conflict resolution is as much of

understanding the field of conflict resolution as it is understanding the target markets. It

is not the market's fault that they do not know who or what the field does. Change starts

with addressing the current status quo and practices of the field as a means for

understanding and identifying different places from which we can start engaging with

larger audiences.

The Language of Identity

Most conflict resolution books begin with, or have a section on, where

terminology used is addressed and/or their take on which terms are best. Terminology is a

highly contested subject within the field, and rightly so, as language serves as a vehicle

for brand identity. The language that is used paints the picture of the process, value, and

access people connected within the larger community. While the ever-present

controversy of terms played an important role in the interview of Group A, the

researcher's focus was not on which terms were best suited, but rather the controversy

itself. The lack of consistent language, the lack of collective conferral on terms, the lack

of internal community buy-in to words was demonstrative of the stratification that exists

in the field of conflict resolution and how that affects the identity of the field.

"I think instead of using the term conflict resolution I like conflict solutions better…. I don't like the term resolution. I like the word solution. Resolution I feel that there's been a winner and a loser, solution means again the satisfaction." (Participant A2)

"Well, sometimes I try to avoid the term conflict resolution… You know, it's funny because I'll use whatever that what the market demands. So... but I'll make sure to say conflict resolution isn't necessarily about resolving conflicts. So, I don't know... to be honest or you know I'm a professor but I'm not really an academician. So, I spend...I actually don't spend a whole lot of time hairsplitting between conflict transformation, conflict management, and conflict resolution. So, it kind of depends on the audience." (Participant A3)

"Well, I actually have a document that goes over all the terms what those mean because for people that are expert each of those terms has a different emphasis. And for the layperson, they don't know." (Participant A4)

"Well, we change our language with everybody except ourselves. And you know, even with our students - with our student being diplomats and military people and so forth - We have a special language of layman language for them." (Participant A7)

Many of the participants in Group B talked about conflict resolution tactics and skills but did not have the language or did not know it was categorized as conflict resolution. With the newness of the term and the categorization of conflict resolution as a field, they didn't label themselves as practicing conflict resolution, but they did describe themselves as practicing conflict resolution. *"And we are not speaking their language. And we are not listening nor are we hearing. So that barriers and silos can start to be pulled down* (Participant A8)." Conflict resolution is about navigating and growing the skills that we might already have or have seen in others. Participants described negotiations but did not label it as negotiation. They described conflict analysis models they used, but they did not use terms like the 'conflict spiral model'. Linguistically, it was described as 'working it out', so there was cognitive recognition that the process was taking place, but they did not have the language or field-based knowledge about what was happening or best practices.

"I always try to step back and not give an answer right away. I try not to be impulsive about my answers, so I can think about my response. So, if I have a conflict was somebody in the office, I would sometimes even just take some time or go for a walk or something and just kind of like think it through and try and analyze it more rather than just jumping on them. For me it's just taking some me time to actually work through the situation before approaching the situation to them." (Participant B1)

"I think that if you sit...no matter what your problem is, if you sit down and talk to the person that you are have a conflict with and talk it out and even agree to disagree. I think that you can you know resolve. I don't you know you don't have to be best friends with the person, but I think that you can communicate and agree to disagree." (Participant B13)

Identity and language have an interdependent role with each other. The mystery of conflict resolution in its lack of visibility in the larger community and the

misunderstandings of what conflict resolution is creates an obstacle for the marketing and

branding of conflict resolution.

"So, in my personal life maybe I'm doing maybe I'm using conflict resolution to avoid conflict. I don't really know. Maybe that's why I have less conflict. Maybe I'm using some sort of maybe I'm using strategies that I don't even know. And that's why I avoid that whole like that anger and uncivil kind of part in my personal life." (Participant B2)

"And so typical phone call we're going to get will be like look I don't want mediation, I don't want to sit down and have a nice conversation. I want to tell this guy he's an asshole and he should give me all the money. And our response will be will we have exactly the thing for you. That's pretty much what we can provide for you. That kind of conversation." (Participant A3)

Language played an important role throughout this analysis and was interwoven

into each section of understanding. The words used told stories. The stories are used to

shed light on the understanding of conflict and conflict resolution. Language serves as a

gauge. It is an instrument for understanding cultural norms and values. Language serves

as a frame for understanding the ideologies that are used behind the words to construct

the social context from which they are digested. Language is as alive as we are and is

constantly experiencing death, growth, and birth to serve as tools for a better

understanding of the world around us. The social context of language demonstrates the

perceived value of people, places, things, and concepts.

In the definitions and descriptions of conflict, there was a pattern from Group A's

responses. In their description, there was a sense of comfort in conflict and fearlessness

of conflict in how they describe the way conflict weaves in and out of their lives. Group

A described an everydayness and omnipresence of conflict. The recognition and

acknowledgment of the role conflict play in their lives, the role they play in it, and what

tools they have to manage it. The descriptions derail from the traditional ideas of conflict

as an event or as negative and normalize the phenomenon of conflict. It is representative

of a desensitization to conflict from their education and work in conflict and their

knowledge of the field.

"I define conflict as normal, as an everyday part of human interaction, as something that could be a catalyst for understanding and creativity." (Participant A3)

"Constantly ... I don't think of a day that goes by...Now, it depends you know where if we're talking you know like it's a major blow out with someone infrequently or talking about how I'll have a difference of opinion with someone and we'll have a conversation a process. Every day." (Participant A3)

"The conflict is a human constant, I think." (Participant A3)

"So yeah there's no limit to conflict." (Participant A4)

"I think the average person underestimates the amount of conflict they have because they think of only things that end up in court or only things in a war and they don't just think about the daily conflicts where you argue with your family over who turning the dishwasher or you haggle for a price at a yard sale or you ask your boss for a raise. So, like every negotiation has some inherent conflict in it typically." (Participant A4)

"Well it it's a reality. It doesn't really... The use of the word doesn't evoke a particular emotion other than it is a reality." (Participant A8)

"Maybe I'd need to qualify that. I would say that there are lots of places where conflict occurs and that happens actually every single day as a mediator. But in terms of my personal life and the conflicts that I have with others, being a practicing mediator for all this period of time has taught me a different attitude and approach to it. Since I no longer respond by tightening up and pulling away. I respond by relaxing and moving towards." (Participant A9)

Comparatively, when the groups were asked to describe how often they felt like

they experienced conflict during a week's time, the responses from Group B leaned

towards minimalism in admitting the role that conflict plays in their lives when asked

directly. Some participants in Group B when defining and describing conflict would

openly joke about "which of the many should I choose from" or saying "there are so

many to choose from" but then when asked directly about how many times they

experience conflict during a week's time most leaned toward minimal or defining low-

level conflict. This could be connected to the stigma that people rarely want to be labeled as conflict-ridden. The negative social understanding that is connected with conflict and the binary positive relationship with conflict resolution influence how people describe their relationship with the terms.

Similarly, later in the interview when asked how often they experience conflict resolution the answers differed in understanding. There was dissidence between the connection of how much conflict participants felt like they experienced versus how much conflict resolution they felt like they experienced. Even some of the participants were surprised by their answers. One participant shifted from saying they experience conflict 30 percent of their week and to express that they feel like they experienced conflict resolution 90 percent of their week. Table 8 below outlines the differences between the responses of how much conflict Group B participants experience during a week with how much conflict resolution they experience during a week.

"I also noticed that when I when I stated my answer that I told you I only see a conflict in my life every two weeks. But I feel like I make some sort of resolution that I'm every day like multiple times a day. I thought that was a little weird." (Participant B15)

This participant identified experiencing conflict 2-3 times a week. *"I would say if I have more conflict resolution than conflicts throughout the week. I feel like conflict resolution might be four to five."* (Participant B1)

Table 8. Co-occurrence Table between Time in Conflict and Time in Conflict Resolution for Group B

Outlined time amounts	Group B Time in Conflict	Group B Time in Conflict Resolution
Minimal	4	1
Once every two weeks	1	0
1-2 times a week	2	2
2-3 times a week	5	1
4-5 times a week	5	4
Everyday	3	7

The clear disconnect between the amount of conflict Group B feels like they experience during a week versus the amount of conflict resolution they feel like they experience is representative of the binary relationship between conflict and conflict resolution. The negative social understanding of conflict and the inverse positive social understanding of conflict resolution are reflected in how often the participants identified with each concept. As outlined earlier, the social stigma of being labeled as conflict-ridden and the negative social understanding of conflict shine through in the participants' hesitancy to identify with conflicts. Contrastingly, the participants were not afraid nor ashamed to identify with conflict resolution.

An observation arose from identifying the process centered view of conflict resolution and the more event center view of conflict that was representative of an inverse view of conflict and conflict resolution. This created the idea that we are constantly in the process of conflict resolution (consciously and unconsciously) and when we experience conflict it is a break in that system. The idea that harmony is the natural state. This is representative of an underlying structural-functional framework that has conflict resolution constructed as our main system. In sociological theory structural-functional approach "is a framework for building theory that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability (Macionis, 2014, p. 16)." That it is almost as if we are in a constant state of conflict resolution (reflective of this idea of harmony) and conflict is a hiccup in the system. That the system will do everything it can to come back to its natural state that being of harmony or of functioning conflict management systems. The focus on avoidance by participants of conflict reflects the desire to maintain the system of conflict resolution running. Much of the linguistics

that surrounds conflict and conflict resolution supported this structural-functionalist approach. Almost as if, we as people are a system of conflict resolution with interrelated parts that are relatively stable with all the parts working to maintain that stability and when the system is disturbed with a conflict all the parts work towards returning to the equilibrium (Macionis, 2014, pp. 16-18). Much of the language used by the participants is reflective of this idea, as well as the linguistic use of idioms such as "middle ground" discussed earlier.

"Every conversation is a negotiation of some kind." (Participant A3)

"You can come back to center" (Participant A5)

"I would do whatever needed to be done to kind of meet anyone in the middle and make everyone happy." (Participant B2)

"However, it can go one of two ways depending on what it consists of... When you're used to remaining kind of a centered type of environment and it does... I'm going to use the word intrude. It might be an interesting choice of words. You can react in one of two ways it can be a knee jerk reaction where you know you're going to react but then come back pretty quickly to center or depending on what it is if it's not an emergency, I think we tend to put the conflicts into categories" (Participant A5)

"Like I really try and avoid any type of conflict so I really try to like finally... if I am in a conflict situation then I would try to find ways on how to resolve and keep that open communication." (Participant B20)

Describing the relationships between the groups and their cultural understanding of time and space with conflict and conflict resolution illustrates the characteristic associations each group has with the concepts. Time and space associations completely transform the way a word or idea is understood. Cultural meanings in reference to time and space will inform people's behavior. For example, the word 'ahorita' in Spanish is a derivative of the word 'ahora' meaning now. 'Ita' is a diminutive suffix used to represent something that is small. Together 'ahorita' linguistically translate into 'right now', but

culturally it is understood differently across South America. For some 'ahorita' means right now or this very instant but in others its means soon or in a little while. The use of the word within its cultural context and understanding of time and space will inform people's behavior in terms of the application. This example represents the cultural importance of understanding the role of time and space associations in reference to terms as a means to evaluate and understanding people's behavior. One participant described this phenomenon in their work in reference to the power of words and their meanings.

"I'm technically translating some books…They keep using the word manager and I realize that in the U.S. you give them some... some room to make decisions to the managers. But here in Mexico, even though the name is called manager from the American perspective, I mean it's managing the resources. I mean Mexico you don't have that ability. You don't have that room. So even though... even at a certain level given that your called manager, you still have to follow the rules. The levels at which you can have some room to implement your ideas. It's not the same level of that you have in the U.S. I keep changing the name manager to executive because in Mexico the managers don't have any ability to change or to negotiate. As a manager here in Mexico are only allowed to enforce whatever you're told to do. Now manager in the U.S. you have some room to negotiate." (Participant A6)

While this example reflects the significance of the cultural understanding of power and decision making, it serves as a model of understanding of how cultural meanings inform words. That the different understanding of time and space associations will inform how people engage with the terms and the field. It describes the cultural context from which conflict resolution practitioners have to grow and develop understanding and learning within the larger community. Additionally, it exemplifies the obstacles that need to be addressed in the education and spreading of the field of conflict resolution.

As previously mentioned, conflict resolution holds an altruistic stigma that serves as an unrealistic scale of measurement for what conflict resolution looks like, but there are other misconceptions that plague conflict resolution as well. Within the participants

from Group B, there was a clear separation of categorization from which they understood

conflict resolution. It was as if the conflict resolution skills were categorized by

environment rather than by skill. The categorization by context made the skills appear to

be different. For example, the categorization that conflict resolution skills are different at

work than at home. The skills are the same, but the context is different, and it feels

different to people. That the conflict resolution people use at work is almost categorically

different than the conflict resolution used in personal relationships and at home. This

demonstrates the influence of environmental context has on the understanding of the skill

set.

"I mean I've worked in customer service for a long time, so I probably have a dozen other adopted a lot of techniques of letting others talk and you know trying to be reassuring and you know, allowing other people to explain themselves before looking for answers. So that I use a lot professionally and because maybe sometimes personally, I don't know how much that filters too much I guess I can ask other people ...but I'm not sure if those are the techniques but I mean I definitely do that professionally try to observe or listen before and get as many as many of the facts as I can before making decisions or putting projects together and things like that." (Participant B3)

"I feel like I don't really have any control at work. Which is probably why I feel like most of my conflicts that I feel comes from work, because in my home life I'm in a position where I'm running my own life like you know with [Friend's Name] like I'm in those friendships with me and I'm in control of my relationships with them because I'm speaking for me I'm not speaking for the team and like it's not my team. So, I feel like I don't really handle it at work." (Participant B7)

Another concern about the misconception of conflict resolution by Group A was

the blending of conflict resolution under a legal categorization. Group A participants that

shared these views did come from a legal background, so that frame did play a role in

their thinking. The blending of conflict resolution into the legal system is an industry that

is fighting an uphill battle with the integration of new techniques into a well-established

and protected traditional system. Conflict resolution practitioners that navigate through

these integrated systems have demonstrated frustration.

"The thing is they basically see it as a law basis. conflict with the law. So that's basically what they are doing at this time. They don't see how.... they don't see yet how conflict is produced by the same entities that...somehow they are related to the business deal."
(Participant A6)

"For people who have found themselves in some sort of a legal situation., I think they tend to think of the professional aspect, the formal aspect of it, where conflict resolution is binding. And that can be, you know, when we're talking about arbitration with say labor unions or something to do with business or it could be with some sort of a lawsuit within the court. Anything that kind of puts them into a binding agreement tends to make them uncomfortable, So, you know, right off the bat they're kind of concerned that they won't have a choice. Let me put it that way or they won't have input." (Participant A5)

Comparatively, only one participant from Group B associated conflict resolution

with the legal system and that participant worked as a paralegal. For the rest of the

nineteen participants, the court system and the legal process was not referenced in their

ideas of conflict resolution nor about conflict. It was not even referenced when asked to

discuss conflict and conflict resolution that they see in the world. With the heightened use

of the court system to mainstream and integrate conflict resolution into the formal

process, the field has created large brushstroke perceptions about the audience without

asking the audience. The participants moreover referenced the informal process of

conflict resolution rather than the formal process such as the law and justice systems.

They as a whole viewed the direct application that it has on their daily lives.

Definitions of conflict were split with no overlapping in definitional

understanding. While Group A used a majority of in-field terms such as incompatible

goals, normal, and an opportunity for change, Group B was defining conflict as the

absence of an agreement or lack of compromise between parties. Group B definitions

more resembled the definitions that are present in the dictionary. Group A definitions

were reflective of the definitions from conflict resolution literature. These two reflections

of definitions observe a clear line between the two groups and how they frame and

understand, 'what is conflict?' The way that words are understood will inform the way

that marketing and branding are absorbed by target markets.

Table 9

Categorization of the Definition of Conflict for Group A and B

Definitions of Conflict	Group A	Group B
A Problem	0	3
Definition by Emotional Trigger	0	3
Difference of Beliefs/Opinions	0	9
Disagreement/Lack of Compromise	0	12
Incompatible Goals	2	0
Normal	1	0
Opportunity for Change	1	0
Structural/Systemic	2	0
Unmet Expectations	1	0
War like terms	1	0

The stark difference between the two groups' definitional understanding observed

a conceptual difference and experience with the word. A person's behavior is heavily

influenced by his/her definition of a situation and/or experience. Meaning we act based

on the meaning we give something, which is an important facet when understanding how

to engage with an audience in marketing. At further analysis, it is almost as if the conflict

resolution field redefined conflict from the socially defined version. This redefining is a

part of the process of rebranding and serves as a platform for the building of the brand of

conflict resolution. This is describing the rebranding process, which is when an entity

takes an established symbol or logo with the intention of creating a new identity of it with

its consumers. While the field has rebranded the definition of conflict it has not

redistributed the new meaning to its consumers demonstrating a variable in the gap

between the supply and demand cycle.

The definition of conflict resolution had some slight overlapping in

understanding, but mostly Group B focused on conflict resolution being equated to an

agreement as opposed to a process as evaluated earlier in the findings. This is built out of

the traditional ideas of peace that have an interdependent relationship with the negative

social understanding of conflict. The binary relationship between the two concepts has

created a linear relationship with the idea of conflict happens first, then conflict

resolution happens. This is funneled through the social lens that conflict is negative,

therefore conflict resolution is positive. Table 10 below outlines the categorization of the

definitional understandings of conflict resolution from both groups. It is important to note

some of the difficulty that members from both groups had in defining both conflict and

conflict resolution reverted to describing what they thought they looked like or felt like as

a means of definition. When things are difficult to define it means there is not a strong

understanding of what the concept or word means, which connects to the lack of

knowledge and understanding about the field.

Table 10

Categorization of the Definition of Conflict Resolution for Group A and B

Definitions	Group A	Group B
Braiding Narratives	1	1
Creative	1	0
Humanizing	1	0
Situational	1	0
Process	5	2
Solutions/End of Conflict	2	12
Middle Point/Agreeing	0	6
Mutual Agreement	0	7

The definitional difference between the two groups about conflict and conflict resolution demonstrates the power of words and that the same word can mean different things to different people. Additionally, it represents how the meaning given to words is not permanent and can transform. The difference in definitional understanding by each group illustrates a gap in communication. It demonstrates how the education of the rebranding of the words conflict and conflict resolution that has taken place within the field of conflict resolution can transform in meaning and reach outside the field. This demonstrates the value of creating shared meaning as a means of marketing and branding for the field of conflict resolution. This will serve to redefine the social understandings of these concepts and inform the public of the value and role it plays in our daily lives.

Group A displayed a clear lack of understanding in their communities about what they do. From Group A, nine out of nine of the participants explained that a majority of the time people do not know what they do when they talk about their careers to people outside the field. Almost all of the participants from Group A laughed or scoffed when the question was asked insinuating that the understanding of conflict resolution outside the field is almost laughable. Most of the participants from Group A described how they have developed tactics for addressing this lack of understanding such as generalizations, explanations, and even avoidance.

"It goes one of two ways. Either they don't get it. And if I explain it to them, they say, 'oh is that like mediation.' Mediation is comparable to typing in my field, that's a basic skill. There are several models. And, No, not really. And then if I explain it to them for the next four days, they still won't get it. That's one end and there's five percent of the population when I explain it they say, you can use it like this and that they get it immediately and they get how you apply it and how it integrates they see... they see.. the grey spaces you can do it." (Participant A1)

"They don't understand what I'm doing." (Participant A6)

"Wow. Very little. Very, very, very, very, little, having said that my team and I, we do conflict analysis and resolution of things that people see on newspapers and really don't understand. So, for the average person, they don't understand it at all." (Participant A7)

"(laughing) Minimal. It's very difficult for them to have a sense of what this really is. So, part of what I've done for all these years is to struggle for the language that helps them understand what it is that we do. And at the same time, I agree with what Albert Einstein said - which is that if you can't explain something in simple terms to someone, you really don't understand it. The idea of trying to be able to explain it to people is really challenging." (Participant A9)

In congruence with the outlining of the lack of knowledge about the field of conflict resolution by Group A, in Group B twenty out of twenty people did not know that conflict resolution was a "thing", a profession, or a field nor what a conflict resolution practitioner would do. Most responses to the question asking to describe what a conflict resolution practitioner does start with a clear recognition of a lack of knowledge and/or understanding.

"Wow! I have no idea. Maybe, I didn't even know that's like a conflict resolution practitioner with a like an actual… that was kind of like the title of the job." (Participant B2)

"I mean my first thought was… I don't think its correct would be like a like a therapist or like a mediator." (Participant B18)

"I don't think I was aware there was a conflict resolution practitioner, but if I were to take a guess it would…" (Participant B16)

The responses went on to try to guess or give their best idea of what they thought a conflict resolution practitioner would do including responses aligning to other professions such as social work and therapy. This coincides with Group A's responses of people not knowing what they do and describes an overall lack of understanding and recognition of the field of conflict resolution.

Table 11

Understanding of the Field of Conflict Resolution: Group B Responses

Responses	Group B
Guessing	20
Provide Solution/Solves Conflict	8
Counseling/Therapy	4
Used the term Mediator	8
Training	4
Middle Person	1
Social Worker	1

Eight participants from Group B utilized the term mediator in their response to what does a conflict resolution practitioner do, which is important to note in recognition of the rising notoriety of mediation. While the term was used, it was still used under uncertainty as the responses were outlined as 'a guess'. Additionally, the responses overlapped with other meanings such as counseling and providing solutions, which describes a lack of understanding of the term 'mediator' that acts as a neutral third party. While there was name recognition of the term mediation, there was not a clear demonstration of understanding what a mediator does.

Table 12

Co-occurrence Table of the Use of the Term Mediator and Other Responses from Group B Understanding of the Field of Conflict Resolution

Description Responses	Used the Term Mediator
Counseling/Therapy	2
General	0
Guessing	8
Middle Person	0
Provide Solution/Solves Conflict	3
Social Worker	0
Training	1

The understanding and name recognition of conflict resolution data set play a valuable role in painting the picture of the current environment and setting from which conflict resolution exists. The overwhelming recognition from Group A that people do not understand what practitioners do stands together with the overwhelming lack of recognition of the field in Group B supports Rhudy's research identifying a low social demand discussed earlier (Rhudy, 2014). The demand is low because people do not know that it exists. Comparatively, as outlined earlier, the research found a high level of interest in Group B after the interview creating an environment that is ripe for the marketing of conflict resolution.

A Brand New Narrative

In an attempt to address the research question of measuring how the view of conflict as negative influences conflict resolution marketing and branding, the researcher discussed marketing strategies and approaches with Group A to gain a deeper understanding about the infield marketing. The participants were asked to discuss their strategies and approaches to marketing their conflict resolution services or entities and some patterns arose. One of the most used marketing strategies was word of mouth. While some participants from Group A used a coupling of strategies together, three participants exclusively used word of mouth marketing technique.

Other marketing strategies mentioned were having a website. While having a website serves as a platform for housing marketing material, it does not serve as a standalone marketing strategy. Websites do not draw traffic by themselves without another medium drawing the audience to the site such as people searching for a keyword associated with the website. As one participant outlined, *"People who are in conflict,*

what are they searching for on the Internet. And they're not looking for conflict

resolution. They're not looking for mediation. They're looking for how to stick it to their

neighbor. And you know that really was so not much a revelation but a justification that

going to people saying hey we're in a place where you can have a nice conversation was

not going to attract people (Participant A3)." While having a web site is a best business

practice in the 21st-century business world, it does not stand alone as a marketing

strategy. It is a piece of a puzzle within a marketing strategy, but it needs other

techniques to drive traffic to the site.

Three participants discussed their presence on the social media site

www.Linkedin.com and how they utilized it to market themselves and their services. One

participant used a targeted email list that utilized a flyer with service information to

widen their reach. Overall, the marketing strategies were minimal with one participant

stating, "if they are serious enough, they'll find me (Participant A2)." And two others

explaining that they are busier than they would like right now, so marketing focus and

time are less prioritized. Overall, there was not much focus or research done on the

development of their marketing strategies. While there was not much focus on marketing

strategy development, there was clear outlining on critiques of the marketing from the

field.

"I think…I do feel strongly we need to move away from all the clichés that I have that I mentioned before and whether it's, you know, whether it's New York or East Texas or any of the places that I've worked. The vast majority of people who are in what they would define as a conflict are not in an emotionally happy place and they may not be in the most understanding or forgiving of places so...So I think the brand has to meet that whatever that is. I think there's room for brands to vary based on the vision of who's running an organization. I don't necessarily think there needs to be a uniform brand or a uniform marketing strategy. I know I personally would be very resistant to having to take up someone else's branding." (Participant 3)

"We are all about finding creative resolutions and yet the way we brand ourselves is like so uncreative by and large. So those are the attributes, how that translates into brands or a larger brand." (Participant A3)

"I can't tell you how many conversations I've been in where it's, you know, where someone said we just need a big, you know, a 'Got Milk' campaign for mediation. It may be but the reality is we haven't, in my view in the mediation and larger ADR field we haven't seen the right intersection between skills of being a good mediator and entrepreneurship of knowing how to reach a large audience and inject, you know, humor and quirkiness and creativity and fun. And as I was saying, meeting clients where they're at. That just hasn't happened on a on a scale." (Participant A3)

"I think it's useful to develop marketing materials. I don't know anybody, who's really done it massively successfully. I don't think that we've got the right touch yet in terms of really reaching people." (Participant A9)

The minimal focus on marketing ties in with a lack of conscious effort in the development of imagery that more adequately represents the rebranded version of conflict and conflict resolution that has been developed by the field. This influences the lack of knowledge of the larger audience about the field of conflict resolution and describes the gap between the high social need but the low social demand for conflict resolution. This played a role of dissonance in Group A desires for the future, in that, they wanted the field to grow, but they are not actively marketing the field.

Displayed in the dialog from Group A surrounding what they would like for the field of conflict resolution in the next five, ten, and fifteen years, there was a clear desire for growth that was supported by an underlying acknowledgment, passion, and belief in the field. The desire to grow the conflict resolution field to become not only household names but first and best choices. These desires coincide with the development of marketing and branding and engaging the audience in the value that conflict resolution has to offer.

"You know, I guess I want our processes, you know, mediation is where I have the most experience, but mediation, facilitation, and dialogue, I want these to be not the last resort

but the first resorts, the go to for people involved and in difficult conversations." (Participant A3)

"My goal would be for people in organizations when faced with a conflict that they've been unsuccessful at resolving themselves, it occurs to them to bring in a neutral or an outsider to help them with that." (Participant A4)

"I would like to see it more widely accepted." (Participant A5)

"I want...I would like this field to grow, to be able to offer us a job or offer to each one that wants one." (Participant A6)

At the end of the interviews for Group B, the researcher asked the participants what type of conflict resolution topics would like to learn about. All of the participants answered and had a desire to learn about different topics about conflict resolution. As they described the skills, they would like to learn it became apparent to the researcher that the knowledge and the tools they desire already exist in conflict resolution. The obstacle was they did not have the language to know how to find it or know where to start.

Many of the responses about what they would like to learn to do better when dealing with conflict were formatted in 'how to', such as 'how to keep my cool'. The 'how-to' is the traditional model that has been used in self-help literature and was reflected in their language. The researcher found it important to note because the packaging of the message can influence engagement with its audience. For example, one of the participants wanted to learn patience when engaging with others in conflict. There are tools in the conflict resolution spectrum to support learning this skill but would not be labeled under patience such as active listening, reflective listening, and asking curious questions as a means of stimulating empathy for the other to create the space for patience to exist. So, a person who is looking to learn patience in conflict might not search for

reflective listening. Demonstrating the marketing, language, and packaging of the field's

materials needs to address the community's needs, language, and access. A rebranding

example could be a conflict resolution hand guide to learning patience. It is important to

connect to the market and their needs and engage with them about what they want. Table

13 outlines the list of skills and techniques the sample population was interested in

learning about in conflict resolution.

Table 13

Group B Categories of Desired Conflict Resolution Skills

Desired Conflict Resolution Skills	Group B
Becoming Comfortable with Conflict	3
Communication Techniques	6
Emotion Management	5
Leadership Skills	1
Patience	1
Personality Types	1
Process	5
Psychology of Emotions	1

It is important to note the timing of the interviews and the role that the political

atmosphere in the United States and globally has stratified and the commonplace

representation of polarization and divisiveness in politics, the media, and our

communities. Political references in terms of dealing with conflict and encountering

conflict was a constant throughout all of the interviews and describes an environment and

society that is ripe for access to conflict resolution skills, techniques, services, and

products.

This chapter outlined the findings from the data collected that depicts an environment

that is heavily influenced by the traditional understanding of conflict as negative. The

social fact that conflict is negative served as the epicenter for understanding how clients

and practitioners engage with conflict and conflict resolution knowledge and ultimately

conflict resolution services. The marketing and branding of conflict resolution are

filtered through this lens and carry it on their back. The final chapter weaves this data

into reflections and implications of the presence of the social fact of conflict as negative

on the field and future of conflict resolution.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, and Conclusion

The ultimate goal of this research was to support the improvement of the practice of marketing and branding of conflict resolution. The researcher recognized the value in improved practice of marketing and branding of the field of conflict resolution as part of the puzzle for creating more name recognition in the field, more prestige in the titles and services, higher levels of use of conflict resolution practices in our communities, and more value in the field's businesses. This research served, as one of the participants described it, as "a voyage of discovery" (Participant A8). In order to improve practice, it is necessary to paint a picture of what exists, what communication looks like now, and outline places for improvement and successes.

This research was focused on observing and describing what exists in the field as a means for growth. Its focus was to examine factors that might influence behavior and circumstances aimed at understanding current issues within the field because you cannot fix something if you do not know it exists. We do not have to reinvent the wheel or start from scratch, but rather we need to update the wheel. The researcher's intentions were to explore if the field's marketing is influenced by the macro social norms, assumptions, and expectations of conflict as negative and if they influence how the field communicates with its target market. The outlined research questions for this research were:

How does the view of conflict as negative influence conflict resolution marketing?

How does the view of conflict as negative influence the brand of conflict resolution?

This final chapter will outline the findings of this research, demonstrate the significance and the role it plays in the growth for the future, and outline recommendations for future work.

Summary of Findings: The Influence of Conflict as Negative

The research questions aimed to evaluate the influence, if any, of the negative social understanding of conflict on conflict resolution marketing and branding. The influence identified and observed within the data collection and analysis as a means to observe how audiences interact with conflict resolution symbols, language, and imagery. The researcher interviewed two sample groups: Group A that was made up of career conflict resolution practitioners and Group B that was made up of the previously identified target market of millennials. The chosen groups were interviewed to serve as a comparison against each other to better be able to observe if a negative influence was present by language and emotional comparisons. The groups were asked questions about their associations of color, emotions, imagery, and time in reference to the concepts of conflict and conflict resolution in order to extract their description and definitions to serve as a base of data for observing if an influence of the social understanding of conflict as negative was present.

The researcher observed the presence of a negative association and connotation with the word and concept of conflict. Observing this standard of conflict as negative by Group B created the environment to observe their relationship with conflict resolution. Meanwhile, the researcher observed an interdependent relationship between conflict and conflict resolution that influenced the associations of emotions and understanding of the influence of time and space with both of the concepts. A binary relationship with positive

associations with the concept of conflict resolution served to further portray the negative association with conflict. The binary relationship between the two concepts started to paint a picture of the current landscape of conflict resolution symbols and imagery. Additionally, the researcher asked questions to both groups concerning the understanding of the field from an emic and etic perspective. To serve as a means to access the knowledge and name recognition of the field and discussed marketing and the brand of conflict resolution with Group A the conflict resolution practitioners.

The influence of the negative social understanding of conflict in Group B, the identified target market group, was prevalent throughout their entire data set. In the association with colors and conflict, Group B associated the color red with conflict as well as Group A. While they both shared the color association of red with conflict, different descriptions of why they chose that color uncovered a difference in perception. Group A described red in association with conflict as vibrant, bright, and energetic, while Group B described the association with red in association with war, darkness, and negativity. While there was a shared association with the color red with conflict, there was a difference in interpretation of why that color was associated and this depicted the gap in a shared meaning between the two groups.

Additionally, in color associations with conflict, Group B outlined the colors black and white fourteen times in their associations with conflict. The black and white association was grounded in the colloquial way conflict and conflict resolution is often discussed in ultimatums such as "it is black and white". These referenced ultimatums of choice, a winner and a loser, and a zero-sum association with conflict. This association further represented the negative perception of conflict from Group B as it outlines a

ridged and limited view of conflict. It represented the interdependent relationship the terms have together as conflict was being associated with the depicting of choice as a characterization of how the conflict will 'end' or how the conflict resolution process is predetermined. Group B associated grey nine times with conflict and was used in connection with the colloquial way we discuss conflict and conflict resolution as 'the grey area', which is built out of the black and white idiom and is associated with uncertainty.

This is representative of a classic representation of a win/lose scenario in conflict resolution. Wilmot and Hocker discuss win-lose metaphors and how they suggest that the outcome is predetermined. "The way a conflict is characterized metaphorically creates a certain perception of what can happen, what will happen, what should happen and with what kind of feeling action might take place (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007, p. 39)." It creates a closed system that lacks the creativity and spectrum of tools that conflict resolution has to offer. It creates a connection between the win/lose mental models that informs the ideas that there is a right and wrong answer. It focuses on positions and predetermined solutions, rather than creatively trying to find ways to address parties' interests in the conflict. Comparatively, black, white and grey were only mentioned once in Group A.

The limited view of conflict as zero/sum, negative, and uncertain within their color association with conflict communicated a negative stigma with the word that would be present throughout the data sets. Comparatively, Group A discusses conflict with descriptions of energy, rebirth, vibrancy, and renewal. The negative stigma is not present in the color associations of Group A with conflict that demonstrates a difference in cultural understanding and meaning. It is almost as if Group A's education and

experience in the conflict resolution field served to create awareness and break the negative stigma that is attached to conflict, while Group B's lack of association with the field and its knowledge and practices trapped it in the traditional negative views of conflict.

The color associations with the terms conflict resolution reflected a positive arch across both groups. This theme of positivity in association with conflict resolution starts to uncover the binary relationship between the two terms representing the logic relationship of if A, then B. If conflict is negative, then conflict resolution is positive. Again, there was an overlapping in color association between the two groups of associating conflict resolution with blue, green, and yellow. The descriptions of these colors represented process and movement with descriptions of water, green traffic lights, and the sunshine. In comparison to the limited and ridged view of conflict, the concepts are understood in relationship with each other and the social of understanding of conflict serves as the frame of understanding for the positive understanding of conflict resolution. Interestingly, Group B had a high association of white with conflict resolution in association with descriptions of purity and lightness that referenced altruistic views of conflict resolution and were funneled through the binary of conflict as negative.

In the description of imagery associated with conflict, Group A responses were categorized into three groups: images of conflict resolution spaces, traditional images of conflict as war or a fight, and the absence of imagery. The category of images of conflict resolution spaces references the pattern of the interwoven and interdependent relationship between conflict and conflict resolution and how they are often defined by describing the

absence of the other or the presence of the other. This was found in two of Group B's responses as well.

Importantly to note that two members of the Group A, the career conflict resolution practitioners, had an absence of imagery for conflict. This was a very important finding in the interviews as the lack of imagery illustrates the role of complacency in the imagery used in the marketing of the field of conflict resolution. The lack of an active role in the defining of imagery that represents conflict relinquishes control to the audience to create and define the images within their own understanding and context. For example, both groups shared the association with the color red in association with conflict but had two different interpretations of meaning. It is almost as if the field of conflict resolution has rebranded the symbols and meanings but has not educated the audience of the new perception. This complacency described the influence on the identity and branding of conflict resolution. The lack of active participation in the development of new images and/or the lack of education on the rebranding of traditional images leaves the audience in control of the identity of the field of conflict resolution. Continuing in the pattern of complacency, two other Group A participants deflected the answer and described the image associations to what they thought others would visualize as conflict and they described war and fighting. This furthers the observation of complacency of the presence of conflict as negative in influencing the marketing and branding of conflict resolution.

The lack of career conflict resolution practitioner's ability to define and outline imagery associated with conflict portrays an environment of complacency to the social norms and understanding of conflict. The norm of conflict as negative did not come from

the field of conflict resolution but rather it is a stigma that the field is actively trying to distinguish itself from. The presence and complacency of the frame are omnipresent in the color and image associations within the field. In support of this description, Group B identified and described the image of conflict as a fight or war. Additionally, their descriptions focused on fighting, yelling, and arguing, supporting the influence and presence of the negative understanding of conflict.

Modeling the responses in the association of color to conflict resolution, both groups' responses to their associations of imagery with conflict resolution reflected the binary relationship between the two terms. An overarching positive theme was present in the responses, as well as, the classic images of conflict resolution such as the handshake, bridge, stock people at a table or a meeting, and a dove. The pattern of complacency continued with two career conflict resolution practitioners who had an absence of imagery for conflict resolution. This leads the researcher to ask the question if we lack the words to describe our identity, how will we teach people who we are, and do we even know who we are? In comparison, Group B had no lack of image association with conflict resolution and described it as a positive light and modeled them in a "before and after" infomercial type fashion. The 'before and after' modeling is reflective of the binary relationship with conflict as negative and conflict resolution as positive demonstrating the omnipresence of the influence of conflict as negative within the identity of conflict resolution.

In the interviews, the participants were asked to describe their emotional responses to the term conflict. Group B overwhelmingly described their emotional connection to conflict as negative with terms like anxious, stressful, tension, or angry.

This reflects the presence of the social understanding as negative and how it can influence behavior and mood. Comparatively, Group A overwhelmingly described conflict as an opportunity, situational, or normal. These contrasting emotional connections illuminate the gap in interpretation between the two groups understanding and relationship with conflict. It further paints the picture of the emotional rebranding that the field has done with the term and an opportunity on where marketing and branding strategies can focus.

In the emotional connection with conflict resolution, there was another modeling of the binary relationship with conflict in that the responses from both groups were overwhelmingly positive. An important distinction took place in Group B responses, in that the participants that described conflict resolution as an event described conflict resolution in a more positive light. As compared to participants that described conflict resolution as a process described the term in a more negative light. The presence of time and space influenced the emotional responses from Group B. The event symbolized and ending or a solution and this garnered more positive associations. In comparison, the process was associated with being uneasy, anxious, and challenging, because the end was uncertain. This observation goes further to describe the underlying misconception of altruism in conflict resolution. The belief that if conflict resolution was used that there is inherently a positive outcome such as everyone is a winner or a happy ending. This idealistic connection with conflict resolution is represented in the traditional imagery used within the field of representing the end, an event, and overwhelming happiness or joy. This is represented in the handshake, the meeting at the table with content people, the bridge, and others.

There exists a dissidence with the association with a solution and a happy ending or agreeing. It creates the idea that solution is equated to agreeing and this creates a very limited view of conflict resolution and forms a dangerous ideal. This same sentiment was representative in the high use of the idiom 'agree to disagree' in the responses from Group B. It was used as a substitute if agreeing was not an option meaning that you could not find a solution, you could always 'agree to disagree'. This creates the ideal that the only way to carry out conflict resolution is by agreeing with each other. The idioms over-usage was reflective of avoidance in conflict resolution (which in some cases is a best practice), but moreover, it was reflective of non-engagement with conflict for fear of not agreeing. This can create echo chambers of ideologies that serve is self-fulfilling prophecies, because avoidance and non-engagement do not allow challenging arguments to enter their ecosystem. Constructed in this idiom is a passiveness, docile, and politeness ideal of conflict resolution that reflects the idea that if a person fights, yells, or argues he/she is not participating in conflict resolution. The idiom is reflective of serving as an avoidance of the process of conflict resolution rather than conflict resolution.

This sentiment was further observed in the high use of the idiom 'seeing eye to eye' that returns to the focus of agreeing. Furthermore, this idiom creates the idea of sameness and that sameness equals fairness. That sameness in comparison with self is what creates equality, that if a person does not 'see eye to eye' with you, there is no agreement. If there is no agreement, then a person can either choose to 'agree to disagree' or meet in 'the middle'. The idiom 'middle ground' was another highly used idiom in the interviews and served to help further paint the picture of the idea of conflict resolution as resource distribution (with the term resource embodying intangible things such as ideas).

The misconception that to resolve conflict there needs to be an event of transference of resources, almost reflective of an act or event to rebalance the scale. This understanding is reflective of the frame of equality that shadows over the understanding of conflict resolution.

In contrast, avoidance was not viewed as a conflict resolution tactic, but rather on how to measure or demonstrate how much people did not like conflict. Participants from Group B used their amount of avoidance to try to demonstrate to the researcher how much they dislike conflict and conflict in their lives. While Group B discussed their avoidance of conflict frequently, they did not categorize it as conflict resolution, which represents the lack of understanding and knowledge about the field of conflict resolution.

Another highly present emotional connection with conflict resolution was shame. From the lack of knowledge about the field and the social altruistic ideas of what conflict resolution should or ought to look like created a skewed scale for measurement from which Group B judged their competencies in conflict resolution against. The negative connotations of conflict make people fearful of being labeled as conflict-ridden or inadept at solving conflict. As one participant in Group A described, people feel not 'socially fit' if they struggle with conflict and that informed a presence of shame in participants from Group B. This created the idea that some people are more conflict-ridden than others or some people are naturally more skilled at solving conflicts. The shame is furthered by altruistic images and ideas of peace, that peace is placid, soft, warm, angelic, and reflective of an almost sainthood. Therefore, if people yell, get mad, or do not remain calm they feel like they are not practicing conflict resolution and they are not good at it.

This creates an almost unattainable ideal of what conflict resolution is and influences the connection with people identifying with the label.

The gap in understanding between Group A and B furthers in evaluating the time and space associations they had with the terms conflict and conflict resolution. Group A responses patterned a reflection of an everydayness of conflict and a level of comfort in the place conflict ebbs and flows throughout their days and lives. This description is in contrast to the traditional negative views of conflict and is reflective of a rebranding of conflict. Comparatively, Group B responses focused on minimalism, which is reflective of the shame and emotional fear of being labeled or stigmatized as conflict-ridden or conflict resolution inept. This continued to be portrayed in the dissidence between the amount of time Group B felt like they experienced conflict during a week's time and the amount of time they experienced conflict resolution during the same time period. There was a drastic shift in responses between the two amounts. While the majority of Group B participants identified as experiencing conflict minimally or 1-3 times a week, the responses for how much conflict resolution they experienced in a weeks' time jumped. The responses moved to 3-5 times a week and every day. This created a clear disconnect between the relationship between the two terms and was reflective of the preference of the association of labels. Participants felt more comfortable labeling and sharing their experiences in conflict resolution rather than in conflict. This is reflective of the negative stigma that surrounds conflict and how it influences identity and can influence association with the word and labels.

An observation within the relationship between the associations of time and space and conflict resolution was an underlying structural-functionalist view of conflict

resolution. This view held that harmony or peace was the natural state of affairs and conflict was a disruption of the system and when conflict arises all parts of the system try to address the conflict to bring things that to its 'natural state' that of one of harmony.

The definitional understanding of conflict had no overlapping in understanding between the groups demonstrating a clear difference in understanding of the concept. Group A discussed conflict using infield terminology such as incompatible goals, an opportunity for change, and normal, while Group B defined conflict as the absence of an agreement or lack of compromise. This circles back to the previously outlined emotional associations with equating conflict resolution to agreeing. Group B continued their definitional understanding of conflict resolution by defining it a being equated to an agreement. This is reflective of the binary relationship between conflict and conflict resolution and it develops a linear relationship with time. If conflict manifests, in the traditional sense of the word, if something bad happens, then something good should happen or conflict resolution should happen. This references back to the structural-functionalist view of conflict resolution being the system and its focus on bringing things back to peace or harmony.

While many of the participants in Group B talked about conflict resolution skills and techniques, they did not have the language or the knowledge to categorize it as conflict resolution. This is a vital key point in recognizing the everydayness of conflict resolution and how to abstract the extraordinary from the ordinary. Participants in Group B described the status quo of their skills without knowing there was a standard of measurement and body of knowledge from which they could evaluate the adequacy of their skills. Participants felt like they would have to learn something brand new rather

than developing the skills they have and use every day. Many participants in Group B had an idea of separation of conflict resolution skills by the environment. They categorized conflict resolution skills and tools categorically different at work than in the home. Where in as, the skill remains the same, but it feels different to people because of the context.

Moreover, there was a clear lack of understanding by the larger community about what conflict resolution is and what a conflict resolution practitioner does. Nine out of nine participants from Group A explained that a majority of the time people do not know what they do when they talk about their career outside the field. It elicited laughter from many of the participants of Group A, because of the stark realness of the question and the almost laughability of the lack of understanding of the field in the larger community. The sentiment was reflected in the responses from Group B in that twenty out of twenty of the participants had a lack of understanding about conflict resolution professionals and described not knowing it was a thing or gave their best guess at what they think they would do. This is representative of a major lack of identity outside the field and of a space for which we can grow.

The ever-present controversy of what is the best or most appropriate terminology to use in conflict resolution was highly present in the interviews of Group A. The lack of consistent language and stratified identity with the language serve as a model for understanding the lack of identity within the field. The lack of collective identity serves to stratify in field identities and reduces the power of impact and influences the building of industry. This was further demonstrated in outlined critiques of the field from Group A. There was a large amount of unaddressed anger in the interviews directed towards the

field with a focus on lack of infield collaboration and support and lack of standardization of the field and its practices. Both of these sentiments expressed emotions that are tied to identity. Portraying how the lack of collaboration is tied to an expected identity of support within the field and the reality not living up to that standard. A false pretense exists that since we are a field of peacemakers that 'normal' or traditional cut-throat business models and tactics do not apply because the field is in the business of peace. Additionally, the lack of standardization of language and practice played an important part in what practitioners described as affecting the viability of growth for the field. The described internal identity stratification and issues served as an important key to understanding the environment for developing marketing and branding of conflict resolution.

Group A described their marketing strategies and the most used strategy was word of mouth. Other strategies included email lists and sharing marketing flyers on LinkedIn, but most of the strategies were described as minimal. Several participants from Group A discussed having a website, this response was representative of the lack of marketing strategy understanding. While having a website is a 21st century best practice, a website alone does not elicit traffic to the site without another medium drawing the audience in. There are keywords that can be attached to websites to draw traffic from search engines, but Justin Corbett's work on analyzing big data to understanding how people are searching for conflict resolution online demonstrated the continued lack of overlapping language. From his research, he demonstrated people are not searching "mediation" or "alternative dispute resolution", but rather talking about their problems to the search bar. This research further described the lack of language Group B had in defining terms

associated with conflict resolution and the lack of knowledge that the field existed represents an important turning point at the blinking cursor inside the search bar on Google. If people do not know about the field of conflict resolution and the work that is possible, they may not search for it. When they do search for conflict resolution support online, it may not overlap with the language that is used in the field. This represents a space for growth within the practices, language, and access for conflict resolution in an attempt to access and become a part of people's daily lives.

Conclusions Drawn from the Research

In conclusion, what the participants described was an environment and understanding that was framed by the understanding of conflict as negative. Group A described a presentation of information that deviated from this frame in the way they acknowledged what they used to feel about conflict and how people they interact with feel about conflict. Figure 1 from Chapter 2 visualizes this relationship between the shared understanding with the frame of conflict as negative between the two groups. Where in as, the frame of conflict as negative largely frames the social understanding of the conflict resolution, the field of conflict resolution has an understanding of the terms outside of that frame that was developed from the field. The field has rebranded the words and concepts. The field of conflict resolution uses a different approach to viewing conflict in that it views it as an opportunity for change and a normal part of our daily lives. This difference in understanding represents the rebranding the field has done of the words and concepts from the traditional meaning. This rebranding of conflict and conflict resolution serves as an opportunity to demonstrate the heightened quality of life and the benefits of prescribing to a conflict resolution lifestyle can support.
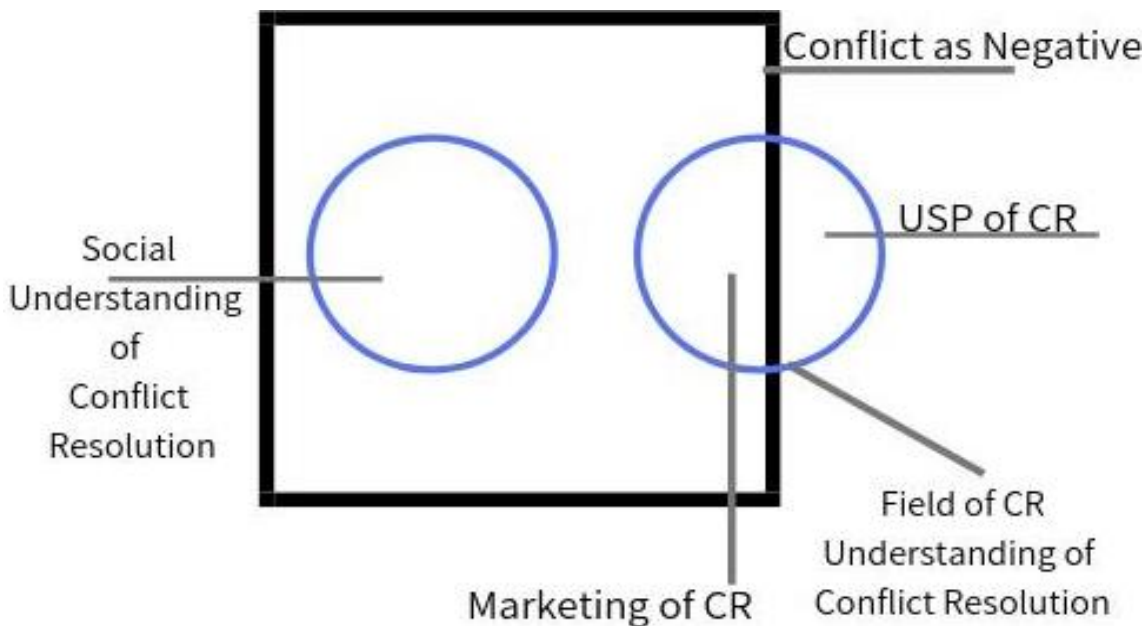
Figure 2. Business Model Evaluating the USP of Conflict Resolution

(Skinner, 2019)

There is a clear shared want and interest in the future and the growth of conflict resolution from both groups. When the career conflict resolution practitioners talked about the next five, ten, and fifteen years for conflict resolution, they discussed name recognition of the field, commonplace and household language and practices, and a desire for growth.

Stratified internal identity politics within the field of conflict resolution that are informed by lack of collective agreement in language, niche markets, and lack of overarching standardization have created a weak platform for creating a presence outside the field. Moreover, the field of conflict resolution rebranded terms and concepts in our society but has not educated the public about the new image and identity.

Similarly, this can be seen with the term 'social' and in how its identity is often conflicted with the rebranding of the term with social media. The word social was birthed

and popularized in association with face to face interaction because that was the only means of interaction with others. As technology advanced, the ways to be social superseded the need to be face-to-face, but rather communication and relationships can be birth and fostered through a screen and online. A new way to be social now exists, but it continues to have to battle with stigma carried over from the traditional use of the word. The field of conflict resolution must similarly disrupt the traditional use of the words and concepts of conflict as a means of branding and name recognition. The unaddressed stigma of conflict as negative needs to be actively addressed in the field's marketing and branding and is serving as a means of rebranding and breaking through the traditional understanding of the concepts.

The complacency in the marketing, the symbols, and the imagery used in association with conflict resolution are more representative of the traditional ideas of conflict and conflict resolution rather than the rebranded understanding of conflict and conflict resolution from the field. This represents the lack of the influence of the images at engaging the public with conflict resolution and a lack of effort to educate about the rebranding of the terms. The negative stigma associated with conflict deters people from identifying and/or accessing the field. The identified shame in Group B in the fear of being identified with conflict demonstrates the strength of the stigma and the power it can have over our field and its access to its audience.

The significance of these findings is grounded in the desire from Group A to grow the field and the interest from Group B in conflict resolution. The demand for conflict resolution services, knowledge, and products will not grow on its own rather we need to build that reality. Practitioners are wired for this, as being skilled facilitators, mediators,

negotiators, and listeners have conditioned for them for heightened communication skills and for connecting people.

Recommendations for Practitioners

This research presents itself as a spark to encourage more research with the lens turned on the field of conflict resolution as a means for informed growth. The lack of existing research on conflict resolution markets and business practices demonstrates the need for this data to create platforms for informed growth. This body of work serves as a starting point for evaluating the marketing and branding of conflict resolution as a means for growth. Recommendations for practitioners and conflict resolution programs included starting to incorporate marketing strategies and business models into their businesses and body of knowledge. Many of the conflict resolution programs do not have business education as part of the curriculum, but prominently given advice in the field of conflict resolution is to be an entrepreneur and find your own niche. There is dissidence in the academic base of knowledge and the subsequent practice of conflict resolution.

This research serves as a starting point for future research about our field. This is the first 100 pages of the Game of Thrones series and there are many more characters to meet, places to see, and volumes to write. This research opens up a wide array of other pressing questions that need to be answered. How do we build a competitive industry? What do we want that to look like? These questions are imperative for taking control of the field for defining the future of conflict resolution. Other questions involve examining the culture and different types of disruptive models that have historically been used to support shifts in change. Additionally, examining the question, how do we redirect the negative emotional response to conflict as a means for rebranding conflict resolution? It

further demands our field to examine the role of culture and its influences on how different cultures engage with the conflict resolution language. Other questions that evolved were examining our current business practices and models to evaluate growth. The field often encourages an entrepreneurial culture in conflict resolution, but is the market prepared for that? Are we setting people up for success? Other questions that arose were examining the other industries in which the field exists and understanding its place in the world. For example, what are the terms that are being used in different industries that encompass the conflict resolution role and responsibilities? When searching on job posting sites, what is the language other industries are using for their conflict resolution positions? Growth is not inevitable and in order to inform growth, we need to be informed about the landscape in which the field plans to grow.

Accountability can feel like an attack when a person is not ready to acknowledge how the behavior affects others. The question the field should be asking ourselves when developing our work is: does this support the future that I'm trying to create? This question has micro and macro influences in that it serves to address personal development and development of the field. The career conflict resolution practitioners from Group A clearly and passionately outlined their hopes for the future of the field of conflict resolution. This reflected a future of growth, a future of increased presence in not only our community but in our households. These hopes and aspirations for the future are built off of our active and conscious behavior now. Recognizing avenues for growth for the field does not devalue the work, the field, nor it's past, but rather demonstrates the humanity of the field. Passion is not enough to fuel the field into the next fifteen years, but rather fueling that passion into connecting with the business knowledge and models,

technology knowledge and use, and collaborators that will actively support our growth into the rest of the 21ˢᵗ century.

A brand is a perceived value. The value of a symbol, a word, or an action has the ability to inform the audience of its brand. Often brands can get simplified to the sense of imagery is what encompasses the brand, but it is more of an identity that is connected with the symbol. *"Taking a step back and misconception about branding is something like, what is your logo? It's not a brand. It's how you go about something or you get how you approach it. What resources do you have* (Participant A1)?" Participant A1 addressed an important aspect of branding in that it is not just the label but the way it looks, it feels, and how it makes you feel. It is important to recognize the relationship between the feeling and stimuli that made you feel that way. The feeling and emotions that are connected with identity are reflected in many different ways. For example, when there is a perfume commercial on television; there is no way to smell the perfume, so they visually demonstrate how they make the viewer feel.

Branding is the process to form the brand identity and the culturally accepted understanding of its language, symbols, and associations. The brand of conflict resolution would be equivalent to the culture of 'going green'. 'Going green' encompasses many types of behaviors and positions, but they reflect a shared ideology of being more environmentally friendly and responsible. It is a cultural shift, a lifestyle to which people commit to and actively participate in their daily lives.

There is not one single training that is going to shift the culture. There is not one big ad campaign that is going to shift from a culture of conflict to a culture of conflict resolution, but rather a holistic approach is necessary. At the base of that holistic

approach is educating and informing the public and the target markets not only of the benefits of conflict resolution lifestyles and the consequences of not actively practicing it. This has been a major part of the organic movement and the 'going green' movement, in that, they informed and empowered the public with knowledge to the benefits of participating, but also the consequences of not participating. The field has rebranded the language and many of the current practices and now it is important that we educate the public on this new meaning and what it can mean to them. With heavy media discourse on the loss of civility in communities and the presences of that discourse in the interviews of this research describes an environment that is looking for a 'new' way, that is ripe for practicing new skills, and ready to transform the ways they are engaging with their neighbors, friends, family, social media followers, and co-workers.

This is not a one-stop-fix-all antidote that will increase the notoriety and understanding of conflict resolution, but rather a holistic approach. A holistic approach reflects on infield accountability and how we can be more inclusive and more accessible. This means there is a wide array of approaches to start to address this issue of the lack of popularization and understanding of conflict resolution. Some ways would be addressing a lack of diversity in age, race, gender, political orientation, religion, ability, and sexual orientation representation in our associations, school programs, and business. Also, addressing the language and package of materials is necessary, so we break down walls and ivory towers of knowledge as a means of access. Additionally, it can look like shifting to incorporate different types of mainstream media and technology as a means to spread our reach to include social media, apps, documentaries, YouTube channels, and more. It can also be reflected in creating more mentorship within the field and building

the industry up rather than lateral with the idea of infinite niche markets. It can be

approached by addressing academic elitism and the ivory tower of knowledge in which

we store our knowledge as a means to make the information more accessible to others.

This list is not exhaustive and has limitless other ways to inform growth. The household

use of conflict resolution is contingent on the field taking accountability for places that

we lack and working together to upgrade and update those gaps to maintain relevancy

and increase value culturally and monetarily.

Final Thoughts

This body of work is derived from the researcher's core belief that conflict

resolution is a lifestyle. It embodies a set of practices and outlooks that inform every part

of our daily activity. The knowledge, mental models, and skills that conflict resolution

provide do not only serve to enhance negotiations at work but weave throughout our day

while we negotiate with our toddlers about dinner choices and internal battles within

ourselves. The value and benefits of conflict resolution can inform a better quality of life

as it informs the way that we interact with everyone around us and leaves people feeling

more satisfied with their interactions and ultimately themselves. The researcher

recognized this difference after having access to knowledge and the field of conflict

resolution and realized the shift within herself. She outlined this shift as the light switch

flip. Imagine you are in a dark room, but you are familiar with this room, you are

comfortable in this room, and you can navigate yourself well around the room and then

suddenly the light switch flips. With the lights on you see the room completely

differently, you experience the colors differently, you acknowledge gaps in your

understanding of the room with the new knowledge the light brought, and you now can

navigate yourself around the room at a heightened pace. This is how the researcher views access to the knowledge and understanding of the field of conflict resolution as the light switching on and its reach, value, and ability to inform behavior in our homes, communities, and beyond. This research serves as a steppingstone of information to support and inform the increased reach of the field of conflict resolution.

The negative social understanding and relationship the larger community has with conflict should be incorporated in the development of strategies for marketing the brand of conflict resolution to the public. The field has done a form of rebranding of the understanding and definitions behind conflict and conflict resolution but has not educated the larger public about the nuanced relationship. Without the active and conscious development of new imagery or the focus of education of the rebranding, the traditional images in conflict resolution marketing fall short in their engagement with the audience. The stigma associated with conflict and the associated ideas that people are almost socially unfit if they cannot solve conflict creates an obstacle for full engagement with the audience. Breaking the stigma about conflict and conflict resolution will create access and understanding about the field of conflict resolution and inform changes in our communities.

A common saying in conflict resolution is to meet people where they are and to speak their language and it is important that we incorporate that into our infield marketing as well. Figuratively, if we are to meet people where they are, we need to meet them online and on their phones. There is a lot of public decry over phone usage, but if you can't beat them - join them and disrupt the current content they are engaging with knowledge, information, and skill-building about conflict resolution. While there is

plenty of critique about the plethora of negative discourse online, our field is not doing anything to disrupt the discourse. The way people are learning has transformed and broken out of the traditional classroom and on to our phones. There are apps on your phone to support skill-building in learning languages, to learn to play instruments and even learn math. The online platforms exponentially surpass the reach of the audience from the traditional training room or conference room and maintain relevancy within the new pace of change.

The research described the gap in language, emotional connection, and understanding between the field and its target market about conflict and conflict resolution. It portrays a rebranding of conflict by the career conflict resolution practitioners and a lack of understanding of that new brand by the outlined target market. It illustrates the current backdrop of understanding from which the field can actively construct the future to ensure a braided narrative to lessen the gap between the high social need for conflict resolution and the low social demand.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

I. **Demography Questions:**
1. What is your gender identity?
2. How old are you?
3. Where do you live?
4. What is your current job position or title?
5. Are you familiar with the conflict resolution field? If so, how?
6. Do you identify with working in the field of conflict resolution?

Group A supplemental question:

7. Do you work in the conflict resolution field?
   a. If so in what capacity?
   b. For how many years have you been working in the conflict resolution field?

II. **Reflection Questions:**
8. How do you define conflict?
9. How would you describe, how conflict makes you feel?
10. When you think of the word conflict, what types of images come to your mind?
11. When you think of the word conflict, what colors come to your mind?
12. Can you give me an example of conflict?
    a. In your personal life?
    b. In the world?
13. How often do you experience conflict in your personal life? For example, during a week's times, how often do you feel like you experience conflict?
14. How do you define conflict resolution?
15. How does the idea of conflict resolution make you feel?
16. When you think of the words conflict resolution, what types of images come to mind?
17. When you think of the words conflict resolution, what types of colors come to mind?
18. Can you give me an example of conflict resolution?
19. How often do you use conflict resolution in your personal life? For example, during a week's times, how often do you feel like you experience conflict?
20. What would you like to learn to do better, when engaging with conflicts?
21. What do you think a conflict resolution practitioner does? What service do they provide?

Sub-set questions for Group A:

a. When you talk about your career to people outside the field, what is their understanding of what you do?

b. What do you think is the biggest misconception about conflict resolution?
c. What do you think is the biggest misconception about conflict?
d. In your opinion, why do people need conflict resolution?
e. In your opinion, why do people want conflict resolution?
f. In your opinion, what is the biggest obstacle between the need and the demand for conflict resolution services?
g. Have you ever developed marketing material for a conflict resolution service, group, or entity?
h. When you were developing the marketing materials for your conflict resolution services, what target market did you have in mind?
i. Did you do target market research?
j. What were the concepts used to create the imagery?
k. What types of language did you use?
l. How do you market your consult services?
m. What is would you say the brand of conflict resolution is?
n. What would you like to see for the future of conflict resolution?