


A Journey within the Theory–Practice Nexus of Conflict Management: Contributions of IACM Rubin Award Recipient Benjamin Broome

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Abstract

In this tribute to the 2016 recipient of the International Association for Conflict Management Jeffrey Z. Rubin Theory-to-Practice Award, we celebrate the work of Benjamin Broome. Each of us highlights a unique contribution of his work: specifically, in the areas of (a) applied communication, (b) intercultural communication, (c) conflict management and peacebuilding, and (d) well-being, sustainability, and systems science education. We conclude our discussion of the four research areas by highlighting common themes suggested by this work. The article closes with words of wisdom from Benjamin Broome, who offers advice to doctoral students and scholars at various stages of their career.

Introduction

We are delighted that the International Association for Conflict Management Jeffrey Z. Rubin Theory-to-Practice Award has recognized the outstanding contributions of Benjamin Broome (see Figure 1), and we are deeply honored to write this essay celebrating his work. Ben has had a profound impact on the fields of communication, conflict management, and applied social science, and, in this article, we focus, in particular, on his contribution in the areas of (a) applied communication, (b) intercultural communication, (c) conflict management and peacebuilding, and (d) well-being, sustainability, and systems science education.

Throughout his professional career, Ben Broome has moved effectively and skillfully between theory and practice in ways that have inspired, informed, and affected society positively. His theory development and applied research, which has focused on facilitation of dialogue in intergroup and intercultural conflict, has been transformative, and it has had a significant, positive impact on the lives of many people across the world. Throughout his career, Ben has approached his work in both transdisciplinary and innovative ways, providing a unique and positive model for translating theory to practice in the conflict management arena. He has maintained a remarkable balance between conceptual development in the academic world and application of theories and principles of communication and conflict management to critical societal issues.

Ben's career as a scholar-practitioner spans across nearly 4 decades. His first academic position was in 1980 at the American College in Athens, Greece. In 1981, he joined the Department of Communication



Figure 1. Benjamin Broome accepting the Jeffery Z. Rubin Theory-to-Practice Award at the 2016 conference of IACM, held at Columbia University in New York City. The award was presented by Jessica Jameson, President of IACM, and Joel Brockner, coauthor with Rubin and founder of the award.

at George Mason University, where he served on the Faculty Advisory Board that established what is now the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. He was also a research associate in the Center for Interactive Management and in the Institute for Advanced Study in the Integrative Sciences. As an advisor and consultant with Americans for Indian Opportunity from 1987 to 1994, he facilitated interactive design sessions with Native American tribes and with the American Indian Ambassador Program for young Native leaders. During the early 1990s, he was a consulting faculty member with Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM) in Mexico, offering training workshops for faculty and students in the Systems Engineering program. Since 1999, Ben has been on the faculty of the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University (ASU), where he currently serves as Director of Doctoral Studies.

Ben has received a number of prestigious awards and appointments. In 1994, he received a Senior Fulbright Scholar Award to Cyprus, serving as the first Fulbright Scholar appointed in the field of conflict resolution. In 2007, he received a Fulbright Senior Specialist Award in Australia, spending a semester at the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Queensland. From 2006 to 2012, he served as a Visiting Faculty Member at Sabanci University's Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution in Turkey, providing support for faculty and students in the region's first program in conflict resolution. From 2009 to 2015, he worked with the Centre for International and European Studies (CIES) at Kadir Has University in Istanbul, facilitating a structured dialogue workshop for the International Neighbourhood Symposium, which brought together 30 young professionals from across the Black Sea region and from the southern and eastern Mediterranean. In 2009, he was elected a Fellow of the International Academy of Intercultural Research, and, recently, he was appointed Research Associate at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (NCPACS) at the University of Otago, New Zealand. In recent years, he has been a consulting faculty member with the National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG), where he has introduced faculty and students to John Warfield's interactive design process and methodologies.

Ben's articles have appeared in top-tier journals, and he has two award-winning books, *Exploring the Greek Mosaic*, which received the Distinguished Scholarship Award for top publication in international and intercultural communication, and *Building Bridges across the Green Line in Cyprus*, which was translated into Greek and Turkish, and distributed widely in both Cyprus communities and within the international diplomatic arena. Translating his scholarly work into practice, Broome has facilitated hundreds of workshops and training programs, working with a broad array of groups and organizations, including

large corporations, government agencies, universities, community groups, Native American tribes, and civil-society peacebuilding groups.

Ben's commitment to bridging theory and practice is best demonstrated by his work in Cyprus. Initially there for a 3-month term in 1994, he stayed until the end of 1996, because of intense lobbying by the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot participants in the dialogue groups that he was facilitating. Ben worked with a variety of groups across demographic, professional, and political spectrums. An initial group of 30 expanded over the years to more than 2,000 participants involved in dozens of dialogue and project groups, setting the stage for an expansion of peacebuilding efforts that influenced Cypriot society at many levels. Through grants from USAID, UNDP, European Commission, and foreign ministries of both Sweden and Switzerland, he organized the first "4-party" workshops, bringing together Greek-Cypriot, Turkish-Cypriot, Greek, and Turkish participants for discussions that made meaningful contributions both to developments in Cyprus and to Greek-Turkish rapprochement, more generally. Although the Cyprus conflict remains without a political settlement, Ben's pioneering efforts on the island have had positive effects on the changing dynamics of the conflict (see Figure 2).

Ben's immense contributions are grounded in his deep understanding of the nature of human communication, group dynamics and facilitation, and the power of structured and empathic dialogue. Importantly, his career illustrates the potential contribution of conflict management theory and practice to make a meaningful difference in individual lives and, simultaneously, impact significantly the system of problems people face in today's world. As one of the anonymous reviewers of this essay commented: "[I] was uplifted by hope and optimism of what we can do as a field when we embrace the courage to confront challenges in process, accept reality as it is, and enliven scholarship in the mirror of the phenomenon it explores." Below, we elaborate on four major themes in his work.

Applied Communication: Lawrence R. Frey

Benjamin Broome and I first met in graduate school at the University of Kansas in the mid-1970s, where we studied communication and human relations (interpersonal and small group relationships). A central part of that program involved participating in (and teaching) "human relations groups" (also called "encounter" and "T-" groups"), in which participants engaged in experiential communication to promote personal growth and develop high-quality relationships (especially by resolving conflict), with a larger purpose of preparing them to be social change agents (see Frey & White, 2012). Although encounter groups morphed into other group work (e.g., social support, dialogue, and peacebuilding groups), their



Figure 2. Benjamin Broome passing through the United Nations checkpoint in the buffer zone in Cyprus, December 1996.

philosophical principles, processes, and practices affected profoundly Broome's study of potential positive effects of communication on people and social systems—which now is known as *applied communication research*.

Most applied communication researchers, however, stand outside the stream of human events, describing what occurs and offering recommendations for others (e.g., practitioners) to enact (see Frey & SunWolf, 2009). In contrast to such “third-person-perspective” research, Ben engages in “first-person-perspective” research, by intervening into discourses, collaborating with community members and groups to affect in profound ways their lived experiences.

An excellent example of Broome's (1995a, 1995b; Broome & Christakis, 1988; Broome & Cromer, 1991; Harris, Sachs, & Broome, 1996, 2001, 2012) engaged applied communication research is his culturally sensitive interventions to aid Native Americans in overcoming obstacles to Tribal governance (e.g., lack of participation and consensus building). Those interventions have employed, among other facilitation techniques, Interactive Management (IM), a computer-assisted methodology that helps groups to identify and impose order on relationships among ideas, to manage complex issues (Warfield & Cardenas, 1994). At first glance, the highly structured methodology of IM might appear to be antithetical to Native American culture but, in fact, as reactions from participants in Ben's studies have revealed, it is highly compatible with Native American values of privileging collaborative group processes where everyone's ideas are heard and considered, and where relationships among ideas are explored (see Figure 3).

Broome (1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2006) also has employed IM—and other communication facilitation methods, such as intergroup dialogues (Broome, 2005, 2013, 2014; Broome & Anastasiou, 2012; Broome, Anastasiou, Hadjipavlou, & Kanol, 2012; Broome & Jakobsson Hatay, 2006)—in his longitudinal applied communication research in Cyprus to manage conflict and build peace between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots (see Clements's comments below), as well as in a large multinational company to take advantage of benefits associated with incorporating culturally diverse perspectives to promote creative problem solving and decision making (Broome, DeTurk, Kristjansdottir, Kanata, & Ganesan, 2002; see Figure 4).

Ben's intervention-oriented applied communication research programs are not only innovative and sophisticated methodologically; they also are theoretically driven and generative. Those programs and his other studies have been informed by and inform theory related to group communication and its facilitation, in general (Broome & Chen, 1992; Broome & Fulbright, 1995; Broome & Keever, 1989); third-



Figure 3. Benjamin Broome facilitating a leadership workshop with Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO)'s Ambassador Program for young Tribal leaders in Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1993. AIO was founded by Ladonna Harris (Comanche).



Figure 4. Benjamin Broome facilitating a structuring session with Young Business Leaders in Cyprus, November 1995. His work in Cyprus was supported by the Cyprus Fulbright Commission (Daniel Hadjitoffi, Director) and the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS).

party facilitation (Broome, 2003; Broome & Murray, 2002), more specifically; and even more specifically, theories of conflict resolution (Broome, 1993a, 1993b, 1998a, 1998b; Druckman & Broome, 1991; Druckman, Broome, & Korper, 1988; Korper, Druckman, & Broome, 1986; Nadler, Nadler, & Broome, 1985), dialogue (in addition to work cited, Broome, 2009b, 2015b), empathy (Broome, 1991a, 1991b, 2009a, 2015a), peacebuilding (Broome, 2009c; Broome & Collier, 2012), and trust (Broome, 2015c), especially as mediated through the lens of culture and intercultural interactions (see Kim’s comments below). Ben’s research, thus, meets Wood’s (1995) criterion that the best applied communication research involves “practicing theory and theorizing practice” (p. 157), with his work achieving that elusive goal of praxis.

Ben’s applied communication research also includes a wealth of “translational” scholarship, in which he both embraces the practitioner role and makes his research accessible and usable to other practitioners, communities with which he works, and members of the general public. He has, for instance, conducted numerous workshops (e.g., on group design) and written many research reports for a wide variety of organizations and audiences around the world, from Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity, to the (U.S.) National Association of Social Workers, to Turkey’s European Union Observatory, to the United Nations Office of Project Services (see Figure 5). Moreover, some of his applied communication scholarship never has been or will be reported, because some communities with which he works (e.g., some Native Americans tribes) want their work to remain confidential.

Finally, applied communication researchers, similar to other researchers, make important choices about what topics to study and how to study them, what communities to work with, and where and to whom to report their research. Applied communication researchers, for instance, often direct their attention to studying and aiding those who have many resources at their disposal (e.g., some wealthy for-profit organizations). In contrast, Ben’s applied communication scholarship takes an activist orientation, which as Broome, Carey, De La Garza, Martin, and Morris (2005) explained, means engaging in

action that attempts to make a positive difference in situations where people’s lives are affected by oppression, domination, discrimination, racism, conflict, and other forms of cultural struggle due to differences in race, ethnicity, class religion, sexual orientation, and other identity markers. (p. 146)

Ben’s applied communication research, thus, constitutes “communication activism for social justice scholarship,” in which researchers, working with affected community members and social justice support groups and organizations, use communication theories, methods, pedagogies, and other practices to intervene into unjust discourses and reconstruct them in more just ways (see, e.g., Carragee & Frey, 2016). Ultimately, Ben uses his human relations training and communication resources to conduct applied scholarship as a collaborative partner who reaches across cultural and intercultural divides to aid, in whatever ways he can, members of marginalized and oppressed communities who have experienced long-term systemic injustices to achieve their quest for social justice—serving as a role model not just for applied (communication) scholars but for all scholars (see Figure 5).

Intercultural Communication: Young Yun Kim

Throughout almost all of my academic life, I have had the good fortune of knowing Benjamin Broome as a fellow intercultural communication scholar. Ben completed his PhD program at the University of Kansas in 1980, only 4 years after I did mine. One of his advisors, Nobleza Asuncion-Lande, was one of the major contributors to the development of intercultural communication. Since then, Ben has been a vital presence in the intercultural communication field.

A great hallmark of Ben’s scholarship is the consistency and continuity with which he has devoted himself to “peacebuilding” research. With a clear sense of purpose and deep passion, Ben has worked to discover academic insights into ways to help people seek peace over conflict, choose dialogue over violence, and cultivate empathic listening over prejudicial monologue. In this research endeavor, he has written extensively about the primacy of “sustainable dialogue” as a consensus-building communication



Figure 5. Benjamin Broome facilitating design workshop that established the American Indian Policy Center at Arizona State University, 2004. The effort to create the Center was led by Kevin Gover (Pawnee), Eddie Brown (Pascua Yaqui–Tohono O’odham), and Rebecca Tsosie (Yaqui).

approach that allows groups in conflict to “envision a collective future” and to work together to realize “joint goals” (Figure 6).

Ben’s committed dedication to fostering peace is very much aligned with the idealism and optimism demonstrated in post–World War II United States, when intercultural communication began to emerge as a subdiscipline of communication. Perhaps some might think that these kernel ideas are a bit too idealistic, considering the enormous complexities and intransigencies that persist in the realities of many intercultural and intergroup conflicts around the world. Yet, we cannot deny the power of “keeping faith” in the goodness of humanity as we strive to find ways to lift ourselves out of “darkness,” see our shared humanity, and seek mutual understanding and common purpose.

Ben’s scholarship has evolved on a solid trajectory of intellectual growth in terms of the scope, depth, and integration of his ideas. The earlier phases of his research publications were comprised mainly of ethnographic studies of Greek cultural patterns of communication and interpersonal relations (Broome, 1993a, 1993b, 1996, 1998a, 1998b), and various case studies focusing on communication processes in peacebuilding efforts in Cyprus (Broome, 1998a, 1998b, 2004a, 2004b; see Figure 7) and on developing community-based planning and design in Native American tribal communities (Broome, 1995a, 1995b; Broome & Cromer, 1991). In his more recent published works, Ben often has addressed more abstract and, thus, more broadly applicable conceptual issues, such as “trust” (Broome, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c) and “building a culture of peace” (Broome, 2013), as well as some more generic methodological issues, such as developing “reflexive multi-dimensional contextual frameworks” (Broome & Collier, 2012) and promoting “systems thinking” (Hogan, Harney, & Broome, 2014).

Ben’s work has been recognized and appreciated widely among intercultural communication scholars. He received the Ralph Cooley Award twice (1993, 2001) for his top-ranked papers presented to the International and Intercultural Communication Division of the National Communication Association. The same group awarded him the Distinguished Scholarship Award twice (1996, 2013) for a top publication in the field of international and intercultural communication. In 2009, Ben was elected a Fellow of the



Figure 6. Benjamin Broome with participants in the structured dialogue workshop held in Heybeliada, Turkey, organized by the Centre for International European Studies (CIES) at Kadhir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey, June 2013. CIES is directed by Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, pictured in the center of the first standing row.



Figure 7. Benjamin Broome facilitating a dialogue workshop with Greek and Turkish participants, held on the Greek Aegean island of Halki. For several years in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) organized an annual workshop called the “Halki Symposium,” bringing together policy leaders from throughout the Mediterranean; ELIAMEP was directed by Ted Couloumbis, Elizabeth Focas, and Thanos Dakos.

International Academy for Intercultural Research, an interdisciplinary and international organization of scholars from across social science disciplines whose research interests converge on issues pertaining to intercultural relations.

Over the years, I have enjoyed working with Ben in various professional activities. For example, I have invited him to join me in thematic panel sessions at conferences to address some broad issues of mutual interest, such as “intercultural community building.” Most recently, he served on the 22-member Editorial Board that I assembled as editor of the *International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication* (in press), an official project of the International Communication Association. He also contributed three articles to this encyclopedia entitled “Communication Modes, Greek,” “Intercultural Empathy,” and “Intercultural Peacebuilding.” On every occasion of working with Ben, I have found him to be an uncommonly responsive, supportive, and gracious partner.

Ben’s research truly is a form of “engaged scholarship,” a way of being a scholar whose knowledge claims and real-life experiences and practices are linked fully and inseparably as one. Engaged scholarship is particularly evident in his inquiry on peacebuilding through sustainable dialogue, and in various training ideas and programs that he has developed and implemented as a facilitator and mediator for various cultural groups, such as Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and Apache and Cheyenne Tribes (see Figure 8).

Such an integration of knowledge and practice gives Ben’s work a special sense of clarity and assurance. Indeed, in his case, the notion of “engaged scholarship” could be extended to include the core of his personhood. In everything that he does, Ben exudes peace—the very issue to which he has devoted much of his academic life. It is in this sense that I believe his scholarship embodies “integrity” at the highest level.

Conflict Management and Peacebuilding: Kevin Clements

It gives me great pleasure to honor Benjamin Broome for his work in developing truly innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to conflict management and peacebuilding. I first met Ben when I took the position of Vernon and Minnie Lynch Chair of Conflict Resolution and Director of the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. At that time, Ben was a faculty member in the Communication Department. Although a preeminent scholar in this field, Ben could not then, and should not now, be defined solely by communication theory or practice. His powerful intellect and



Figure 8. Benjamin Broome facilitating a workshop on Tribal Governance for the Comanche Tribe, organized by Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) and Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO), Spring 1991. AIO was founded by Ladonna Harris (Comanche), and OIO was founded and directed by Iola Hayden (Comanche).

concern to make the world a better place has resulted in a transcendence of narrow disciplinary borders and enabled him to embrace a range of theories, methodologies, and practical processes for managing conflict and building sustainable peace.

When I first met Ben, in the 1990s, he already had established an enviable reputation as a leading “pracademic” (academic practitioner) in intercultural communication. His major contribution to conflict management and peacebuilding, however, was to connect these communication principles to the design and implementation of intentional dialogical and sophisticated, collaborative problem-solving processes aimed at the transformation of toxic identity-based conflicts into generative, productive, and peaceful relationships (Broome, 1997, 1998a, 1998b; see Figure 9).

In all of this work, Ben has designed processes, and, with John Warfield, technologies, that enable conflicting parties to move beyond presenting problems and perceived incompatibilities, to the cultivation of a shared vision of relationships that they wish to realize in the future. Building on his early work in human relations and intergroup conflict (see Frey’s comments above), Ben understood that focusing primarily on a painful past normally is a recipe for relational paralysis. To prevent this paralysis, Ben, inspired by peace researchers, such as Elise Boulding and Kenneth Boulding (Boulding & Boulding, 1995), focused attention on ways in which antagonists could develop collective visions of desirable joint futures, and, in doing so, forge what he called “relational empathy” (Broome, 2009a).

Relational empathy and agreed-on goals and aspirations are important elements in helping parties in conflict to identify, and, hopefully, deal with, impediments to the transformation of negative, unpeaceful relationships into positive, peaceful ones. Elise Boulding and Warren Zeigler did this type of work in what they called “imaging workshops,” experiential processes aimed at freeing the imagination, harnessing creativity, and working out ways of visualizing, and, then, realizing common aspirations in a process that they called “shared visioning.” This shared vision then was accompanied by a process of future’s remembering, which enabled participants to develop action plans to realize their agreed-on future (Boulding, 1988).

Ben’s innovative contribution to processes of imaging the future was to apply Interactive Management (IM) methodology to develop a more intentional process and precise substance to Boulding and Zeigler’s more experiential processes. This software-assisted methodology enables groups to discern which values, principles, goals, and preferences do and do not unite them. The methodology was used to excellent



Figure 9. Benjamin Broome with students in the Conflict Analysis and Resolution Program at Sabanci University (SCAR) in Turkey, after a workshop they facilitated for European leaders on Turkey's accession application to the European Union, June 2008. The students were studying with Nimet Beriker, head of SCAR's MA program.

effect in all the work that Ben did in facilitating dialogue and communication across the Turkish–Greek Cypriot divides in the 1990s and beyond (Broome, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005).

The initial core work took place between 1994 and 1996, and it followed earlier efforts by Doob (1976) and others to engage Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in a range of collaborative problem-solving workshops. Ben built on this early work and made it more focused and systematic. His work in Cyprus, initially, was for a 3-month term in 1994, but because of his analytical, integrative, and nonjudgmental style, he catalyzed generative conversations that moved beyond naming and blaming earlier initiatives. Because of his approach, he was asked by both sides in the conflict to continue the work until the end of 1996, and, since then, he has maintained active involvement in this conflict (see Figure 10).

Ben operated at multiple levels of Cypriot society and convened a wide variety of bicomunal groups of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, as well as key players from mainland Greece and Turkey. Although most of the groups he worked with were comprised of 15–30 participants, the number of people involved in the bicomunal workshops and projects grew to around 2,000 during the time that Ben was in Cyprus. This growth speaks to the motivation and engagement that people gained from participating in the dialogue groups that were facilitated by Ben.

One of these bicomunal processes (Broome, 2004a, 2004b) resulted in a “Collective Vision Statement for Peace Building Efforts in Cyprus.” This vision was the result of a series of separate conversations within both the Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot communities, followed by a bicomunal process where there was a deep recognition of commonalities and differences between both sides of the conflict. The IM methodology enabled Ben to generate singular and unified visions for ending the conflict and for advancing Cypriot coexistence and reconciliation. The methodology did two things very successfully. First, it generated a clear image of the future and clarity about actions and steps to help realize the collective vision. Second, in the process of working together on ranking



Figure 10. Benjamin Broome with the Bicommunal Peacebuilding Group and the Training Team from the Cyprus Consortium (including Louise Diamond, Diana Chigas, and Ron Fisher) from an early 1994 workshop.

preferences and priorities, and building the vision, the IM methodology enabled the two communities to acquire a deeper understanding and acceptance of the individual differences, needs, and concerns of both parties, which Ben called “relational empathy.” Relational empathy is critical to both parties addressing and dealing with commonalities and differences between them, and, therefore, it is one of Ben’s most enduring contributions to the management of conflict and the building of sustainable peace (Broome, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). When participants feel diffident, afraid, or nervous about developing a common action plan, the shared vision and relational empathy enable them to move ahead in a spirit of mutual trust. Certainly, the world as a whole could do with more relational empathy at this critical moment in global affairs.

Although these pioneering initiatives in Cyprus have not yet been translated into a permanent peace agreement—the 2017 UN Secretary General’s initiative just ended in failure—there is no doubt that they have been absolutely critical in countering and tempering Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot demonization and dehumanization of the other. The fact that political leaders have not agreed should not detract from the fact that Ben’s “problem-solving” workshops have created riper conditions for the achievement of a future agreement.

Ben stands firmly in the Enlightenment tradition. He has been successful in his work as a conflict transformer and peacebuilder because he combines rationality, empathy, and a radical concern for and celebration of pluralism, tolerance, inclusion, and incorporation of multiple voices in decisions about social, economic, and political futures. In this work, he combines academic rigor with a strong creative and humanistic impulse. These characteristics make him and his wife, Bliss, such wonderful people and such excellent integrators and peacemakers (see Figure 11).

Well-being, Sustainability, and Systems Science Education: Michael Hogan

It is a wonderful honor to celebrate the work of Benjamin Broome. Ben is an inspirational scholar, a master facilitator, and one of the greatest practitioners of applied systems science working in the field.

Ben worked closely with John Warfield for many years at George Mason University. Warfield is known famously for developing the conceptual and methodological basis for a new approach to applied systems science, which involves team facilitation and the development of a shared understanding and consensus-based responses to complex societal problems. Central to Warfield's approach to applied systems science is the application of a computer-supported systems thinking methodology: Interactive Management (IM). I came across Warfield's work around 10 years ago, and Warfield introduced me to Ben. I was intrigued by the IM methodology and wanted to meet with Ben to learn "how" to run an IM session. Warfield made it clear to me that Ben was the chief expert in the field. I jumped immediately on a plane and made the 4,887 mile trip from Galway, Ireland to Phoenix, Arizona.

When I met Ben outside his office in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at ASU, he suggested that we take a walk in the sunshine. Within minutes, it became very clear that Ben was deeply knowledgeable, wise, and skilled, and that he was someone who worked very hard in the service of many groups in need. I knew that I needed to work with Ben and support his efforts. Ben taught me everything that I know about IM and group facilitation, and we have worked together to apply IM in a variety of national and international projects.

Ben has traveled to the National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway every summer and, in addition to many stimulating conversations walking along the Atlantic coast, we have worked vigorously on some of the most intractable problems of our day, including the broad challenge of promoting societal well-being and environmental sustainability. We also have worked to advance Warfield's vision for applied systems science; specifically, by developing a new approach to systems science education. We have run training sessions to impart skill in IM facilitation, updated the IM software, and advanced new ways of approaching collective intelligence (CI) work (see Figure 12). Ben has mentored me with great wisdom and kindness, and our collaborative efforts have been hugely impactful both nationally and internationally. Below, I describe three domains of application.



Figure 11. Benjamin Broome with faculty and students of the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (NCPACS) in New Zealand, Director Kevin Clements (back row, left of center); students are visiting the Otakou Marae, Otago Peninsula, March 2013.

National Well-Being Measurement, Policy, and Infrastructure Design

Internationally, the political and academic landscape is changing rapidly, and there has been massive convergence of interest across all levels of society in human well-being and economic, social, environmental, and psychological factors that contribute to it. Ben and I have organized two conferences focused on advancing well-being measurement, policy, and practice, both nationally and internationally. The purpose of the first well-being conference was to bring scientists, community organization representatives, and policymakers together to discuss the latest advances in well-being research and policy. We had four objectives: (a) establish a new network of scientists, community organization representatives, policymakers, and other key stakeholders to discuss the latest advances in well-being research and policy; (b) introduce conference participants to IM as a collaborative systems design methodology that could inform well-being project work; (c) foster a dialogue on barriers to well-being in Ireland and develop a systems model describing how barriers to well-being in Ireland are related; and (d) use IM systems design methods to agree about a set of high-impact, feasible options to overcome barriers to well-being in Ireland.

The outcomes of the first conference included a published CI report detailing barriers to well-being in Ireland and high-impact, feasible options to overcome those barriers (Hogan & Broome, 2012; see Figure 13). Our report identified fundamental “driver” barriers to well-being in Ireland, including “*the absence of leadership*” and “*the lack of a national well-being index,*” which became the focus of our second Well-being in Ireland Conference. For the second conference, we invited directors of the Canadian, United Kingdom, Scottish, and Japanese well-being indices, and Alex White, the Irish Minister of State for Primary Care at the Department of Health. Conference delegates participated in a CI session focused on the design of a new Irish Index of Well-being (Hogan & Broome, 2013). We published an essay in *Social Indicators Research* describing our work, where we argued for a structured and systematic approach to consulting with citizens in the design of well-being measures and policies (Hogan, Harney, & Broome, 2015; Hogan, Johnston, et al., 2015). It is important to involve citizen consultation in the design of well-being measures and policies, and recent case studies underscore dangers of failing to consult adequately with citizens. Ben has played a vital role in helping us to understand how CI methods can provide insight into citizens’ values, goals, and preferences; engage all stakeholders in a democratic, consensus-building process that facilitates buy-in and enhances the legitimacy of decision-making groups; and facilitate transparent understanding of reasoning that informs systems thinking about groups. With his expert guidance, we are beginning to highlight the importance of adopting a wider social science toolkit to confront the challenge of facilitating social progress. Key societal outcomes of our work to date include (a)



Figure 12. Benjamin Broome with faculty of the Department of Psychology (Michael Hogan pictured in the center) at National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG), during a design workshop in 2010.

the development of a new national well-being measurement framework in collaboration with the Central Statistics Office in Ireland; (b) the design of early intervention projects in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities group in Galway, Ireland; and (c) facilitation work supporting the Public Participation Network (PPN) in Galway City, to highlight the importance of well-being in local government project work.

Marine Sustainability

Over a period of months, from September 2012 to January 2013, Ben and I worked closely with Dr. Christine Domegan, NUI, Galway, to design the CI consultation methodology for a major European Union (EU) project focused on marine sustainability. Sea for Society is a €4.2 million EU project that brought together a multidisciplinary partnership of 21 partners from 11 countries representing marine research institutes, funding agencies, science museums and aquaria, civic society organizations (CSOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), higher education institutes, and business networks. CI was used to create opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to take action to tackle marine societal challenges at local, national, and European levels. Ben and I designed workbook and video training materials, and we delivered a 2-day CI training workshop for 40 EU researchers involved in consultations with marine stakeholders and citizens across Europe. Members of this group then worked as CI facilitators, following step-by-step instructions, with our collective efforts generating large-scale CI engagement across Europe. A total of 131 mobilization projects across Europe were implemented based on our CI work, with 500,000 people influenced by it. This work has been reported in a number of recent essays (e.g., Domegan et al., 2016), and the open dialogue process will lead to further empowerment opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to take action to tackle marine societal challenges at local, national, and European levels. This work would not have been possible without Ben's wisdom, expertise, and patient guidance.

Systems Science Education

Central to Ben's work is a focus on the facilitation of dialogue and problem solving in groups, which implies the important educational goal of training the next generation of group facilitators, with Ben offering facilitation training at the graduate level for many years. This is important work because facilitators need to develop an understanding of group dynamics, barriers to communication in group problem solving, and skill in overcoming these barriers. In particular, facilitators need to develop skill in the application of CI methodologies, which takes time, practice, and patience. An educational infrastructure is needed to support the next generation of group facilitators, and Ben and I have been working to develop that infrastructure.

One important study by Broome and Fulbright (1995) provided excellent insights about barriers to communication in group problem solving. In that study, seven groups of 12 to 18 participants with significant task group experience identified and categorized barriers to communication in group problem solving. The study highlighted a range of barriers, including planning, process, resource, and methodological barriers, as well as group composition, organizational culture, attitude, and cultural diversity barriers. Broome and Fulbright described how these barriers affect group dynamics and outcomes. Although some barriers can be overcome by specific facilitator actions (e.g., careful *planning* of CI sessions in advance of group meetings), other barriers require broader stakeholder and organizational involvement (e.g., changing *organizational culture* such that CI work becomes common practice). When it comes to developing new approaches to systems science education, a variety of organizational, cultural, and political infrastructure changes are needed to support societal well-being and sustainability into the future. This view aligns squarely with Warfield's vision for applied systems science and with John Dewey's views of education for democracy.

Ben has been central to innovations in the field of applied systems science education. In a recent book chapter (Hogan, Harney, et al., 2015), we argued that resolving complex scientific and social problems often is impeded by three interdependent human limitations: (a) poor critical thinking skills; (b) no clear methodology to facilitate group coherence, consensus design, and collective action; and (c) limited computational capacities. Third-level science education is designed to facilitate the development of generic critical-thinking skills, but it often does so with only limited success (Kuhn, 2005). Furthermore, third-level science education focused, generally, on domain-specific computational skills do not transfer well outside of the domain in which they normally are used, and training in the use of systems science methodologies that facilitate group coherence, consensus design, and collective action rarely is available (Warfield, 1974, 1990, 2006; Warfield & Cardenas, 1994). We believe that these problems can be addressed by integrating three thought-structuring technologies within a systems science curriculum: IM for system design, Argument Mapping (AM) for critical thinking, and Structural Equation and System Dynamics Modeling for mathematical modeling. Such a curriculum would promote systems thinking and cooperative inquiry skills in relation to basic and applied science problems, and they would facilitate collective action in the context of a multidisciplinary action research agenda. More generally, we describe how teaching and learning applied systems science require a vision around the development of tools, talents, and teams. We need to further develop *tools* (i.e., software tools and specific group methodologies) that support and enhance team members' *talents* (e.g., critical- and systems-thinking skills, and social intelligence), and we need to focus more explicitly on how best to support *teams* and promote *teamwork* across all levels of society.

In another contribution (Hogan et al., 2014), we highlighted the key role of the group facilitator in the design and implementation of effective CI sessions, and in supporting effective teamwork, and we provided examples of how our approach to applied systems science has been used in a variety of settings. Importantly, none of this work focused on societal well-being, sustainability, and systems science education would have been possible without Ben's vision, knowledge, wisdom, diligence, and patience. My heart swells with gratitude, pride, and love when I think about the wonderful contributions that Ben has made to the field, and I am deeply honored to have this ongoing opportunity to work with him. His contributions are profoundly significant and influential on so many levels, and they are growing from year to year, inspiring within me a deep sense of hope in the future.

Reflections on the Theory–Practice Nexus: Benjamin Broome

We asked Ben to offer a few thoughts on our article celebrating his theory–practice accomplishments. We posed two questions for him to reflect on, and we invited him to offer any general comments he wanted to add to our discussion.

First, let me say that I'm overwhelmed and humbled by the kindness and generosity exhibited in the comments offered by my friends and colleagues Larry Frey, Young Yun Kim, Kevin Clements, and Michael Hogan. I'm at a loss for how to say "thank you" for taking the time to review articles, book chapters, and reports I've written, and to place these in the context of the nearly 4 decades over which my career has spanned thus far. I am especially grateful for your reflections on how we've worked together over the years in applied communication research, intercultural communication, dialogue and peacebuilding, and systems approaches to social issues. You can be sure that your influence is embedded in anything that may have resulted from work in which I've been involved. I've looked to each of you as a mentor, and each of you has provided me with opportunities to learn, grow, and contribute. It is deeply satisfying to know that scholars of such stature and accomplishments believe that my contributions have promoted positive change in individuals and in society. It motivates me to remain even more engaged and active in the next stage of my career. I am indebted for all the ways you've inspired me, and I deeply value your friendship and the support you've offered me throughout my career.



Figure 13. Benjamin Broome with participants in workshop on “Well-being in Ireland” held at National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG), June 2013; in front center is Michael Hogan and Minister Alex White from Ireland’s Department of Health.

One important lesson I’ve learned over the years is that successful projects revolve around collaboration and partnerships. Even when I initiate or take a lead role in a new venture, I’m always working closely with colleagues in the field and partners on the ground, who have a deep investment in the outcome of these endeavors. Additionally, I’ve learned that any effective project must be built firmly on what came before. The major efforts in which I have been involved were grounded in the vision and prior labors of dedicated individuals and groups working tirelessly and unselfishly for years to bring about positive changes. I’ve had the good fortune to become part of journeys that were already underway, trying to offer perspectives and skills that were needed to nudge along the effort. I view my primary role as helping to move forward the work of others, and, hopefully, fostering additional progress by those who come after me.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer my thoughts to graduate students and early career scholars in conflict management. It is richly gratifying to see the field reach a stage that attracts so many talented and dedicated young professionals. It shows that we’ve come a long way since I first entered the conflict management arena more than 35 years ago. The opportunities and the obstacles I encountered over the years are different from those that will be faced by someone entering the field today, which makes me hesitant to give “advice,” but I’m pleased to share some observations and understandings I’ve gained in relation to the two questions below.

Question 1: The Rubin Award you received recognizes important contributions to the nexus among theory, research, and practice. How were you drawn so deeply into that nexus?

Nexus means binding, joining, fastening, connecting, or linking disparate entities. There was probably no single point in my career when I consciously decided to work in the nexus but looking back, I can see several turns that drew me deeper into the world of practical applications. During my graduate school studies in the late 1970s, I coordinated the activities of a campus organization that we called *Operation Friendship*, with the motto “Building Bridges between Cultures.” The purpose of this group was to bring

together international students and U.S. students, providing opportunities for mutual learning and development of friendships. This experience led me to the study of group dynamics and human relations (as Larry Frey noted in his comments), and it brought me to the newly developing field of intercultural communication (as Young Yun Kim discussed in her remarks). My PhD program advisors, Nobleza Asuncion-Lande (see Pennington, 2012), Kim Giffin (1967), and Paul Friedman (1989), introduced me to concepts and theoretical frameworks that helped me to understand dynamics that shaped communication in the groups I was working with on campus. Immediately after completing my PhD in 1980, I accepted my first teaching job at the American College of Greece. There, I was situated between my Greek students and colleagues, and classroom norms and an administrative governance system based on the U.S. model of higher education that didn't always line up smoothly with Greek cultural expectations. At George Mason University, in the early 1980s, I served as a member of the Faculty Advisory Board of the newly established Center for Conflict Resolution (now, the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution), in which faculty from at least 10 academic departments were working together to create a new entity. This highly interdisciplinary initiative required significant attention to bridging disparate orientations brought to the table. Working with Native American communities in the late 1980s and early 1990s (primarily, through Americans for Indian Opportunity), I found myself in the middle of factions, with some tied to more traditional values, whereas others were steeped more clearly in structures and institutions of the larger society. At the same time, I was constantly crossing between the Euro-American world in which I lived and the Native American world in which I was working (for essays in which I share thoughts about some of these differences, see Broome, 1991a, 1991b, 2009a, 2015a).

These experiences, which occurred over a 15-year period, positioned me for what has become the most involved and long-term applied experience of my career: the peacebuilding work in Cyprus. There, I encountered a conflict that has unfolded over many decades (even centuries) and that is deeply intertwined with regional and international political concerns. As Kevin Clements insightfully noted, the concept of "relational empathy" emerged as a crucial conceptual framework when I worked with the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities in developing collective visions of desirable joint futures. Here, I most clearly found myself in the nexus of not only the two worlds in Cyprus but also the often-conflicting domains of theory and practice. The approach to group work that I brought was theoretically well grounded in systems science and group dynamics, but in the context of an intractable conflict situation, the applications in Cyprus provided both a robust test of the efficacy of this approach and the opportunity to further refine it for a wider range of applications. This movement back and forth between theory and practice lies at the heart of the nexus in which I lived, and it remains there to this day in the work in Ireland and across Europe that was described by Michael Hogan. I continue to be involved with peacebuilding work in Cyprus and with governance issues in indigenous communities (see Figure 14).

The nexus is a place where different concerns and interests meet, and collisions are inevitable, requiring constant negotiation between the two domains. As I've discussed in an essay published recently in *NCMR* (Broome, 2017), I've found it helpful to view theory and practice as joined together in a *symbiotic relationship*. This view has allowed me to take advantage of the dynamism and creativity that is inherent in this connection. As Kim (2001) wrote in her book *Becoming Intercultural*, we live in an intersubjective world of not only roles and identities but also of shared realities. As I go forward, I hope that I can promote collaborative inquiry in which scholars and practitioners coproduce knowledge, building a shared reality that allows us to better understand complex problems and to design potential solutions to the many challenges we face in today's world.

Question 2: What advice would you give to graduate students and early career scholars who are striving to balance theory, research, and practice in the field of conflict management?

Perhaps there is no other academic subject where scholarship and practice are more intertwined than in the field of conflict management. I suspect that most students of conflict were initially drawn to the field because of its inherently applied nature. Many conflict scholars are called upon regularly to offer



Figure 14. Benjamin Broome continues to be active in working with groups inside and outside the United States. He is currently working with the Navajo Parks and Recreation Department (NPRD) to create a vision statement and General Management Plan for the Diné (Navajo) Nation park system. NPRD is directed by Martin Begaye. Pictured here are participants at a design workshop in January 2015 that Benjamin facilitated with the assistance of Tony Skrelunas (Diné) and Vanessa Vandever (Diné), who work with the Native American program at Grand Canyon Trust.

advice and/or assistance with conflicts faced by organizations and community groups. Moreover, in the classroom, students studying conflict respond best to practical examples, case studies, and applied assignments. Indeed, the field of conflict resolution has long recognized that both theory and practice are vital in the study of peace and conflict (Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2008).

Fortunately, there are many outlets for work that bridges the Academy and the community. I've found it very important to become involved in professional organizations, such as the International Association of Conflict Management (IACM), which regularly features sessions at its annual conference that focus on the intersections of theory, research, and practice. The IACM Jeffery Rubin Theory-to-Practice Award, celebrated in this issue of *NCMR*, was established to recognize contributions to the nexus of theory, research, and practice. So even though IACM is an academic conference, it's a place where you can have meaningful conversations with others who are also trying to balance a life in the nexus. Similar opportunities exist in certain divisions within the larger professional associations, such as the American Psychological Association (APA), in which Michael Hogan is involved; International Studies Association (ISA), where Kevin Clements regularly presents; International Communication Association (ICA), where Young Yun Kim has been Chair of the Intercultural and Development Communication Division; and National Communication Association (NCA), where Larry Frey was a candidate for President, and where both Young Kim and I have each been Chair of the International and Intercultural Communication Division. In NCA, I've also been involved in the Peace Communication Division, the Applied Communication Division, and the Activism and Social Justice Division (with Larry Frey being a primary founder and past Chair of the latter two divisions). I also recommend the International Academy of Intercultural Researchers (IAIR), of which Young Yun Kim recently served as President. There are many other academic associations where "pracademics" (to apply the term used by Kevin Clements) are welcomed and will find support for their work.

In addition to professional associations, there are many journals that are receptive to research focusing on practical applications. Unlike earlier days, when it seemed that many academic journals stayed away from applied research, today, many (but not all) of the top journals in several fields related to conflict management actively seek research based in practice. There also are some journals that are devoted specifically to applied research (e.g., *Journal of Applied Communication Research*). Besides academic



Figure 15. Benjamin Broome on the south coast of Cyprus in 1996, taking time to reflect on the nexus of theory and practice during his 2.5-year residency as Senior Fulbright Scholar on the island.

journals, there have been dozens of edited volumes over the past several years that focused on both scholarship and practice. Although many universities tend to value journal publications more highly than chapters in edited books, I've always sought the most appropriate outlet for my research, rather than be overly concerned with the type of publication. In the past, journal articles were more accessible to fellow scholars and tended to receive more citations, but in today's electronic publishing world, it is easy to make your work accessible no matter where it was published. In any case, you should be able to find an appropriate outlet for the work in which you are involved.

Working within the nexus requires that we give sufficient attention to both the theory side and the practice side of the relationship. By drawing upon theories that have emerged in the field, we can be better prepared to recognize and respond to opportunities that arise in our work. From designing interventions, to counseling and coaching individuals, to dealing with unexpected crises that erupt in the middle of a project, it is important to be guided by theoretical frameworks and carefully conducted research. Intuition is certainly relevant, but it requires both knowledge and experience.

At the same time, it is imperative that we draw upon our applied work to develop, shape, and test theoretical propositions, frameworks, and models. I believe that as scholars of conflict management, we are obligated to develop practical theories, rather than those that simply look elegant. Conflict is messy and difficult to get our arms around, but it is the ideal place for probing theory and examining conclusions from our research. As engaged scholars, we are in an advantageous position to test the explanatory and predictive power of the theories that form the basis of conflict studies.

The symbiotic nature of scholarship and practice demands that we constantly engage in critical reflection of both applied projects and theoretical frameworks, as well as the places where they intersect. This practice takes time, and it is not easy to set aside space for examining what we've learned, especially as we rush from one project, meeting, or class to another. Although both life in the Academy and life as a practitioner can be hectic and extremely demanding, we owe it to ourselves and to the field to find venues for being both a reflective practitioner (Schon, 1983) and a reflective scholar. Kevin Clements (Boulding, Clements, Morrison, & Yodsampa, 2016), in his recent tribute to Elise Boulding, advised us to follow the principle of reversibility, preserving what he called an "adaptive resilient capacity" (p. 279) that allows future scholars to change, modify, and adapt what we have created or decided. Adhering to this principle requires continual reflection and willingness to acknowledge and learn from mistakes. Through such a reflective orientation, we can not only survive the nexus but we can thrive within it, realizing the potential for learning and contributing that results from the dynamic, tensional forces that spin around us as we strive to balance the gifts of theory and practice that have been bestowed upon us (see Figure 15).

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