Defining Conflict

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Except God and love, no theme has received more attention in world literature than conflict...

(Anotol Rapoport)

... And 75% of literature is about a combination of those three...

What do you find fascinating about conflict?
Defining conflict

- Many different definitions from many different perspectives.

- Main differences:
  - intrapersonal versus interpersonal (social)
  - objective versus subjective
  - behavior or experience
Intrapersonal and Interpersonal conflict

Intrapersonal or Inner conflicts

Decisions you have to make
Conflicting roles
Conflicting feelings
Evaluations of your life

All can create *inner* tensions
and (self)destructive thoughts
And behaviors
Intrapersonal and Interpersonal conflict

Interpersonal or social conflicts are conflicts between two or more persons or parties.

There is a strong link between intrapersonal and social conflict.

Intrapersonal ↔ interpersonal

Stress ↔ social conflict
Intrapersonal and Interpersonal conflict

Difference between intra- and interpersonal conflict is attribution
Who do you see as root cause for Frustration, fear, misery?
Yourself or the other?
Objective versus Subjective conflicts

- Lawyers, economists, and sociologists often define conflicts in terms of an ‘objective’ analysis and ‘objective’ outcomes.

- A classic approach is the Marxist perspective of class conflict. Different Neo-Marxist theories (workers, women, black) elaborated on that; the repressed group internalizes values of the dominant group, and therefore is not aware of conflict, that does exist.

- Most psychologists focus on the subjective experience: cognition, perception, and emotions.
Conflict as Behavior or Experience

Conflict can be described as manifest in antagonistic behaviors
Conflict starts with experience of frustration
Conflict: working definition

- There is a Conflict between two or more parties if at least one of the parties is frustrated or hindered by the other.

- Conflict Management: Any *behavioral* response to the frustration, and response on that response.

- Cognitive and/or Affective
- Subjective: there doesn’t have to be an objective ground
- (At least) one party feels frustrated
- Conflict *management* is different from conflict experience
I. Defining conflict

Intrapersonal versus Social conflicts

What is the difference between intrapersonal conflicts and social conflicts? (interpersonal/ intergroup)