Herding Cats: Multiparty Mediation in a Complex World, Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, Pamela R. Aall, US Institute of Peace Press, 1999, 1878379925, 9781878379924, 735 pages. An illustrious cast of practitioners here describe their personal experiences in working to bring peace in significant conflicts across four continents. As James Baker, Richard Holbrooke, Max van der Stoel, Alvaro de Soto, Aldo Ajello, and others make clear, the mediator must operate in an environment of daunting complexity, insecurity, and uncertainty. Whether sequestered in Norway or zigzagging across Africa, the mediator can take nothing for granted—"not participants, agendas, or timetablese" in the struggle to sustain and advance the peace process. And just to make things more complicated, each conflict now typically attracts several independent mediators. Indeed, coordinating third party mediators is like herding cats—"difficult if not impossible. In each of the two dozen cases examined in this volume, mediation was a multiparty effort, involving a range of actors—"individuals, states, international organizations, and NGOse—working simultaneously or sequentially. These vivid accounts attest to the crucial importance of coordinating and building upon the efforts of other players. They also illuminate the opportunities and problems presented by different entry points of mediation—"from conflict prevention, through negotiation during active conflict, to post-settlement implementation and peacebuilding—"and by different kinds of leverage, levels of engagement, and objectives. This volume was developed by the same editors who were responsible for USIP Press’s highly successful 1996 publication Managing Global Chaos and is intended as a follow-on to that book. In their feedback on the 1996 volume, readers requested additional resources, especially case studies that reflect real, hands-on experience in complex settings. Not only will these cases illustrate how multiparty mediation works or does not work, but they should also stimulate further work on the special requirements and best practices of the field, promote a dialogue among practitioners themselves as well as between academics and practitioners, and lead to unique insights, new understandings, and alternative approaches that can be applied to future mediations. The editors have framed the volume with discussions that link the practitioner cases to the scholarly literature on mediation, thereby situating the case studies in terms of theory while also drawing lessons for both scholars and practitioners that can help guide future endeavors.

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Nurturing Peace Why Peace Settlements Succeed Or Fail, Fen Osler Hampson, 1996, Political Science, 287 pages. Focusing on intrastate conflicts in which third parties have played prominent roles, Hampson argues that durable settlements depend on sustained third-party engagement not only ....

Herding Cats A Life in Politics, Trent Lott, Aug 23, 2005, Biography & Autobiography, 312 pages. The senior senator from Mississippi recounts his political career, from his efforts to broaden Republican influence to his differences of opinion with the Bush administration ....

Mediation in international relations multiple approaches to conflict management, Jacob Bercovitch, Jeffrey Z. Rubin, 1992, Law, 283 pages. This collection of articles examines mediation in a range of situations including in international relations, informal mediation by private individuals and by scholars and ....

Words Over War Mediation and Arbitration to Prevent Deadly Conflict, Melanie C. Greenberg, John H. Barton, Margaret E. McGuinness, Jan 1, 2000, Law, 447 pages. The international community can creatively and aggressively address deadly conflict through mediation, arbitration, and the development of international institutions to promote ....

The Mediation Dilemma, Kyle Beardsley, Aug 18, 2011, Political Science, 240 pages. While mediation has a strong record in reducing hostilities, it is not without its own problems. In The Mediation Dilemma, Kyle Beardsley highlights its long-term limitations..

UN Peacekeeping, American Policy and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s, William J. Durch, Nov 15, 1996, Political Science, 502 pages. A list of the most well-known scholars in the field to look at the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations during the present decade..

Managing global chaos sources of and responses to international conflict, Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, Pamela R. Aall, 1996, Political Science, 642 pages. Please see the newest, replacement volume "Leashing the Dogs of War," A resurgence of ethnonationalism, the collapse of empires the outbreak of humanitarian crises, and growing ....

Contemporary Conflict Resolution The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts, Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse, Hugh Miall, Dec 8, 2005, Philosophy, 399 pages. Offering an assessment of the theory and practice of conflict resolution in post-Cold War conflicts, this book addresses a number of questions. It explores the nature of ....

Resolving International Conflicts The Theory and Practice of Mediation, Jacob Bercovitch, 1996, Political Science, 279 pages.

Do No Harm How Aid Can Support Peace - Or War, Mary B. Anderson, 1999, Political Science, 161 pages. Introduction to part 2..

Paving the Way Contributions of Interactive Conflict Resolution to Peacemaking, Ronald J. Fisher, 2005, Political Science, 251 pages. Paving the Way offers insights into the conditions and qualities of successful programs of interactive conflict resolution from experts in the field. Editor Ronald J. Fisher ....

Studies in International Mediation, Jeffrey Z. Rubin, Jacob Bercovitch, 2002, Law, 277 pages. Studies in International Mediation brings together a number of prominent scholars in the field of international relations. The central concern of the contributors is mediation ....

Dealing with Conflict in Africa The United Nations and Regional Organizations, Jane Boulden, Dec 5, 2003, Law, 325 pages. Dealing with Conflict in Africa analyzes the roles of the various organizations involved in conflict resolution in Africa. The first section of the book deals with the overall ....

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understandings, and alternative approaches that can be applied to future mediations.

Fen Osler Hampson is professor of international affairs and director of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. Hampson was a senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace in 1993-94. He is chair of the Human Security Track of the Helsinki Process on Globalization and Democracy, a joint initiative of the governments of Finland and Tanzania.

Pamela R. Aall is the Provost for the Institute’s Academy for International Conflict Management and Peacebuilding. She directs the education program, which focuses on strengthening teaching, learning, and research on conflict prevention, management, and resolution. Before joining the Institute in 1993, she was a consultant to the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and to the Institute of International Education. She held a number of positions at the Rockefeller Foundation. She has also worked for the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam and Brussels), the International Council for Educational Development (New York), and the New York Botanical Garden. She holds a B.A. from Harvard University and an M.A. from Columbia University and attended the London School of Economics, conducting research on political and economic integration in Scandinavia and Europe.

"The object in this chapter is to explain how Canada, of all countries, came therefore to take the lead in attempting an armed intervention in eastern Zaire. It will describe the challenges of middle-power management of a multistate coalition, the confusion of facts on the ground in a complex emergency, and the lessons that might flow from the ambiguous conclusion of this unusual episode."


"Mediation is best thought of as a mode of negotiation in which a third party helps the parties find a solution which they cannot find by themselves." [p. 446] Zartman and Touval focus on mediation of violent, international, or civil conflicts. They describe why third-parties decide to mediate, why and when conflicting parties accept mediation, and what factors produce effective mediation.

Intractable Conflicts brings together essays from a number of authors who explore intractability through diverse theoretical frameworks and case histories. These essays were first presented at a conference sponsored by Syracuse University's Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts. Primary Link

"Mediation is one of the most important management strategies in international relations, yet it has been the focus of relatively little scholarship. International mediation may involve private individuals, academic scholars, small or large states, transnational and international organizations, and yet the nature and consequences of such variation have yet to be examined systematically. The purpose of this book is to analyze the mediating efforts of these actors, and to consider their contributions to international peace and security." --Harvard Law School

"The mediation in Haiti was a superb case study—but not of how to combine diplomacy with force, but why it is so difficult, practically impossible, particularly for a democracy, to combine these two elements into an effective strategy." It was innovative in a number of ways. First, the UN Security Council had declared the overthrow of a democratic government a threat to peace. Second, mediation was conducted by private citizens and a senator sent by Clinton. Third, why did this quasi-governmental mediation team succeed when official missions from international organizations and national governments failed?

"[W]e seek in this chapter to explore the possibility that multiparty mediation may add further weight to the need for a synthesis between what might be called the structuralist and social-psychological paradigms of mediation. We look at multiparty mediation from the standpoint of timing and conflict cycles, and seek to explore how the comparative contributions of different actors may unfold and
what the strengths of different mediators are....The chapter concludes with a more general discussion of the particular practical and operational challenges posed by multiparty mediation and the implications for policy...."

This chapter discusses the complex dealings and issues of representation that occurred in Northern Ireland during the process that led to the Good Friday Agreement. This agreement could only be reached through a complicated multiparty mediation that included representatives from several factionalized stakeholder groups in the region. The article briefly considers the relationship between political leaders and their constituents, noting how leaders’ perceptions of their constituents affected their positions on important issues. It concentrates primarily on the bonds that moderate stakeholder representatives (leaders) formed during the peace process, which made the eventual agreement possible.

This article presents a discussion of the role of non-official mediators in international conflicts, such as Quakers. This article represents a relatively early take on the potential role of NGOs in peacemaking activities, as NGOs were just emerging as significant international actors in the mid-1980s. The author notes that the UN was not entirely prepared to relate to, nor effectively utilize the contributions of, NGOs at this point in time.


This volume brings together essays from a number of leading international relations scholars. The primary concern of the work is the effectiveness of international mediation and how best to achieve it. The three key themes throughout the work are the determinants of successful mediation, the range of mediation methods in use, and new strategies for intervention.

"This chapter discusses the period from the renewal of fighting in 1995 to the signing of the comprehensive settlement almost four years later....[I]t sketches the background of the conflict and briefly summarizes the evolving positions of the parties and the details of the settlement. In keeping with this volume’s concentration on multiparty mediation, the primary focus here is on the role of the guarantors."

"The aim of this chapter is to review the period between the start of the work of the International Body in December 1995 and the attainment of the Good Friday Agreement of April 10, 1998. The chapter is written from the personal perspective of the author, who was a member of the international team involved in both the decommissioning review and the chairing of various aspects of the political process, as well as the chairman of the decommissioning body still engaged in working to achieve its mandate."

"The author identifies three distinct mediation sequencing strategies used in intractable communal conflicts: the gradualism model; a ‘boulder-in-the-road’ approach; and the ‘committee’ strategy. Using case examples of contemporary mediation efforts, he describes the three approaches and their advantages and disadvantages. A wider-angle approach to the differences in how mediators and conflicting parties achieve peace in these destructive conflicts is useful for both scholarly inquiry and practice." --Abstract

Bercovitch examines 241 international conflicts occurring from 1945 to 1990. Mediation was attempted, often multiple times, in 60% of those conflicts. Bercovitch identifies nearly 600 mediation attempts made over the course of these conflicts. Based on an analysis of the mediation attempts,
the author identifies a number of factors which correlate strongly with successful mediation.

This article reviews and assesses three aspects of current research on the course and outcomes of international mediation. First, the vague notion of mediation success is addressed. Second, the key contextual and process factors believed to explain the outcomes of international mediation are discussed. Finally, the author addresses some concerns about current theorizing on the subject, particularly the assumptions that underlie current research.

This is an article about the ongoing conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The paper outlines the political dynamics and the border dispute that lie at the center of the conflict. In addition, the author details various attempts at international mediation by outside actors as well as the efforts of nongovernmental organizations working in each country.

This paper discusses ongoing tensions and problems in the Georgian region of Abkhazia, which are preventing the establishment of a stable peace. The paper details the political dynamics of the situation, as well as describing a variety of peacemaking activities by nongovernmental organizations working in the region.

This article details the dynamics of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabach in which ethnic Armenians have been struggling for control since the late 1980s. There have been a variety of attempts to mediate this conflict, particularly in the form of multi-track diplomacy, but as of 2002 it remained at a stalemate.

This paper is an edited transcript of a talk given by Donald Bossart for the Intractable Conflict/Constructive Confrontation Project on April 10, 1993. It is a case-study of Southern Rhodesia's move to become Zimbabwe and illustrates how different perspectives influence conflict--internationally as well as locally.

This article discusses the civil war in Tajikstan, which broke out soon after the nation declared its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The majority of the article focuses on the successful peace process initiated by the United Nations that led to the signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan in 1997.

This USIP special report details the efforts of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), who have been employing nonviolent methods to try and instigate political change in Zimbabwe. The report examines the roles and strategies of key domestic actors in recent years and provides insights into the possible nature of transition. The conclusion argues that international mediation must be coupled with forms of domestic pressure if a transitional authority (the preferred peaceful option) is to be attained.

The Oslo experience and the signing of an agreement between Israel and the PLO is used as an empirical case study to highlight the nature of successful mediation in international conflicts. To provide a structure for the analysis, the concept of intractable conflicts and their management is utilized. Factors affecting the mediation of intractable conflicts are grouped into two clusters: (a) contextual factors and (b) process factors. The paper focuses on the changing balance of contextual factors and how these created a ripe moment for mediation, and on the particular way the mediation process was carried out. Timing, ripeness and secrecy are identified as the crucial variables that produced the breakthrough in Oslo.

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