

CONFLICT RESOLUTION
AND MANAGEMENT
IN CONTEMPORARY
WORK ORGANIZATIONS:
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES
AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a conceptual and empirical synthesis of models of organizational conflict, negotiation and bargaining, and third party processes. It then draws specifically on organizational justice, exit-voice-loyalty, and organizational punishment theories to test certain propositions about the uses, settlement and post-settlement consequences of grievance-appeal procedures in five large nonunion companies. The empirical results provide relatively strong support for organizational punishment theory, moderate support for organizational justice theory, and weak support for exit-voice-loyalty theory.

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Several initiatives have recently been undertaken by scholars from a variety of disciplines and fields to advance the integration of organizational behavior (OB) with industrial relations (IR) research (Lewin and Feuille, 1983; Lewin and Strauss 1988; Kochan 1980; Kochan and Verma 1983). Ironically, OB and IR were once closely connected, perhaps even integrated, within academic units of U.S. (and other) universities (Lewin 1987b, 1987c). In about 1960, however, OB and IR began to move in separate research directions, which led to the restructuring and realignment of numerous OBIR academic units (Kaufman 1992; Lewin 1989).

Despite these developments, or possibly because of them, some OB and IR scholars have detected certain points of actual or potential convergence between the two fields. One point of convergence, which serves as the focus of this paper, is the research on conflict management and resolution. Notable streams of recent research on this topic can be found in both the OB and IR literatures (Lewicki, Weiss, and Lewin 1992). For those interested in the integration (or reintegration) of this research, the challenge is to assess the extent to which conflict management/resolution theories, concepts, evidence, and methods employed by OB and IR scholars converge or diverge.

In this regard, the present paper begins with a brief review of leading theories and models of conflict resolution and management drawn from selected disciplines and problem areas of study. Next, more detailed analyses and assessments are conducted of theories and models of organizational conflict, negotiations and bargaining, and third party dispute resolution processes. For each of these three research streams, a dominant model or paradigm is identified and the relevant literature is assessed in terms of its predominantly descriptive or predominantly normative orientation. Then the paper turns in an empirical direction and presents an analysis of the uses and consequences of formal dispute resolution systems in five large, nonunion, publicly-held, U.S.-based companies. The analytical framework for this empirical work is grounded in models of organizational justice, exit-voice-loyalty, and organizational discipline. In the final portion of the paper, the main findings and conclusions of the study are discussed largely in terms of their implications for the further integration of OB and IR research on conflict management and resolution.

MODELS OF CONFLICT

Underlying all models of conflict are certain approaches or perspectives on this social phenomenon. Within the eclectic literature on conflict research, it is possible to identify (at least) six major approaches, each of which subsumes certain theories and models. Three of these approaches stem from academic disciplines. The micro-level or psychological approach concentrates on conflict

within and among human beings as individuals, specifically on intrapersonal, interpersonal, and small group behavior variables that affect conflict causes, dynamics, and outcomes (Nye 1973). Second the macro-level or sociological approach focuses on groups, departments, divisions and even whole organizations as units of analysis for understanding conflict dynamics (March and Simon 1958; Pondy 1967). Further, some macro-level researchers concentrate on the functions and dysfunctions of social conflict as well as the analysis of conflict at the societal level (Dahrendorf 1959; Marx 1906).

The third approach employs economic analysis and, in particular, applies models of economic rationality to individual decision-making and even to complex social behavior (Becker 1981). One example of this approach is game theory, which abstracts from situations of interdependence, the parties' alternative courses of action, the parties' preferences, and possible outcomes, and then prescribes rational choice behavior (Luce and Raiffa 1957; Shubik 1964). Another example of economic analysis in this regard is the work on exit, voice, and loyalty, which offers a "rational" explanation of why some consumers who are dissatisfied—in conflict—with companies stay and "fight" rather than switch to other companies—producers (Hirschman 1970). More recently, the exit-voice-loyalty model has been applied to the study of labor unions in their efforts to resolve conflicts with employers (Freeman and Medoff 1984).

In addition to the three research approaches closely tied to disciplines, there are three approaches to conflict which owe their origins to specific problem area applications. The labor relations (or fourth) approach originated from an interest in understanding and influencing the practice of U.S. industrial relations. (It has also drawn heavily from the disciplines of economics and psychology, however). As Kochan and Verma (1983) observe, industrial relations research "...has maintained a coherent and consistent set of assumptions about the nature and role of conflict within organizations around issues pertaining to the determination and administration of the employment relationship" (p. 17). (Also see Barbash 1964; Commons 1928, 1934; Kerr, Dunlop, Harbison, and Myers 1964.) Recent research has focused more heavily on the determinants and consequences of workplace conflict resolution mechanisms and techniques (Kochan, Katz, and McKesie, 1986; Lewin, 1987a; Lewin and Peterson, 1988).

A fifth approach to the study of conflict is bargaining and negotiation, which arose from the frequent use of these processes in labor relations and international relations. Early researchers in these areas enumerated sets of principles for effective negotiations (Chamberlain 1955; Dunlop and Healy 1953; Ikle 1964; Schelling 1960), while others borrowed from game theory to model the bargaining processes (Nash 1950; Zeuthen 1930). Social psychologists have created an entire subdiscipline of research on the interpersonal aspects of these processes (Druckman 1977). More contemporary

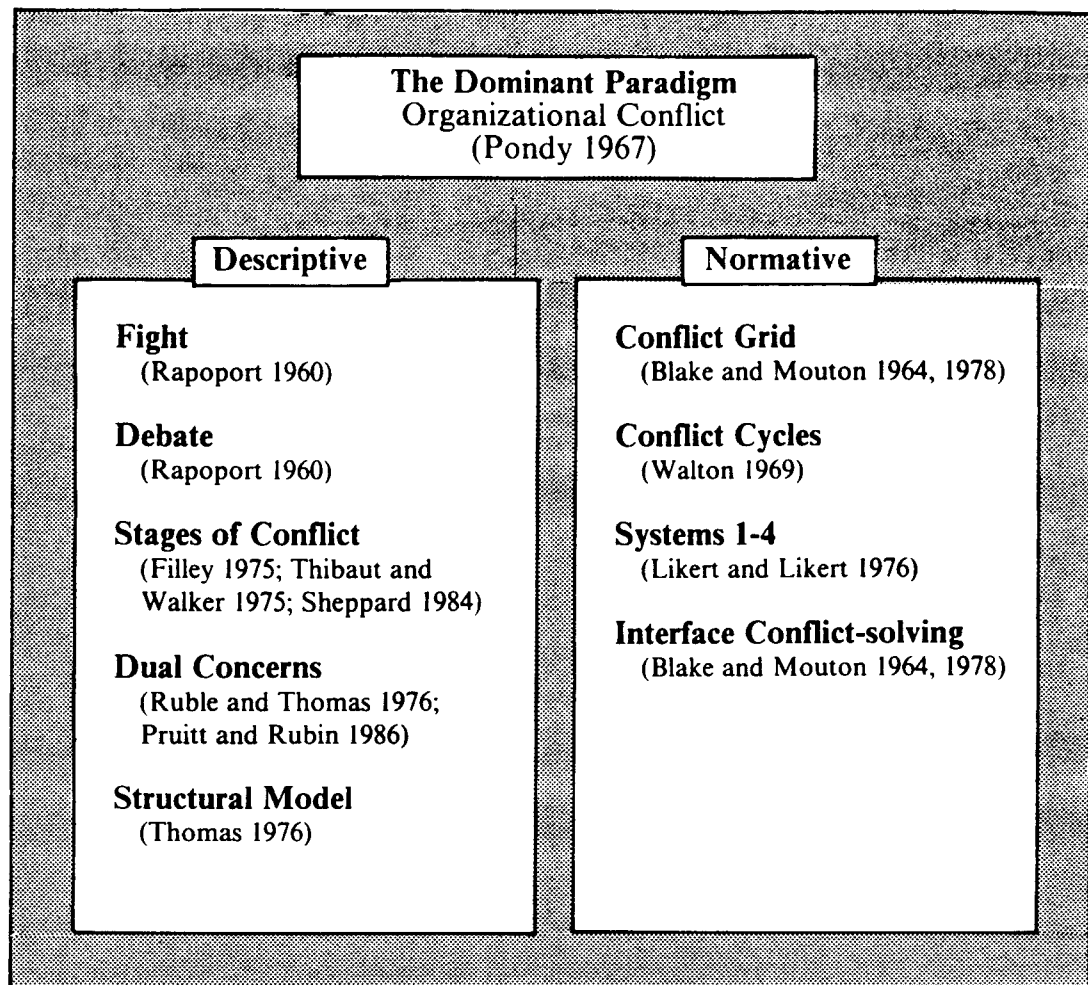


Figure 1. Models of Conflict

researchers have blended or cross-pollinated the discipline-based models or focused on specific applications, such as to labor relations (Siegel and Fouraker 1960; Stevens 1963; Walton and McKersie 1965).

Third party dispute resolution represents a sixth approach to the study of conflict. Like the two previous approaches, this research was stimulated by concerns about more effective resolution of labor and international disputes, and emphasizes the actions taken by parties external to a conflict to resolve it or to restore effective negotiations (Jackson 1952). Early studies focused on third party style and effectiveness in arbitration (Kagel 1961), mediation (Stevens 1963), and process consultation (Walton 1969), while more contemporary approaches have sought to integrate third party intervention into a broad understanding of the causes and dynamics of conflict itself (Sheppard 1984).

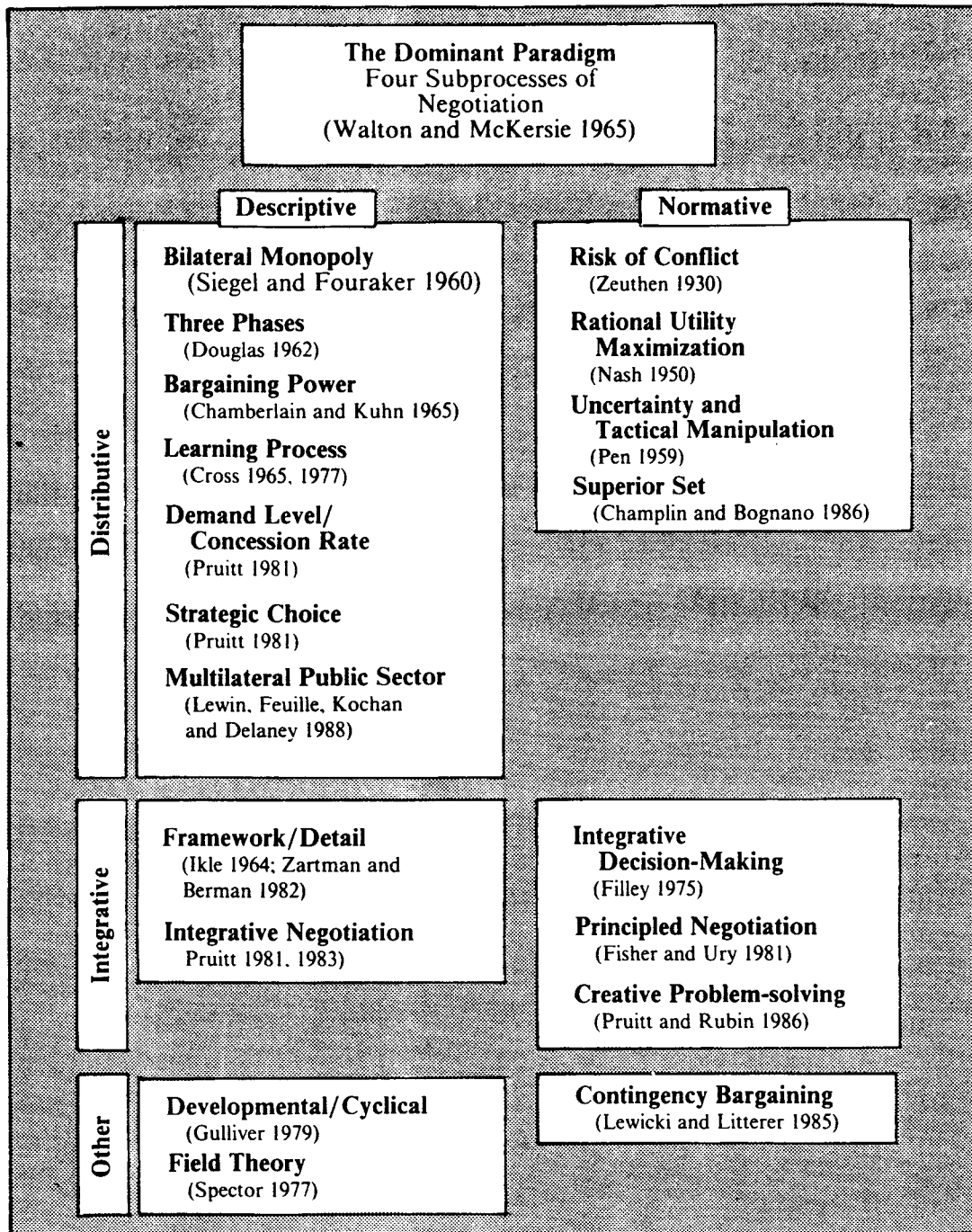


Figure 2. Models of Negotiation and Bargaining

Other academic disciplines and fields that have contributed to conflict research, such as social psychology and organizational behavior, have borrowed from two or more of the aforementioned approaches. Indeed, considerable cross-fertilization has taken place among the six approaches

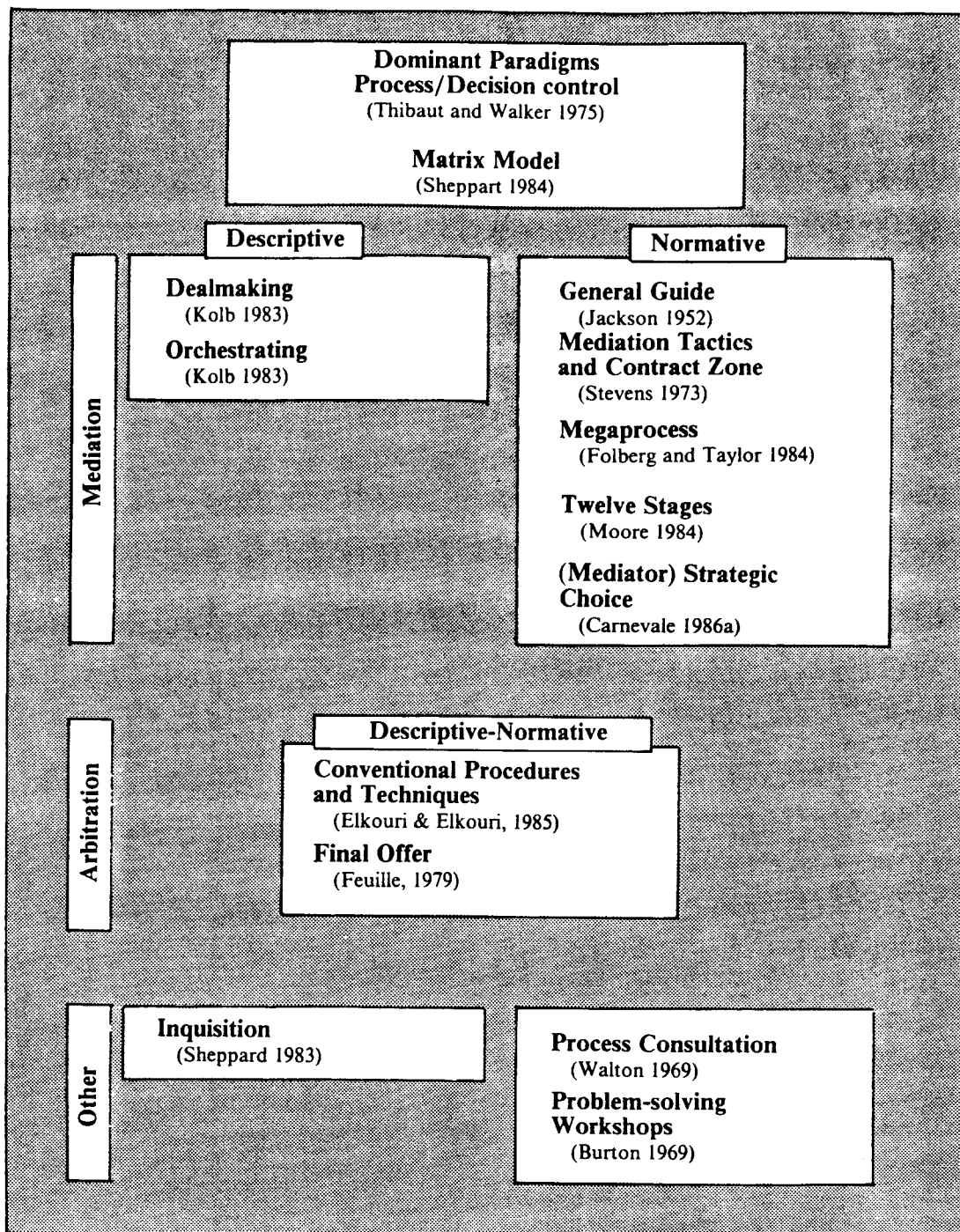


Figure 3. Models of Third Party Processes

themselves. Although these efforts have been beneficial in many ways, they have also resulted in the neglect of some of the premises and fundamental assumptions of the original approaches and paradigms for the study of conflict. It is not possible here fully to assess the benefits and limitations of these six

Table 1. Assumptions Underlying Models of Conflict, Negotiation and Third Party Behavior

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- A1. Conflict originates from a variety of possible sources.
 - A2. Conflict follows a predictable course or pattern.
 - A3. Conflict is manifested in many ways, which have positive and negative consequences.
 - A4. Conflict and conflict handling behavior is adaptive.
 - A5. Conflict is to be managed with respect to its consequences (rather than its causes).
 - A6. Collaborative behavior is strongly desirable as a way to manage and resolve conflict.
 - A7. The dynamics of conflict can be (and should be) analyzed apart from the dynamics of its resolution.
 - A8. Interpersonal and small group processes may be examined apart from environmental and societal variables.
 - A9. Lessons from particular models of conflict dynamics and conflict resolution can be readily generalized across various actors, issues and settings.
 - A9a. The dynamics of negotiations between two individuals adequately represent negotiations between two groups or organizations.
 - A9b. Generalizations about bilateral negotiations extend to multilateral negotiations.
 - A9c. Research findings derived from single issue negotiations in simple game-like experiments can be generalized to complex multi-issue negotiations in real-life settings.
 - A10. Negotiators are economically rational and seek to maximize economic outcomes.
 - A11. Any negotiation situation, taken as a whole, is either purely zero-sum or purely nonzero-sum.
 - A11a. An entire negotiation can be described and explained by either a distributive model or an integrative one.
 - A12. There is a definitive way to negotiate well.
 - A13. All types of problems are negotiable.
 - A14. All parties want to negotiate and are able to negotiate.
 - A15. The essential part of negotiation takes place at the negotiation table.
 - A16. Third parties are motivated solely by the desire to resolve disputes effectively.
 - A17. A conflict should be resolved, not allowed simply to run its course.
 - A18. It is not useful to generalize from one kind of third party behavior (e.g., mediation) to another kind of third party behavior (e.g., arbitration).
 - A19. The formal role description of a third party (e.g., mediator) is a strong predictor of that party's actual behavior.
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approaches to the study of conflict (see Lewicki, Weiss, and Lewin [1992] for one such assessment). However, it is possible to identify dominant models or paradigms that have emerged from certain of the approaches to the study of conflict, and also to characterize some of the studies undertaken in conjunction with these models and paradigms as having a predominantly descriptive or normative thrust. The former adopt a scientifically "detached" position and attempt to describe and predict actual conflict dynamics. The latter prescribe actions for individuals, groups, and organizations and typically tend to focus on and evaluate negative consequences of conflict. Figures 1-3 summarize the dominant organizational, negotiation, and third-party models of conflict

reviewed here, and also categorizes the associated studies according to their dominant orientation (descriptive or normative). Table 1 summarizes the leading assumptions underlying models of organizational conflict, negotiation, and third party behavior.

MODELS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

Early conflict researchers, especially social psychologists, were preoccupied with efforts to define conflict and to describe its primary causes (Fink 1968). For example, Mack and Snyder (1957) described conflict as "a particular kind of social interaction process between parties who have mutually exclusive or incompatible values" (p. 212). Bernard (1957) and Deutsch (1973) offered similar views, but other definitions of conflict abound. Further, theorists have debated the relative importance of such definitional matters as the outcomes of conflict versus the process (Schmidt and Kochan 1972), the goals of the parties versus their actions (Boulding 1962; Deutsch 1973), and the objective versus perceived incompatibility of goals and actions (Hocker and Wilmot 1985).

In an important article on organizational conflict, Pondy (1967) sought to synthesize the relationship among structural and personality variables that affect conflict, conflict processes, and conflict outcomes by treating them as elements of a conflict "episode." The five stages associated with a conflict episode are:

- (a) antecedent conditions;
- (b) latent conflict;
- (c) perceived conflict;
- (d) manifest conflict; and
- (e) conflict aftermath.

Pondy proposed that the primary antecedent conditions in organizations included competition over scarce resources, individual and/or subunit efforts to achieve autonomy and escape interdependence, and divergence of individual and/or subunit goals.

Each of these antecedent conditions served as the core of a model of organizational conflict. First, problems of competition for scarce resources will arise between different interest groups (e.g., labor vs. management, staff vs. line) who engage in a strategic bargaining process to resolve their differences. Second, a bureaucratic model largely described the conflict for control that occurs between vertically differentiated groups, such as superiors and subordinates, and typically involves disputes related to rules and rule-making, organizational procedures, and leadership. Third, a systems model describes

the conflict in lateral relationships that occurs as workers in different subunits attempt to resolve conflicts related to work coordination and task integration.

Pondy's stage model has not been directly tested, but many researchers refer to it and a few have attempted to refine and build on it (Filley 1975; Thomas 1976). Further, Pondy's three conflict types tend to encompass or subsume much of the subsequent research literature on the types and causes of conflict. The premise of resource conflict underlies intergroup conflict and labor relations models (e.g., Smith 1776; Homans 1961), while control conflicts related to models of power use and power equalization (Derr 1978). Lateral relations conflicts are often at the root of contemporary studies of behavior in complex and dynamic organizations adapting to their environments (Strauss, 1962).

Several other descriptive models of organizational conflict have been developed, though perhaps none is as comprehensive or as wide-ranging as Pondy's. Thus, "fight" models describe conflict that stems from interpersonal aggression (Rapoport 1960) and have been applied to the international arms race (Richardson 1947), community disputes (Coleman 1957), marital relations (Bach and Wyden 1969), and intraorganizational conflict (Pruitt and Rubin 1986); "debate" models describe the exchange of ideas about "what is" versus "what ought to be" (Rapoport 1960) and have been applied to parties' attempts to convert their opponents to competing points of view in a variety of contexts (Brehmer and Hammond 1973; Walcott, Hopmann, and King 1977); "stages of conflict models" embellish Pondy's conflict model by expanding the list of antecedent conditions (Filley 1975), adding methods of conflict resolution, such as problem solving (Filley 1975), and adding process and decision stages for the representation and assessment of evidence (Thibaut and Walker 1975; Sheppard 1984; "dual concerns" models focus on the dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness in "conflict handling" (Ruble and Thomas 1976) and have been used to generate typologies of conflict management styles (Pruitt and Rubin 1986); and "structural" models identify the structural determinants of conflict behavior, for example, the parties' behavioral predispositions, respective social pressures, respective conflict incentives and stakes in their relationship, and jointly applicable rules and procedures (Thomas 1976).

From this body of descriptive work on organizational conflict, it is possible to derive the following three assumptions about conflict:

- A1. Conflict originates from a variety of sources.
- A2. Conflict follows a predictable course or pattern.
- A3. Conflict is manifested in many ways, which have both positive and negative consequences.

Normative models also occupy a prominent place in the organizational conflict literature. These include the "conflict grid," which discriminates between the manager's fundamental concern for production and fundamental concern for people, and which has been used to generate a grid featuring five dominant styles of "conflict management" in which the combined high concern for production and people is preferred (Blake and Mouton 1964, 1978); the "conflict cycles" model, designed as a basis for intervention, which identifies substantive and emotional issues leading to triggering events that make conflict manifest and which entails conflict behavior and consequences that then feed back into new or redefined issues (Walton 1969); The "Systems 1-4" model, grounded in notions of management style, which advocates the use of System 4 style of conflict management featuring a strong willingness to listen to and understand the other party, open and trusting communication, low use of power, development for opportunities for mutual influence, a desire to cooperate, and a search for a joint, problem-solving approach to conflict (Likert and Likert 1976); and the "interface conflict-solving" model, which advocates a six-step action-oriented approach to the resolution of conflicts between groups in organizations who work together frequently, for example, line and staff and labor and management (Blake and Mouton 1985).

The assumptions which underlie this normative work on organizational conflict are as follows:

- A4. Conflict and conflict-handling behavior are adaptive.
- A5. Conflict is to be managed with respect to its consequences rather than its causes.
- A6. Collaborative behavior is strongly desirable as a way to manage and resolve conflict.

Further, when the descriptive and normative models of organizational conflict are taken together, three additional assumptions underlying this body of work can be identified.

- A7. The dynamics of conflict can (and should) be analyzed apart the dynamics of its resolution.
- A8. Interpersonal and small group processes may be examined apart from environmental and societal variables.
- A9. Lessons from particular models of conflict dynamics and conflict resolution can be readily generalized across various actors, issues, and settings.

While the models discussed above provide a foundation for understanding both conflict processes and conflict resolution, they have significant limitations—the most notable of which, perhaps, is their failure to make their

underlying assumptions explicit. Such explicitness, as we have attempted to provide here, is key to addressing the validity of these models and to further development of research in this field.

MODELS OF NEGOTIATION AND BARGAINING

Negotiation has been defined as "the deliberate interaction of two or more complex social units which are attempting to define or redefine the terms of their interdependence" (Walton and McKersie 1963, p. 3). This definition appears applicable to individual as well as to groups and organizations. It also treats negotiation as a broader process than bargaining, which Gulliver (1979) defines as "the presentation and exchange of more or less specific proposals for the terms of agreement on particular issues" (p. 71). The broader interaction, whether labelled negotiation or bargaining or both (interchangeably), has been approached by researchers in various ways.

Nevertheless, the dominant model or paradigm in this area is clearly that of Walton and McKersie (1965). This model, which adopted a distinctly managerial point of view and was grounded in numerous studies of union-management relations, remains a leading example of the integration of industrial relations with organizational behavior research. Walton and McKersie's model formulates negotiations as a set of four subprocesses rather than a single overriding process. These four subprocesses are distributive bargaining, integrative bargaining, attitudinal structuring, and intraorganizational bargaining.

"Distributive bargaining" occurs when each party attempts to maximize its share of a fixed-sum payoff; in other words, what one party wins the other party loses. In describing negotiating behavior from this perspective, Walton and McKersie considered negotiators' target points (or preferred outcomes), resistance points (or tolerance limits), the effects of different intersections of the two parties' ranges between these points, and various strategies by which to manipulate an opponent's perception of one's own target and resistance points. The distributive bargaining agenda featured issues (especially economic issues) to be fought over and (perhaps) resolved, and emphasis was placed on the power tactics of one party versus the other party.

"Integrative bargaining" occurs when the parties attempt to explore options to increase the size of the joint gain without respect to the division of the payoffs. This type of bargaining, or negotiation, tends to follow a joint problem-solving format and to benefit all parties. The parties to integrative bargaining must recognize and define problems (rather than issues), search for possible solutions to problems (especially noneconomic problems), evaluate them, and select those that maximize joint gain. The critical aspect of this process is a willingness to share information combined with open communication.

The third subprocess, "attitudinal structuring," refers to negotiators' efforts to influence the quality and nature of their relationship. Formally, attitudinal structuring is a socioemotional, interpersonal process by which parties attempt to change each other's perceptions, attitudes, and the "climate" of negotiations. Here, the level of trust is a central concern.

The fourth subprocess, "intraorganizational bargaining," departs from the first three subprocesses in that it does not treat complex social units simply as unified actors. Instead, this fourth component recognizes the boundary roles held by many negotiators and the sources of internal conflict within negotiating units. In short, intraorganizational bargaining refers to the "system of activities which brings the expectations of the principals into alignment with those of the chief negotiator" (Walton and McKersie 1965, p. 5). Much intraorganizational bargaining rests on the degree of internal control exercised by the leader and/or chief negotiator for an organizational unit.

The interrelationships among these four subprocesses are not readily evident from Walton and McKersie's explication of their model. They can be regarded as four components of a single model, as four separate models, or as a combination of models and "generic" processes. To illustrate this last point, distributive bargaining and integrative bargaining have generally been treated by researchers as separate, distinctive bargaining models, while attitudinal structuring and intraorganizational bargaining have been treated as generic processes that occur in all forms of negotiation (Chamberlain, Lewin, and Cullen 1980). Further, whereas Walton and McKersie intended their model to be primarily descriptive, certain of the subprocesses in their model, especially integrative bargaining, has often been treated and adopted for normative processes.

A wide variety of research on negotiations has been conducted by scholars from several disciplines, some of which has been inspired by or based on Walton and McKersie's model. Other descriptive models of distributive bargaining include "bilateral monopoly," which has featured experiments involving buyers and sellers in which the amount of information available to the parties, the number of bid transactions, and the payoff structure of outcomes are manipulated (Siegel and Fouraker 1960); the "three phases" model, in which negotiators establish the negotiating range, grapple with their commitments and alternatives to their initial positions, and reach a nonreversible point of decision to settle or declare a stalemate (Douglas 1962); "bargaining power," which defines this concept as the capacity of one party to a negotiation to produce an agreement on its own terms and which, in turn, depends on each party's ratio of the costs of disagreeing with the other party to the costs of agreeing (Chamberlain and Kuhn 1965); the "learning process" model, which rejects the notion of bargainers making static estimates of optimality in favor of the notion that bargainers make relative judgments about their own and their opponents' costs and benefits as these vary during the bargaining process

(Cross 1965, 1977); the “demand level/concession rate” model, which focuses on the match and mismatch between bargainers’ expectations and concessions as these are reflected in negotiators’ demand levels, concession rates, the speed at which demand levels change, and negotiation outcomes, including image loss (Pruitt, 1981); the “strategic choice” model, which calls attention to negotiators’ irreversible choices at several points in a negotiation to concede unilaterally, stand firm and employ pressure tactics (competition), or collaborate with the other party in search of a mutually acceptable solution (coordination) (Pruitt 1981); and “multilateral public sector bargaining,” which is so labeled because it refers to the presence of more than two distinct parties to negotiations, especially the multiple actors, units, and interests which purport to represent the management of governmental organizations in their interactions with unionized government workers (Lewin, Feuille, Kochan, and Delaney 1988).

Normative distributive models of negotiation include “risk of conflict,” which features the construction of equations to predict the maximum risk that a rational bargainer would be willing to take instead of conceding, thereby establishing a framework for specifying who should make concessions at particular points during a negotiation (Zeuthen 1930); “rational utility maximization,” which emphasizes joint—Pareto optimal—rather than individual payoffs to negotiators within a utility maximization-perfect information framework, explores symmetric and asymmetric utility functions for negotiators, and identifies several types of solution frontiers or likely areas of negotiator settlement (Nash, 1960); “uncertainty and tactical manipulation,” which departs from utility maximization and complete information assumptions to emphasize the psychological, market, and political factors which combine to create intense preferences among negotiators for “satisficing” target points and bargaining outcomes (Pen 1959); and the “superior set” model, which involves negotiators comparing the expected utility obtainable from a negotiated agreement with the expected utility obtainable from an arbitrated settlement (a threat point), and in which the superior set is the subset of the attainable utility set that is no less preferred by both parties than arbitration (Champlin and Bognanno 1986).

The aforementioned models of negotiation largely address the behavior of negotiators in competitive, win-lose settings. The development of the models was initiated and dominated by researchers who took an economic or quasi-economic perspective on negotiating behavior. Therein lies an important assumption:

- A10. Negotiators are economically rational and seek to maximize economic outcomes.

While descriptive models (and related studies) of negotiations often provide data which appear to confirm the above assumption, the normative models

have been at the center of considerably greater debate. For example, Nash (1950) intended his model to be descriptive, but researchers who followed him challenged such assumptions as rationality (preference maximization), bargainers' common acceptance of the definition of a situation, and perfect information (Braithwaite 1955; Harsanyi 1965; Raifa, 1953). Today, scholars generally treat these models and their implications as ideal standards, but only direct empirical tests, of which there have been relatively few (Greenlagh and Neslin 1983; Laing and Olmstead 1978), will settle this matter.

Although distributive models antedate and outnumber them, several integrative models of negotiation have been developed since Walton and McKersie's (1965) work. One descriptive integrative model of note is "framework/detail," which was introduced by Ikle (1964) to illuminate the process of diplomatic negotiations. In the first stage of this model, proposals are confronted and the parties seek a compromise that establishes some framework of broad objectives and principles. In the second stage of the model, the parties draw out a number of detailed points of agreement. Later, Zartman and Berman (1982) expanded this model to incorporate three phases, namely, diagnosis, formula, and detail. The diagnosis phase refers to the parties' assessments of their respective positions, relationship with each other, and need to change the current order of things, while the formula phase refers to negotiators' attempts to develop a shared definition of the conflict and shared terms of trade. Another descriptive integrative model of negotiation follows closely on the work of Walton and McKersie (1965), and consequently may be labeled "integrative negotiation" (Pruitt, 1981, 1983a; Pruitt and Carnevale, 1982). It provides rich detail about the antecedents to negotiation that define the framework for integrative agreements, the different forms taken by integrative agreements, and the tactics used by negotiators to reach such agreements.

The concept of integrative negotiation rests on a value system that stresses interpersonal trust, cooperation, and a search for mutually acceptable outcomes. These qualities can be seen in normative models of integrative bargaining, which include the following: "integrative decision-making," in which a six-step process is used by the parties to adjust relational conditions, perceptions, and attitudes in order to clarify the processes of problem definition, search for alternatives, and achievement of consensus (Filley 1975); "principled negotiation," a widely popular approach to negotiation which encourages negotiators to maintain good relations with opponents without yielding their own positions by following a four-step process of separating the people from the problem, focusing on interests rather than objectives, inventing options for mutual gain, and insisting on using objective criteria for judging solutions (Fisher and Ury 1981); and "creative problem-solving," which translates earlier descriptive work into a set of prescriptions for effective problem-solving by negotiators who must ask whether there is really a conflict of interest, analyze their own interests, set reasonably high aspirations, prepare

to commit oneself to these aspirations, seek ways to reconcile both parties' aspirations, and, if necessary, lower one's own aspirations and continue to search for a common solution (Pruitt and Rubin 1986).

The first two normative integrative models, especially "principled negotiations," have achieved a high degree of visibility and support from social scientists. These models seem to share the favor accorded collaboration in conflict research (see Assumption 6 above). But Fisher and Ury (1981) did not cite research that preceded the development of their model or studies that confirm its effectiveness in achieving "wise, efficiently achieved outcomes." A few authors have challenged this model by assertion (e.g., White 1984), but there appear to be no extant empirical tests of the "principled negotiations" model as a whole.

Three other models of the negotiation process merit brief mention here. Though they are neither explicitly distributive or integrative in intent, the first two are considered to be descriptive and the third normative. The "development/cyclical" model is based on ethnographic studies of actual negotiation cases in East Africa and Western industrial relations (Gulliver 1979). The model combines a cyclical stage, in which negotiators exchange, review, and process information, with a developmental stage, in which negotiators grapple with information cycles, reach a crisis, search for a new arena of negotiations, and move on to realize final outcomes. The "field theory" model relies on the work of Kurt Lewin to describe and synthesize the impact of personality, perception, expectations, persuasion, and the interactions among these factors on the dynamics of dyadic negotiation (Spector 1977). This model attempts to capture both causal relationships and the temporal flow of a stage or phase model of negotiation. The last model taken up here may be labeled "contingency bargaining," and refers to the work of a few researchers who advocate the use of both distributive and integrative bargaining approaches depending on the characteristics of a dispute, the overall goals of the parties, the parties' perceptions of one another, and the strategies the parties' desire to pursue. Early formulations of contingency bargaining appeared in Ware (1980) and Lewicki and Litterer (1985). More recently, Lax and Sebenius (1986) have introduced the twin processes of "claiming value" (distributive bargaining) and "creating value" (integrative bargaining).

As with the organizational conflict models reviewed earlier, some important assumptions have characterized the development and evolution of descriptive and normative models of negotiation and bargaining; these are as follows.

- A11. Any negotiation situation, taken as a whole, is either purely zero-sum or purely nonzero-sum. Relatedly, (A11a) An entire negotiation can be described and explained by either a distributive model or an integrative one.
- A12. There is a definite way to negotiate well.

Despite the four possible combinations of distributive and integrative, and of descriptive and normative, lines of work, we have primarily seen an early emphasis on descriptive distributive models and a recent shift toward interest in normative integrative ones. The shift probably stems from the assumptions and value systems of the social scientists who teach and do research. Whatever the reason, normative distributive and descriptive integrative models have lacked both advocacy and research support. Given the apparent success of some popular ideas about the former models (e.g., Cohen 1980) and the empirical thrust of the latter, it would be valuable to expand the scope of existing research on normative distributive and descriptive integrative models of negotiation and bargaining.

It is also important to reiterate Assumption 9 above, developed in the conflict models section: Lessons from particular models of conflict dynamics and conflict resolution can be readily generalized across various actors, issues, and settings. Not only does this assumption also appear to hold strongly for models of negotiation, several derivatives can be adduced from it:

- A9a. The dynamics of negotiations between two individuals adequately represent negotiations between two groups or organizations.
- A9b. Generalizations about bilateral negotiation extend to multilateral negotiation.
- A9c. Research findings derived from single issue negotiations in simple game-like experiments can be generalized to complex, multi-issue negotiations in real-life settings.

In addition, three other assumptions that have tended to characterize model-building and testing in negotiation are as follows:

- A13. All types of problems are negotiable.
- A14. All parties want to negotiate and are able to negotiate.
- A15. The essential part of negotiation takes place at the negotiation table.

MODELS OF THIRD PARTY PROCESSES

Historically, research on third party processes has been segmented according to third party style and the social context in which it occurred. For example, mediation, arbitration, and process consultation have all been examined in the collective bargaining context (Douglas 1962; Northrup 1966; Walton 1969), as has much research that compares third party styles (Kochan and Jick 1978). These styles have also been contrasted to approaches to grievance handling (Lewin, 1987a; Lewin and Peterson 1988). Examples of the social contexts studied include adjudication in the courts (Vidmar 1986; Wall and Schiller

1983), international relations (Jackson 1952), and formal organizations (Kolb 1983; Sheppard, Saunders and Minton 1987). Unfortunately, researchers have not generally referenced one another's work until recently, so most third party research developed in relative isolation. This fragmentation (largely by discipline) prevented researchers from interpreting their areas of specialization as parts of third party processes as a whole. It also led to a general failure to contrast various third party styles within the same context, and a failure to compare the impact and effectiveness of styles across contexts. Both consequences have hampered model development in this area.

Two models of third party processes may be considered dominant, in part because they address more than one third party style. The first of these, advanced by Thibaut and Walker (1975), derived from a series of research studies designed to test the efficacy of the U.S. judicial approach to resolving legal disputes. These authors proposed that legal dispute resolution has two stages: a process stage, comprising procedures used by both sides to resolve a dispute (e.g., presentation of evidence), and a decision stage during which evidence is evaluated and the outcome of the conflict is determined. The amount of control exercised by the third party in each stage permits the differentiation of several third party styles: bargaining (third party present but with little control over either stage), mediation (control over the process stage), arbitration (control over the decision stage), autocratic (control over both stages), and moot (control over both stages shared with disputants). The authors reported the results of several laboratory studies designed to test the effectiveness and perceived fairness of each of these control orientations.

The second broad model of the third party process taken up here, the "matrix model," has been developed by Sheppard (1983, 1984; Lewicki and Sheppard 1985) and represents a significant reformulation and extension of Thibaut and Walker's two-stage model. Sheppard suggested four possible forms of third party control: process control (how disputants interact during dispute resolution), content control (the substantive resolution of the dispute itself), motivation control (the source of power the third party uses to influence the disputants, e.g., persuasion, legitimate authority, threats, and promises), and control used only at the request of a disputant. In addition, Sheppard highlighted a factor only implicit in Thibaut and Walker's model, namely, the timing of a third party's intervention. Intervention timing is best described through a stage model of conflict or negotiation; according to Sheppard, third parties can intervene in the definition, discussion, alternative selection, or reconciliation stages.

If the four forms of control and four stages of intervention timing are combined into a 16-cell matrix, entries (representing observed behavior) can be made in various configuration of cells to distinguish third party styles. Observations of mediators, for example, suggest that they employ all four forms of control in all stages, except reconciliation. Sheppard also identified

styles previously neglected by researchers, such as inquisition (process, content, and motivational control in all four stages) and providing impetus or "kick in the pants" (process, content, and motivational control in the definition and reconciliation stages). This paradigm addresses two other areas of concern in the description and explanation of third party behavior. The first has to do with a third party's motivations for intervention. Besides the commonly cited interest in effective dispute settlement, Sheppard persuasively presented alternative criteria such as efficiency (conserving time and resources), disputant satisfaction, and perceived fairness. Second, the choice of an intervention strategy may also rest on specific dimensions of the conflict itself, for example, the characteristics of the disputants, the type of conflict, and the setting.

As with the dominant paradigms of Pondy (1967) and Walton and McKersie (1965), neither Thibaut and Walker's (1975) nor Sheppard's (1984) model has been empirically tested, let alone validated, in its entirety. Nevertheless, the process/decision control model provided the initial, and for many researchers the continuing, basis on which to consider and compare various third party processes. Further, it is a touchstone for an important, ongoing debate on the relative value of process versus outcome control in third party dispute resolution (Brett 1986; Folger 1986). The matrix model is based on numerous empirical studies, is stimulating additional research on third party dispute resolution (e.g., Sheppard, Saunders, and Minton 1987), and draws attention to two new assumptions:

- A16. Third parties are motivated solely by the desire to resolve disputes effectively.
- A17. A conflict should be resolved, not allowed simply to run its course.

Notwithstanding the broad scope of the models reviewed above, most of the models and research on third parties consider only a single process or style. In particular, the industrial relations literature has concentrated on mediation and arbitration, so these processes are highlighted below. However, brief attention will also be given to the organizational behavior literature featuring models of inquisition and process consultation. As before, we shall distinguish between descriptive and normative models contained in the literature.

By definition, mediators employ a variety of strategies and tactics to initiate and facilitate interactions between disputants, but leave the final resolution or terms of settlement in the hands of the disputants. Put differently, mediation relies primarily on facilitating negotiation among disputants. Leading descriptive models of mediation include dealmaking and orchestrating, both offered by Kolb (1983), who has used participant observation to study mediators' roles (cognition and action). As a "dealmaker," the mediator tends to ignore the parties' past history of negotiations, emphasizes his/her entry

as a wholly new process, views the parties' demands as unreasonable based on their lack of experience, tends to separate the parties and shuttle between them, and changes his/her role from a logical persuader to a headbanger, all for the purpose of forging a settlement among the parties. In contrast, an "orchestrating" mediator leaves relatively more of the resolution of substantive issues under the parties' control, provides an accompanying forum to that of negotiations, works to develop a dialogue and direct communications between the parties in joint meetings, and changes his/her role from dumb questioner to gatekeeper. This research suggests that mediators are more aggressive than previously thought, and it provides a basis for expanded descriptive studies of mediator roles and styles (Silbey and Merry 1986).

A variety of normative models of mediation are available, the earliest of which were based largely on mediation in labor disputes, and the more recent of which are based on mediation in a wider set of conflict situations. The "general guide" model of mediation, based on studies of mediation in the United States and European labor disputes and in political disputes in the United Nations, encompasses a sequence of five techniques (Jackson 1952): getting the parties together, building confidence in the mediator, "deflating" facts to their true proportions, raising doubts among the parties about the positions they have assumed, and generating alternative solutions and expanding areas of agreement. The "mediation tactics and contract zone" model postulates that mediators base their strategies and tactics on their assessment of the status of disputants' negotiations at the time of intervention. Using union-management bargaining as his context, Stevens (1963) proposed one of three courses of action for the mediator. First, create a contract zone for the parties if they have failed to do so; second, recreate the contract zone by helping the parties save face if their original zone disappeared due to intimidation and threats; and third, help the parties weigh alternatives and create a truly imaginative strategy in they have identified a contract zone but cannot decide among the alternatives within it.

The "megaprocess" model goes well beyond the preceding two models to specify seven stages of mediation: introduction (creating trust and structure); factfinding and isolation of issues; creation of options and alternatives; negotiation and decision-making; clarification and writing a plan; legal review and processing, and implementation, review, and revision (Folberg and Taylor 1984). The "twelve stage" model offers an even more comprehensive formulation of the mediation process, with the first five stages occurring even before the mediator attempts to bring the parties together, and the mediation process itself occurring in the seven remaining stages (Moore, 1986). This model also proposes that the mediator design hypotheses and appropriate strategies for executing each stage of the mediation process. The "(mediator) strategic choice" model proposed by Carnevale (1986a, 1986b) proposes that a mediator choose a strategy based on the amount of common ground that he or she

perceives for the disputants, and on the value that he or she places on the disputants achieving their aspirations. More specifically, the mediator can press the parties to be less rigid, compensate them for making concessions, remain inactive, or propose integrative agreements. Note that this model applies to changes in a mediator's behavior during a single negotiation as well as to the mediator's overall choice of strategy.

In contrast to mediators, arbitrators control the outcome rather than the process of dispute resolution. Parties present their positions and arguments to the arbitrator, who attempts to ensure that both sides have an equal and reasonable opportunity to do so. In the end, though, it is the arbitrator who decides the outcome. Arbitration is widely used to settle disputes over provisions of existing labor contracts in the private sector (so-called grievance arbitration), determine new terms and conditions of employment in public sector labor agreements (so-called contract arbitration), and increasingly to resolve commercial disputes, community disputes, and regulatory compliance disputes (Ichniowski and Lewin 1987; Lewin, Feuille, Kochan, and Delaney 1988; Lewin and Peterson 1988). In addition, the arbitration literature presents more classification problems than the literatures concerning models of conflict hitherto described. Stated, another way, arbitration models are designed to be both descriptive and normative, and consequently will be treated as such below.

What may be termed the "conventional procedures and techniques" model of arbitration is based on the work of Elkouri and Elkouri (1985), which was offered as a manual about the "workings of labor-management arbitration." A major section of this work sets forth a step by step arbitration process and includes stating the issue, preparing for the hearing, presenting the case (including opening statements, examination of witnesses, and closing arguments), and receiving the arbitrator's award and opinion. As to the behavior of the arbitrator during the hearing, Elkouri and Elkouri (1985) say that "he must be free to ask questions and to explore all angles which he deems necessary to a full understanding of the case." In this "conventional" arbitration process, the arbitrator need not limit the content of the award to the final position of one or the other party.

In contrast to this process is "final offer" arbitration, which forbids the arbitrator to split the difference between the parties and constrains him or her to accept the last offer proposed by one or the other disputant (Feuille 1979). In fact, this model owes its origins to research on a problem with conventional arbitration known as the "chilling effect." Because disputants believe that many conventional arbitrators split the difference between the disputants' positions, they tend not to make concessions and may even exaggerate their positions in order to offset the impact of the arbitrator's split-the-difference decision (Farber and Katz 1979); the result of such arbitration is to exert a chilling effect on negotiations. Final offer arbitration tends to reverse this behavior, that is,

to encourage negotiations and discourage the use of arbitration (Lewin, Feuille, Kochan, and Delaney 1988).

Work continues on the development of testable models of the arbitration process, and indeed this literature can best be described as robust. Recent literature features studies of single versus multiple arbitrators, binding versus nonbinding decisions, final offer by issue versus final offer by total package (Delaney and Feuille 1984), the narcotic effect of conventional arbitration (Chelius and Extejt 1985), the half-life of arbitration, the effects of multiple decisions consistently in favor of one party on perceptions of arbitration's effectiveness (Kochan 1980; Lewicki and Litterer 1985), the effects of arbitration on the incidence of strikes (Anderson 1981; Ponak and Wheeler 1980), and negotiator commitment to contract settlements under conventional and final offer arbitration (Neale and Bazerman 1983; Notz, Starke, and Atwell 1983). Research into arbitration appears to provide especially fertile ground for the coupling of industrial relations with organizational behavior frameworks, concepts, and methods.

As to other third party methods of dispute resolution, one descriptive and two normative models are briefly taken up here. The descriptive model is "inquisition," which calls attention to the high degree of control over both the process and outcome of a conflict. The "true" inquisitor selects the approach to be used by the parties to resolve a dispute, controls the information available to both sides, decides the outcome, and enforces the outcome (Sheppard 1983). Inquisitions tend not to diagnose a conflict in depth and are thus prone to make "snap judgments." Very little research has been done on this form of dispute resolution. At the margin, however, arbitrators who exert some control over the discovery process may be described as inquisitors, as may mediators whose tactics pressure the parties toward a predesignated solution. Research from these domains, therefore, could be called upon to better understand inquisitors and their effectiveness.

One additional normative third party model is "process consultation" which focuses on the resolution of interpersonal and intergroup disputes based on a human relations/humanistic psychology approach to conflict (Walton 1969; Schein 1969). This intervention combines elements of mediation with the third party's engineering of a direct confrontation between the parties, all designed to facilitate problem-solving behavior. Specifically, Walton's (1969) model comprises preliminary interviewing, structuring the confrontation, facilitating dialogue between the parties, encouraging problem-solving, and planning for the future. The last normative third party model is that of "problem-solving workshops" which are prenegotiation experiences intended to enhance disputants' subsequent use of negotiation and to simply improve their relationship. In one of the earliest published works on this subject, Burton (1969) asserted that perceptions of conflict are intensely subjective and alterable phenomena. He set out to induce changes in these perceptions, specifically,

to encourage disputants to view conflict as a problem to solve rather than a contest to win. Burton held his workshops on university campuses, away from the disputants' normal places of work, controlled communications between the disputants via third party academics, and provided a five-stage problem solving format for the workshops. Similar models and experiences with workshops have been reported in efforts to resolve racial tension in Rhodesia (Burton 1969), a border dispute in East Africa (Doob 1970), religious conflict in Northern Ireland (Alevy, et al. 1974), Arab-Israeli disputes (Kelman 1976), and community and organizational disputes (Fisher 1983).

This review of models of third party processes has shown that, as before, descriptive and normative research and writing have developed separately and remain largely apart. Rarely have direct connections been made between these two strands of third party process research. Further, there appear to be two strong, implicit assumptions in much of the third party literature.

- A18. It is not useful to generalize from one kind of third party behavior (e.g., mediation) to another kind of third party behavior (e.g., arbitration).
- A19. The formal role description of a third party (e.g., a mediator) is a strong predictor of that party's actual behavior.

All of the assumptions underlying the models of organizational conflict, negotiation, and third party processes identified above are summarized in Table 1. The main motivation for identifying these assumptions (apart from a desire to convert the implicit to the explicit) is to encourage researchers to test these assumptions against both received and new models of conflict resolution and conflict management. Moreover, such testing and model-building can usefully draw on the traditions and methods of both industrial relations and organizational behavior research in an effort to advance the integration (or reintegration) of these two fields. Toward this end, we turn next to a new study of workplace dispute resolution in nonunion settings which is framed by organizational justice, exit-voice-loyalty, and organizational punishment theories and models.

ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE, EXIT-VOICE-LOYALTY, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PUNISHMENT THEORIES

Models of organizational justice have come to play a prominent role in the literature on third party dispute resolution, and these models place major emphasis on the distinction between procedural justice and distributive justice (Folger and Greenberg 1985; Lind and Tyler 1988; Sheppard, Lewicki, and Minton 1992). Procedural justice focuses on the mechanisms or processes

through which resource allocation decisions are made, while distributive justice focuses on the outcomes of such resource allocation decisions and the criteria used to make them (Feuille and Delaney 1993). Stated another way, procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of the procedures used to make intraorganizational decisions, and distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of the substance and consequences of these decisions.

The concept of organizational justice appears to be supported by a body of scholarly work which indicates that fairness is a major contributor to the effective functioning of organizations. To illustrate, fairness apparently is a desirable "good" in that people want to be treated fairly and to be perceived by others as being fair (Greenberg 1990). That this preference may be especially strong within organizational settings is suggested by the work of Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler (1986a, 1986b), whose respondents to a telephone survey judged numerous decisions of companies to raise prices and reduce wages to be unfair. These economists concluded that norms of fairness do indeed impose substantial constraints on the market-oriented behavior of companies.

Relatedly, individual perceptions of the fairness of resource allocation decisions depend on both the procedures used to make these decisions and the outcomes of the decisions—that is, on procedural justice and distributive justice. For example, several studies have shown that the citizens of some nations strongly prefer an adversarial to an inquisitorial system for resolving legal conflicts, apparently because the former (but not the latter) allows the disputants to control the collection and presentation of evidence (Folger and Greenberg 1985; Lind 1982; Thibaut and Walker 1975).

Research also shows that organizational members more readily accept organizational decisions which affect them when the processes used to make such decisions are perceived to be fair (Greenberg 1990; Sheppard, Lewicki, and Minton 1992). Perceptions of organizational fairness, in turn, significantly influence employee attitudes toward numerous organizational characteristics and processes, for example, performance appraisals and grievance systems (Folger and Greenberg 1985; Fryxell and Gordon 1989).

Concerning the adoption and use by companies of grievance (or appeal, complaint, and dispute resolution) systems, a topic which continues to be of paramount interest in the industrial relations literature (Ichniowski and Lewin 1987; Lewin and Peterson 1988; Peterson and Lewin 1991; Lewin 1992), the organizational justice literature implies that norms of fairness are of paramount importance. By providing a procedure for resolving intraorganizational and workplace conflicts, an employer signals to employees that conflict is "acceptable," that conflicts will be treated in a "standard format," that conflicts not resolved at lower levels will be solved at higher levels, and that the outcomes of conflict resolution will not be "unfair" to organizational members in the sense that those who grieve will not be punished for filing grievances.

Indeed, one of the key conceptual underpinnings of formal grievance systems in organizations is that conflicts should be surfaced and expressed in writing, rather than being repressed or expressed only verbally (Lewin and Peterson 1988). With respect to the grievance systems studied in this paper, organizational justice theory leads to the propositions that these systems will be used, that intraorganizational and workplace conflicts will be resolved, and that organizational members will not be punished for using the grievance system—that is, for filing grievances.

The exit-voice-loyalty model (Hirschman 1970), which has come to occupy a prominent place in the contemporary industrial relations literature, clearly leads to the proposition that employees who file grievances will be less likely to leave their employers than employees who do not file grievances. In the intraorganizational employment context, grievance filing represents the exercise of the voice option and quitting represents the exercise of the exit option. Hence, exit and voice are posed as tradeoffs, and exit should be negatively correlated with voice. While, as noted earlier, the exit-voice-loyalty model was evoked to explain why some consumers who are dissatisfied with a company's products or processes choose not to switch to another company (and, instead, choose the voice option by engaging in letter writing, returning defective products, and occasionally conducting boycotts of a company's products), this model has often been used to analyze the behavior of labor unions (Freeman and Medoff 1984; Freeman 1980).

The dominant finding that emerges from this work is that, by providing employees with a voice mechanism, unions reduce voluntary employee turnover, that is, quits. Other, related outcomes associated with unionism in this research include increased job tenure (experience), training (human capital), and productivity. However, only a small portion of this work treats grievance procedures (as distinct from unionism) as a voice mechanism, little conceptual attention is given to the distinction between grievance procedure coverage (availability) and usage (Ichniowski and Lewin 1987), and none of the work tests for the effects of grievance procedure usage, issues, settlement levels, or decisions on employee quits.

Even more fundamental, perhaps, are two other limitations of the exit-voice-loyalty model. First, model of the conceptual development and exposition of the model is devoted to exit and voice; loyalty is given much shorter shrift, and this may help to explain both the conceptual confusion about the relationships among exit, voice, and loyalty (Barry 1974; Birch 1975), and the lack of empirical attention to the operationalization and measurement of the loyalty construct (but see Boroff and Lewin 1991; Boroff 1990). Moreover, even those industrial relations researchers who have employed the exit-voice-loyalty model seem relatively uninterested in the loyalty component of the model, or in integrating their studies with those of organizational behavior researchers who have modeled and studied organizational commitment

(Buchanan 1974; Dubin, Champoux, and Porter 1975; Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979; Angle and Perry 1981; Ferris and Aranya 1983). Indeed, numerous studies have been conducted of union members' commitment to their unions and of dual commitment, that is, the commitment of individuals, such as unionized employees, to two organizations, such as the company and the union (Fukami and Larson 1984; Larson and Fukami 1985; Fullagar and Barling 1987; Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, and Spiller 1990; Ladd, Gordon, Beauvais, and Morgan 1982). Yet, apparently neither industrial relations nor organizational behavior researchers have sought theoretical or empirical convergence among constructs of commitment and loyalty.

Second, and of particular relevance for the present paper, the exit-voice-loyalty model has not been tested in nonunion settings. In other words, even if the findings of an exit-voice-loyalty tradeoff in unionized settings are accepted as valid (but see Lewin and Peterson 1988), the model lacks generalizability in terms of providing a theoretical and empirical explanation of the dynamics and consequences of conflict management and resolution in an intraorganizational context. This is an especially important research gap because, in contrast to unionized grievance procedures, nonunion grievance procedures do not feature an institutional representative of the employee in grievance-handling, and because most nonunion grievance procedures do not provide for third-party arbitration (Lewin and Peterson 1988; Delaney, Lewin, and Ichniowski 1989; Lewin and Ichniowski 1988). A priori, therefore, one might propose that the negative relationships between exit and voice which are said to prevail in unionized settings will be less strong, nonexistent, or even reversed in nonunion settings.

The empirical work undertaken below provides one of the few extant explorations of the relationship between exit and voice in nonunion settings (see Lewin 1986, 1987a, 1992). Based on the exit-voice-loyalty model, this exploration will yield evidence about the proposition that the exercise of voice through grievance procedures is negatively correlated with employee turnover. Note that this proposition dovetails closely with and, in a limited sense, extends one of the propositions derived from organizational justice theory, namely, that organizational members will not be punished for filing grievances. Framed from the perspective of the exit-voice-loyalty framework, organizational justice theory leads to the more specific proposition that grievance filers will not have significantly different involuntary turnover rates from those who do not file grievances.

Organizational punishment (and industrial discipline) theory provides a substantially different perspective on intraorganizational conflict generally and grievance procedures specifically from those offered by the organizational justice and exit-voice-loyalty models. Organizational punishment theory calls attention to the violations of organizational and work rules committed by organization members (Scott 1965). When such violations or infractions are

committed, the organization must take appropriate disciplinary action so as to "correct" the behavior in question and reaffirm the policies and practices which were violated.

Invoking this analytical framework, grievance filers may be viewed as typically reacting against discipline initially imposed by the organization, so that the filing of a grievance is essentially an attempt to get the organization to modify or reverse the action originally taken. Empirical research using organizational punishment theory has concluded that grievance filers impose additional costs on organizations (Arvey and Jones 1985), but also that such sanctions as warnings and dismissals can be used as "positive" management tools (O'Reilly and Weitz 1980) in the sense that they help to define appropriate and inappropriate employee behaviors. In fact, one study found that managerial performance in retail food establishments was positively correlated with the frequency and severity of use of such disciplinary measures as warnings and dismissals (O'Reilly and Weitz 1980).

Another strand of organizational discipline theory and research has "gone further" than the aforementioned studies in concluding that grievance filers are likely to be viewed as complainers, trouble-makers, problem employees, or dissidents who may therefore be subject not only to organizational discipline, but to retribution (Selznick 1969; Brinker 1984). Further, not only may grievance filers be viewed and treated negatively by organizations, so too may supervisors against whom grievances are filed (Jennings 1974).

This perspective is given some support by recent empirical studies (Lewin 1987, 1992; Boroff 1991), by internal company surveys which find that "fear of reprisal" is the most frequently cited reason for the failure of managerial and nonmanagerial employees to file written grievances in nonunion organizations that maintain formal grievance systems (Lewin 1987a), and by popular works which call attention to the retaliation meted out to organizational "whistle-blowers" (Ewing 1989).

In essence, the organizational punishment literature leads to the proposition that grievance filing will be positively associated with employee turnover—and perhaps with other intraorganizational consequences as well. This is a markedly different proposition from those derived from organizational justice and exit-voice-loyalty theories of conflict management and resolution. Note, however, that organizational punishment theory may have more in common with the exit-voice-loyalty theory than with organizational justice theory in its emphasis on distributive justice (outcomes) and de-emphasis of procedural justice.

In sum, organizational justice, exit-voice-loyalty, and organizational punishment theories are used to guide the present study of conflict management and resolution in nonunion organizations. These theories are relied on because of the insights they provide about workplace conflict resolution, and because of the opportunity which they collectively provide for integrating organizational behavior and industrial relations research on a topic which

continues to occupy a prominent place in the literature of both fields. However, the guidance drawn from these theories takes the form of a set of propositions, rather than formal hypotheses, about the relationship between grievance filing and the consequences (outcomes) of filing. The decision not to specify formal hypotheses here stems from the judgment that the aforementioned theories lead to different expectations about the relationships between grievance filing and the consequences of filing, and because the empirical evidence about this area of conflict management and resolution is insufficiently robust to warrant the specification of expected, or a priori, relationships.

Data and Empirical Analysis

The data base for this study consists of grievance and personnel records drawn from five large, nonunion, publicly-held, U.S.-based companies, each of which maintains a formal, multi-step, written grievance procedure. Grievance and personnel file data were obtained for the 1984-1988 period and were converted to a single master data tape. Of central importance to this study, samples of grievance filers and nonfilers were drawn from each of the five cooperating companies. Grievance data were then extracted and collated for the samples of grievance filers, and personnel file data were extracted and collated for the samples of grievance filers and nonfilers. The grievance data were limited to grievances filed and settled in calendar 1986; in conjunction with the personnel data for 1984-1988, the grievance data enabled us to employ a quasi-experimental research design in which 1984-1985 serves as the "pre-test" period, 1986 as the "treatment" or "experimental" period, and 1987-1988 as the "post-test" period.

Four measures of post-grievance settlement outcomes are used in this study: annual job performance, measured on a five-point rating scale, with 1 = low and 5 = high; annual promotion rate, measured as the percent of grievance filers and nonfilers in year x promoted to higher-ranking jobs in year $x + 1$; annual work attendance, measured as the percent of work days absent from work and late in reporting to work; and annual turnover, measured as the percent of grievance filers and nonfilers voluntarily and involuntarily separated from work (in 1987 and 1988 only).

To what extent are the grievance procedures in these five nonunion companies actually used to resolve intraorganizational and workplace conflicts? The data in Table 2 indicate that the annual grievance rate per 100 employees averaged 5.1 over the 1984-1988 period, and ranged between 3.8 and 6.2 among the individual companies studied. This overall grievance rate is about 40 percent lower than the average annual grievance rate recently reported for unionized employees in steel manufacturing, retail trade, nonprofit hospital, and local public school organizations (Lewin and Peterson 1988). Nevertheless, these data can be interpreted to support the proposition, derived

*Table 2. Annual Average Grievance Filing Rates in Five Nonunion Businesses, 1985-1988
(per 100 employees)*

<i>Grievance Step</i>	<i>Firm A Annual Average 1985-1988</i>	<i>Firm B Annual Average 1985-1988</i>	<i>Firm C Annual Average 1985-1988</i>	<i>Firm D Annual Average 1985-1988</i>	<i>Firm E Annual Average 1985-1988</i>	<i>Total Annual Average 1985-1988</i>
Grievance Rate Per 100 Employees	4.1	3.8	4.7	6.2	5.4	5.1
Second Step Grievance Rate Per 100 Employees	1.6	1.3	2.1	2.5	2.2	1.9
Third Step Grievance Rate Per 100 Employees	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.4	1.3	0.8
Fourth Step Grievance Rate Per 100 Employees						0.2
● CEO	0.1					
● Senior Vice President, Human Resources		0.2				
● Chief Administrative Officer			0.1			
● General Manager				0.2		
● Arbitration Panel					0.3	

from organizational justice theory, that nonunion grievance procedures will be used by employees.

Additionally, the data presented in Tables 2 and 3 indicate that most nonunion employees' grievances are settled at the lower steps of grievance procedures, and that, on average, about one of every 500 grievances initially filed eventually proceeds to the last step of the grievance procedure. Observe from Table 2 that this "ascension rate" was highest in the one company included in this study which provided for arbitration as the final step of the grievance procedure. This evidence can be interpreted to support the proposition, also drawn from organizational justice theory, that intraorganizational and workplace conflicts in the form of written grievances are actually resolved, as well as the normative dictum, drawn from the industrial relations literature, that grievances should be settled as close as possible to their sources of origin (Lewin and Peterson 1991).

Table 4 presents evidence relevant to the propositions drawn from organizational justice, exit-voice-loyalty, and organizational punishment theories about the relationships between grievance filing and post-grievance settlement outcomes, especially employee turnover; these data suggest several key conclusions. First, grievance filers and nonfilers do not differ (statistically) significantly with respect to job performance ratings and promotion rates during the pre-grievance filing period (1984-1985) or during the grievance filing period (1986). The work attendance of grievance filers was slightly but not (statistically) significantly higher than that of nonfilers during both the pre-grievance and grievance filing periods. In other words, two groups of employees in five nonunion companies—subsequent grievance filers and nonfilers—appear to be and, on a statistical basis, are virtually identical along several personnel utilization and assessment dimensions during a two-year pre-grievance filing period and a one-year grievance filing period.

Second, grievance filers and nonfilers display significantly different job performance ratings, promotion rates, and turnover rates during the two-year post-grievance filing and settlement period, 1987-1988. Specifically, grievance filers have significantly higher average voluntary and involuntary turnover rates and significantly lower average job performance ratings and promotion rates than nonfilers in the post-grievance settlement period. Moreover, though not statistically significant, the average work attendance rates of grievance filers are lower than those of nonfilers during the post-grievance settlement period, whereas the opposite relationship prevailed during the pre-grievance and grievance filing periods.

Third, the differences between grievance filers and nonfilers along several personnel utilization and assessment measures widen between the first and second years (1987 and 1988, respectively) of the post-grievance resolution and settlement period. Turnover differences between grievance filers and nonfilers are significantly higher in 1988 than in 1987, while differences in performance

Table 3. Level of Grievance Settlement By Issue, In Five Nonunion Businesses, 1985-1988
(in percent of written grievances filed)

<i>Grievance Issue</i>	<i>Firm A Level</i>				<i>Firm B Level</i>				<i>Firm C Level</i>				<i>Firm D Level</i>				<i>Firm E Level</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Pay and Work	61	29	9	1	62	30	6	2	58	27	13	2	59	26	12	3	62	26	10	2
Benefits	73	21	5	1	70	24	4	2	68	25	5	2	67	24	8	1	69	21	9	1
Performance & Mobility	51	33	12	4	49	32	14	5	53	25	9	3	52	30	13	5	57	24	16	3
Discipline	56	29	12	3	55	29	12	4	56	26	16	2	54	29	14	3	52	29	13	6
Discrimination	48	31	16	5	49	32	15	4	50	27	19	6	51	24	19	6	50	30	15	5
Supervisory Relations	72	23	3	2	70	24	5	1	72	22	5	1	74	20	6	0	69	23	7	1
Average	62	26	9	3	60	27	10	3	59	27	12	2	59	26	12	3	63	22	12	3

Table 4. Measures of Personnel Activity for Grievance Filers and Nonfilers in Five Nonunion Companies, 1984-1988 (in annual averages)

<i>Personnel Activity Measure</i>	<i>Year</i>				
	<i>1984</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1988</i>
Filers	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.2 ^a	3.0 ^a
Performance rating (1 = low, 5 = high)					
Promotion Rate (in %)	4.3	4.1	4.0	1.9 ^a	1.5 ^a
Work Attendance (% of days absent and late)	7.7	7.9	8.2	8.4	8.6
Turnover Rate					
Voluntary	—	—	—	7.7 ^a	8.2 ^a
Involuntary	—	—	—	5.9 ^a	6.3 ^a
Nonfilers	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.9 ^a	3.8 ^a
Performance Rating (1 = low, 5 = high)					
Promotion Rate (in %)	4.2	4.2	4.3	3.9 ^a	3.7 ^a
Work Attendance (5 of days absent and late)	7.9	8.1	8.3	8.1	8.2
Turnover Rate					
Voluntary	—	—	—	5.8 ^a	6.0 ^a
Involuntary	—	—	—	2.3 ^a	2.4 ^a
Total N = 2050	2114	2032	1946	1834	

Note: Differences in rates are significant at $p < .05$, according to chi-square tests

Source: David Lewin, "Grievance Procedures in Nonunion Workplaces: An Empirical Analysis of Usage, Dynamics, and Outcomes," in Martin H. Malin, ed., *Labor Arbitration Thirty Years After the Steelworkers Trilogy*, *Chicago Kent Law Review*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (1991), in press.

ratings, promotion rates, and work attendance rates are insignificantly higher in 1988 than in 1987. These data appear to confirm a deterioration in the organizational positions of grievance filers relative to nonfilers in the period following the filing and settlement of written grievances. Taken as a whole, this evidence appears to support propositions about intraorganizational and workplace conflict resolution drawn from organizational punishment theory, rather than those drawn from organizational justice theory.

Further, this evidence appears to disconfirm propositions about intraorganizational and workplace conflict resolution drawn from exit-voice-loyalty theory. In particular, the exercise of voice by employees in the five nonunion companies studied here is significantly positively associated with both voluntary and involuntary employee exit—a finding which accords closely with the results of other recent studies of unionized and nonunion dispute resolution systems (Lewin and Peterson 1988, 1991; and Lewin 1991, 1992; Boroff 1990; Boroff and Lewin 1991). These conclusions are further

Table 5. Measures of Personnel Activity for Supervisors of Grievance Filers and Nonfilers in Five Nonunion Companies, 1984-1988 (in annual averages)

<i>Personnel Activity Measure</i>	<i>Year</i>				
	<i>1984</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>1987</i>	<i>1988</i>
Supervisors of Filers	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.4 ^a	3.2 ^a
Performance rating (1 = low, 5 = high)					
Promotion Rate (in %)	2.1	2.0	2.1	0.9 ^a	0.8 ^a
Work Attendance (% of days absent and late)	6.4	6.7	6.6	6.9	7.0
Turnover Rate					
Voluntary				4.2 ^a	4.6 ^a
Involuntary				3.7 ^a	4.0 ^a
Supervisors of Nonfilers					
Performance Rating (1 = low, 5 = high)	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.2 ^a	4.1 ^a
Promotion Rate (in t)	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.6 ^a	2.3 ^a
Work Attendance	6.6	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.7
Turnover Rate					
Voluntary				2.9 ^a	3.0 ^a
Involuntary				1.2 ^a	1.1 ^a
Total N =	342	321	306	284	259

Note: Differences in rates are significant at $p < .05$, according to chi-square tests.

Source: David Lewin, "Nonunion Grievance Procedures: An Empirical Study of Supervisory Roles and Consequences," working paper, Institute of Industrial Relations, UCLA, February 1991.

strengthened by the results of analyses of post-grievance settlement outcomes for samples of supervisors of grievance filers and supervisors of nonfilers in the five aforementioned nonunion companies. These samples were drawn in a manner similar to the drawing of the employee grievance filer and nonfiler samples, and personnel file data were once again extracted and merged with grievance file data. Table 5 presents the findings from this portion of the research.

As with nonsupervisory personnel, the supervisors of (subsequent) grievance filers do not differ significantly from the supervisors of (subsequent) nonfilers with respect to performance ratings, promotion rates, and work attendance during the pre-grievance and grievance filing periods. In the immediate post-grievance settlement period (1987), however, the supervisors of grievance filers have significantly lower average performance ratings and promotion rates than the supervisors of nonfilers. The former also have a poorer average work attendance record than the latter, though this difference is not statistically significant.

With respect to turnover, supervisors of grievance filers have significantly higher average voluntary and (especially) involuntary turnover rates than the

supervisors of nonfilers in the first year following the settlement of grievances. Further, the differences in performance ratings and (especially) turnover rates between these two groups widen during the second year (1988) of the post-grievance settlement period. Thus, as before, these findings appear to support propositions about intraorganizational and workplace conflict resolution drawn from organizational punishment theory, rather than organizational justice theory, and to disconfirm propositions drawn from exit-voice-loyalty theory.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study of grievance system usage, settlement, and post-settlement outcomes in five nonunion companies have several implications for the continued development of theories of intraorganizational and workplace conflict. Perhaps foremost, the findings provide support for organizational punishment theory. Matched samples of grievance filers and nonfilers and of supervisors of filers and nonfilers showed no statistically significant differences on several measures of personnel activity, either in the period preceding grievance filing or in the grievance filing and settlement period itself. In the post-grievance settlement period, by contrast, the "organizational position" of those directly associated with grievance activity, that is, grievance filers and the supervisors of grievance filers, deteriorated in relation to the organizational position of those not associated with grievance activity, that is, grievance nonfilers and the supervisors of nonfilers.

One is tempted, when reviewing these findings, to quickly conclude that they tell a "reprisal" theory. In other words, employees who file written grievances suffer reprisals—incur punishment—for doing so, and this phenomenon extends to the supervisors of grievance filers. Perhaps this is why managerial personnel, who are typically also eligible to file written grievances where nonunion grievance systems are in place, rarely do so (Lewin 1991b). Indeed, recent studies of the determinants of grievance filing in nonunion organizations show that occupation is the single strongest predictor of filing, with managers being substantially and significantly less likely to file written grievance than members of all other occupational groups (Lewin 1992; Boroff 1990). In addition, managers are more likely than all other organizational personnel to express fear of reprisal when responding to anonymous surveys about grievance filing and nonfiling in nonunion organizations (Boroff 1991; Lewin 1987, 1992).

It is unlikely that the designers of nonunion grievance systems intend these systems to result in reprisals when they are used or to generate fear of use by organizational members. In fact, nonunion companies often celebrate and publicize their grievance systems, and appear to regard them as a positive conflict resolution, employee relations, and communications mechanisms

(McCabe 1988; Westin and Feliu 1988; Lewin, Dralle, and Thomson 1992). But an organizational punishment perspective suggests that the findings of this paper are not necessarily inconsistent with the "positive" conflict resolution properties of nonunion grievance systems.

In particular, consider that the post-grievance settlement differences between grievance filers and nonfilers, and between the supervisors of grievance filers and nonfilers, with respect to job performance ratings, promotion rates, (nonsignificant) work attendance rates, and turnover rates may reflect true "performance" differences. That is, grievance filers (and supervisors of filers) may be systematically poorer performers (and, more broadly, employees) than nonfilers (and supervisors of nonfilers), and these "differences" are accurately reflected in the post-grievance resolution and settlement personnel data. For such an explanation to be valid, it must be the case that the act of grievance filing and settlement of grievances "shocks" the organization into conducting more careful personnel assessments than those which prevailed during the pre-grievance filing and grievance filing periods.

Ironically, this explanation receives some indirect support from court decisions rendered in employment discrimination and wrongful discharge cases. In several such cases, the performance appraisal systems used by companies have been judged invalid and unreliable, and these judgments often spur company initiatives to improve the validity and reliability of performance appraisal (and other personnel) systems (Dertouzos, Holland, and Ebener 1988; Player, Shoben, and Lieberwitz 1990). This reasoning is also supported by reference to the "shock" theory of unionism, whereby unions are said to spur improvements in companies' utilization of personnel, technology, and management systems (Rees 1977). If this is a valid explanation of the findings from this paper, it squares more closely with propositions drawn from organizational punishment theory than does the reprisal for use and fear of reprisal explanation discussed previously. In this regard, recall that involuntary turnover—organizationally rather than individually-initiated separations—was significantly higher among grievance filers (and supervisors of filers) than among nonfilers (and supervisors of nonfilers) in the post-grievance settlement period.

Concerning exit-voice-loyalty theory of intraorganizational and workplace conflict resolution, the findings from this study run counter to the propositions derived from that theory. Across samples of thousands of employees and supervisors drawn from five large nonunion companies over a five-year period, grievance filing—the exercise of voice—is consistently and significantly positively associated with employee turnover—the exercise of exit. This result is directly counter to the central proposition of exit-voice-loyalty theory, and also contrasts strongly with the findings of studies on unionized grievance procedures conducted by labor economists (Freeman and Medoff 1984). Note, in particular, that voluntary employee turnover (quitting) is significantly higher

among grievance filers (and supervisors of grievance filers) than among nonfilers (and supervisors of nonfilers) in the post-grievance settlement period—the type of turnover which exit-voice-loyalty theory and research explicitly claims will be negatively related to the use of voice.

Another proposition derived from exit-voice-loyalty theory is that loyalty will be positively associated with voice and negatively associated with exit. Unfortunately, the framers and users of exit-voice-loyalty theory give such short shrift to loyalty that they seem never to have operationalized or measured the construct (Hirschman 1970; Freeman and Medoff 1984). While the present study design did not provide for the collection of perceptual data by which to construct a loyalty measure, a related study of 1100 employees and managerial personnel in a nonunion company that maintains a well-known written grievance system found that loyalty to the company was significantly negatively associated with both grievance filing (voice) and intent to leave the company (exit) (Lewin and Boroff 1991). Thus, a body of new evidence about nonunion grievance systems casts considerable doubt on the validity of propositions about intraorganizational and workplace conflict resolution and management derived from exit-voice-loyalty theory.

As to organizational justice theory, the study design and evidence presented in this paper do not constitute a direct test of propositions about intraorganizational and workplace conflict drawn from this theory. The data pertaining to the use of the grievance systems and the settlement of grievances in the five nonunion companies included in this study provide some indirect support for organizational justice-based propositions about procedural justice. In fact, the very existence of these systems, both in the companies studied here and in almost one-half of all publicly-held U.S. companies more broadly (Delaney, Lewin, and Ichniowski 1989), in itself provides strong support for notions of procedural justice in work organizations.

With respect to distributive justice, it was proposed earlier that for this type of justice to prevail organization members should not be punished for using the grievance system. Here again, perceptual data were not obtained, but the post-grievance settlement data presented in Tables 4 and 5 provide indirect evidence about the presence of distributive justice in these five nonunion companies.

Returning to the two alternative explanations of these findings, the reprisal or punishment explanation suggests that distributive injustice, rather than justice, prevails in these organizations. Further from this perspective, organizational members who choose not to use these grievance systems, even if and when they believe that they have been unfairly treated at work, are acting rationally because they expect injustice to result from grievance filing and settlement—and they can observe such injustice operating in the cases of grievance filers and supervisors of filers.

In contrast, the “true performance” explanation may be consistent with the presence of distributive justice in these organizations, especially if performance

is regarded by organizational members as a suitable, even preferred, criterion for making employee retention and separation decisions. Indeed, organizations and organizational members who strongly favor meritocracy may be likely to regard the failure to separate "poor" performers as a classic case of distributive injustice. This interpretation receives some additional support from studies of the effects of organizational work force layoffs on those who survive. One such effect is improved individual job performance among survivors in the post-layoff period, and one mechanism for the transmission of this effect is the notion expressed by survivors that they deserved—merited—retention (Brockner and Ichniowski 1994).

Thus, although the evidence presented in this paper is perhaps more relevant to assessing propositions about intraorganizational and workplace conflict resolution and management derived from organizational punishment theory, it is also relevant for assessing such propositions derived from organizational justice theory. As with other areas of organizational behavior and industrial relations research, however, the evidence presented here is subject to competing explanations and interpretations, and does not fully confirm or disconfirm any of the aforementioned propositions. All the more reason, then, for OB and IR scholars to continue their efforts to integrate theory and research on conflict resolution and management in contemporary work organizations.

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