

Introduction

THIS SECTION CONSISTS OF FIVE chapters that examine the practice of sustained dialogue in several different contexts: race relations on campus; the conflict in Derry, Northern Ireland; social justice at West Virginia University; and situational policing and public safety in urban neighborhoods.

The student sustained dialogue movement on U.S. campuses began in the late 1990s when two Princeton undergraduates, David Tukey and Teddy Nemeroff, met Hal Saunders, an alumni who was then a Princeton trustee. “Diving In: A Handbook for Improving Race Relations on College Campuses Through the Process of Sustained Dialogue” is a handbook in which Tukey, who has since earned his doctorate in neuroscience, and Nemeroff, whose subsequent work in South Africa is discussed by Saunders and Parker, explained to their fellow students seeking to become involved with sustained dialogue the workings of a viable campus process. Social workers and others familiar with group process will find much that is recognizable in their discussion of the process, which was written as a student-to-student account of how to initiate a campus sustained dialogue process.

After more than thirty years of violence, the conflict in Northern Ireland was finally ended with the Good Friday Agreement (Comhaontú Aoine an Chéasta) in 1998, although grievances and misunderstandings remain on all sides more than a decade later. In “Derry Exceptionalism and the Organic Model of Sustained Dialogue,” Nick Acheson of the University of Ulster and Carl Milofsky of Bucknell University explore the social conditions for the emergence of dialogue in Derry/Londonderry in the wake of that famous accord.

West Virginia University was among the first American universities to establish a viable institution-wide social justice program for faculty, staff,

and students. When the Nova Institute sought to establish a student sustained dialogue effort in the Tukey-Nemeroff-Saunders mode on the WVU campus, one of the first places organizers turned for help was to the Office of Social Justice. In "The Role of Dialogue in Achieving Justice at an American University," the executive officer for social justice, Jennifer Macintosh, and Charles Morris, a staff member in the Office of Social Justice, review the development and operation of that office in light of its continuing role in facilitating dialogue on campus.

Another of the contexts in which sustained dialogue is making inroads is in community policing, thanks to the work of James Nolan, associate professor of sociology and his colleagues at WVU. Jim is a former police officer and FBI agent with a long interest in community policing who, together with his colleagues and students in sociology, conducted two important studies of the role of dialogue. The first of these, presented in the chapter by Nolan, Norman Conti, and Corey Colyer, "A Public Safety Process: Sustained Dialogue for Situational Policing," lays out "a structure for policing that begins by conceptualizing a practical end state that the police and community can work toward (i.e., neighborhood development) and then provides a blueprint for achieving it." The second study, presented in the chapter by Nolan, Ronald Althouse, and Jeri Kirby, "Facilitating Neighborhood Growth: A 'Commonsense' Public Safety Approach from the Relational Paradigm," reports the results of their studies of community responses to a dialogue-based approach to community policing on the North Side of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.